**PRESS RELEASE**



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**ESA’s patent database PINTO is now LIVE!**

To facilitate information of plant breeders by increasing transparency regarding the patent status of commercially available plant varieties, ESA European Seed Association has set up a specific database.

Following a name contest on social media and other events, the new web-based tool now named PINTO (**P**atent **IN**formation and **T**ransparency **O**nline), has gone live today!

The unique feature of PINTO is the link it establishes between a plant variety and patent(s) relating to these varieties. This should provide a useful assistance to breeders to make a more informed choice when selecting specific varieties for a  new breeding programme. Next to the breeders’ themselves, PINTO can be a valuable tool also for farmers, growers, public authorities or other interested parties.

PINTO is a publicly accessible site for all interested parties and can be accessed from the ESA website <http://www.euroseeds.org/patent-database>.

Users can simply sign up and create their personal account on the site. They then can access the search tool function that allows to browse through the content of the database with the help of a number of search criteria, such as variety denomination, species, patent holder, patent number or specific keywords. Besides these key functions, many other tools are included to make PINTO as user-friendly as possible. More information on these tools as well as on general background is available in ESA’s specifically designed flyer “More Transparency to Help Breeders” (<http://www.euroseeds.org/ESA_13.0530.pdf>) which can be downloaded for free as well.

In its starting phase, PINTO will focus on varieties commercialized in the EU and in EFTA countries. But as varieties from all over the world may be used in breeding programmes, the long-term goal is to widen the scope and also cover other countries and continents. In addition to patents already granted, published patent applications are also included in PINTO. The information regarding the varieties included  in PINTO are provided to ESA on a voluntary basis by the companies commercialising them.

“The PINTO database is an important element in the overall implementation of ESA’s policy and position on intellectual property rights for plants and seed.”, Garlich von Essen, Secretary General of ESA points out. “We believe that it is crucial that uncertainty or lack of transparency do not discourage the use of material and potentially reduce innovation. PINTO is an additional tool to help breeders making their choice when selecting material for breeding programmes to bring ever new and better varieties to the market and consumers.”

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