

The Seed Industry as vibrant as ever !!



With 1583 participants, the 2013 ISF World Seed Congress in Athens, Greece celebrated a new record. From all continents the seed industry came together to meet in sunny Athens. The Congress provided an excellent venue for seedsmen and seedswomen to converse, learn, network and do deals.

At the Opening Ceremony Mr. Tim Johnson, President of ISF underlined that ISF is a strong believer in the benefits of global movement of seeds to improve grower success around the world.



Mr. Marcel Bruins, Secretary-General of ISF highlighted that in recent years services to ISF members had gone up, while the congress registration fee had gone down.

The technical meetings during the Congress were an opportunity for the industry to promote and share best practices; they acted as a forum for debate and to receive the latest updates. ISF's main goal is to facilitate the international seed trade, and from that angle, delegates saw a high level line up of speakers from the international arena on the recent developments: the Commission on Phytosanitary Measures, the Nagoya Protocol, the OECD, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the International Seed Testing Association, the Global Crop Diversity Trust and the International Plant Protection Convention. All these organizations have a potential impact on the seed industry, and ISF had contributed to shaping them.

Intellectual property and its enforcement were center stage during the Forage and Turf Section meeting. The participants got interesting updates from UPOV and Breeders Trust. A panel discussion led to animated discussions in the meeting of the Field Crops Section. The panelists discussed the outcome of the ISF publication "Collection Systems for Royalties in Wheat – An International Study". The importance of the Incoterms® was underlined in the meeting of the Trade and Arbitration Rules Committee, and the Seed Applied Technologies Committee dedicated ample time for a presentation on the Compass report, outlining the socio-economic value of neonicotinoids seed treatment. The Vegetable and Ornamental Section saw a change in guard from long standing chairman Mr. Anton van Doornmalen to Mr. Vicente Navarro, and heard interesting presentations on how to do business in China and the SolCAP project. The Dutch ambassador to Greece honored the meeting with his participation. ISF's work on an International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures, specifically for seeds, was an important topic during the meeting of the Phytosanitary Committee.



During the congress, ISF adopted two position papers: the 'ISF View on Low Level Presence in Seed' and the 'ISF Viewpoint on Indirect Seed Health Tests'. Mr. Jean-Christophe Gouache of Limagrain, France, was elected as the new Second Vice-President of ISF.

As is tradition, the Trading Floor was buzzing with activity, underlining the importance of the ISF World Seed Congress for the international trade. The beautiful venues of the Welcome Party and Gala Dinner gave every one the opportunity to have fun with friends and colleagues. During the closing Gala

Dinner, the Greek Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Athanasios Tsiftaris addressed the audience on the importance of high quality seed and the investment possibilities in Greece. The Congress showed that the Greek seed industry and farmers have experience in the multiplication of seed and can secure high-quality production combined with a high yield. Greece, due to its placement on the map provides an excellent hub for managing business in South Europe.

The next ISF World Seed Congress will take place in Beijing, China in May 2014.