



ESA NEWSLETTER

April 2012

ESA_12.0220

ESA Meetings (selected)

- **03.05.2012**
ESA STAT WG
Meeting
- **21.05.2012**
ESA WG
Natural Turf
CC
- **29.05.2012**
CIPR Meeting
CC
- **06.06.2012**
ESA WG Biotech
Meeting
- **20.06.2012**
ESA WG
Biodiversity
- **20.06.2012**
ESA WG Plant
Health Meeting

Dear Members,

The practical implementation of our ESTA European Seed Treatment Assurance scheme is moving forward!

On May 2nd and 3rd, we will have meetings of our responsible Steering Group and the ESA STAT to discuss and formally approve the final technical amendments to the system after the ESA Board already gave its green light to the principal set-up and content of the certification standard at its meeting of end of March.

In addition, we have developed an ESTA Guidance Document which shall help certifying bodies (provided these are properly accredited to their proper respective national authority) in the practical work with individual seed treatment facilities. This document is not an additional standard but shall provide a 'helping hand' to companies during the certification process and help to achieve a harmonized implementation and thus practical use of the standard as far as this is possible.

Both documents will be uploaded on the ESTA part of our ESA website immediately after the above mentioned meetings and we will accompany this official launch of the ESTA with respective press releases, information to official bodies such as the Commission and Member States but foremost to you, our membership. It will be specifically important to assure the wide distribution of this information to your respective membership on national level so that the implementation starts on an as wide a range of countries and companies as possible. Our target is ambitious: we want to achieve a minimum coverage of more than 80% within the coming 12 to 15 months! But anything less will not be sufficient to convince regulators that such an industry led quality assurance system is indeed not only sufficient to achieve the desired quality of treatment processes and the resulting treated seed; it is also a precondition for our industry to prove that further detailed regulation is unnecessary.

The latter point is of specific importance in relation to the on-going discussions on the EU Guidance Document for seed treatment. While ESA principally supports the development and EU-wide acceptance of such a 'guidance', we are also clear about the fundamental reasoning for it: to assure the free movement and subsequent use of seed treated (with a plant protection product that it is authorized for this application in at least one Member States) throughout the European Union. Farmers and growers need more seed treatment solutions to successfully address the growing plant health challenges under conditions of more extreme weather conditions, climate change and resulting spread of pests to new areas. We will not accept that the fundamental principle of an EU-wide mutual recognition of seed treatment authorizations (for which ESA successfully fought in the revision of the legislation in 2009) is now watered down or even repealed by Member States wishing to uphold their national sovereignty in this policy area.

With best regards, yours

Garlich v. Essen, Secretary General



Turkey—Import restrictions

On April 17 B.Scholte visited the Permanent Representation of Turkey in Brussels in relation to the import restrictions regarding seeds imposed by the Turkish authorities since January this year as follow up of a letter to the Turkish minister of Agriculture. Mrs Fatma San informed on the instructions given by Ankara to the authorities in the different regions regarding sampling and testing. She took note of the continued concerns as expressed by ESA in particular our request to discuss a solution for the longer term. She agreed to contact the Turkish Ministry of foreign affairs and agriculture and has confirmed to come back to us in the near future. The Secretariat will continue the pressure in order to improve the situation. The ESA members will be kept informed of the reaction of the Turkish authorities and regarding possible actions in the future. (BS)

External Meetings (selected)

- **15.05.2012**
How to combine digital and traditional in your organization?
Brussels (BE)
- **15./16.05.2012**
ESA SPC
Novi Sad (RS)
- **21.05/25.05.2012**
UPOV TWA
Angers (FR)
- **27.05./30.05.2012**
World Potato Congress
Edinburgh (UK)
- **11.06/15.06.2012**
UPOV TWV
Venlo (NL)

ESA Potato Section (SPO) meets in Kinross (Scotland)

On April 19 the SPO had its spring meeting in Kinross on the invitation of Douglas Harley (Cygnet). A record number of 25 participants attended the meeting and discussed the evaluation of the EU legal framework on seed marketing, plant health and GMO. In addition issues were addressed regarding the possible extension of the duration of Plant Breeders Rights for potatoes. Alex Reid (Scottish agricultural research centre - SASA) presented the interim results of a project on Essential Derivation in potatoes. The final report will be available shortly and will be used in fine-tuning the threshold for the reversal of the burden of proof in EDV cases. After the meeting the group visited the premises of Cygnet and enjoyed a dinner at the Harley estate hosted by Douglas Harley and his wife. The following day the group visited SASA in Edinburgh and was informed on potato seed production and certification in Scotland. During the visit Mr John Kerr (SASA) informed on the status of the discussion in a Working Group of the Standing Committee on Seeds regarding the revision of the annex to the Seed Marketing Directive. Clearly the line of thinking deviates from the ESA position developed in 2010, in particular in providing for a second marketing generation in the class certified seed. Further lobbying activities are being organised in Brussels and on National level on this specific issue. The 2 day event was well appreciated by all participants. (BS)





CPVO Annual Report 2011—now available online

We would like to inform you that the recent Annual report of The Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) is now published online and accessible (for the moment in English) via

<http://www.cpvo.europa.eu/main/en/home/documents-and-publications/annual-reports>

The Board of the Section Oil and Fibre crops (SOF) meets at Ickleton (UK)

On invitation of Daniel Segonds (RAGT) the SOF Board met at the breeding station of RAGT in Ickleton (UK). As in other years the meeting was open for members of the SOF section having an interest in the work of the SOF Board. The meeting was attended by 23 participants. The SOF discussed the state of play regarding the evaluation of the EU legal framework in relation to Seed Marketing, Plant Health and GMO. In addition an up-date was given on Seed treatment, ESTA and the labeling of treated seed. An important item on the agenda was the discussion on iLuc (Indirect Land use Change) which could have significant effect on the use of oil crops in bio-energy. In addition in relation to oil crops technical issues were discussed regarding Clearfield, DUS testing of hybrids in Oilseed rape, DUS testing of converted varieties in sunflower, the changes in the Common Catalogue regarding the Glucosinolate level in 00 varieties of Oilseed rape and the research project in Spring Oilseed rape in relation to the ESA SOF proposal to lower the purity level for SOR hybrids. Interesting presentations were given on Oilseed production and breeding in Oilseeds and fiber crops in the Czech Republic by Mr. Pavelek as well on the market situation on Hemp by Mr. Matrai. After the meeting the RAGT premises were visited including the DNA profiling lab and green houses. The group enjoyed a dinner hosted by RAGT in the wonderful Jesus College in Cambridge going back to the 12th century. The following day SOF visited Niab in Cambridge and was informed on DUS testing of Oilseed rape as conducted in the UK and visited the Image Analysis facilities. The group visited also the DUS field trials of Winter Oilseed Rape. The windy



and wet conditions during the visit will be remembered by all participants but in particular by Mr. Philippe Lesigne. All in all the event took place in a constructive atmosphere. (BS)



Bioeconomy Public Private Partnership

Building on its Strategy for a Sustainable Bioeconomy in Europe and its new funding programme for Research & Innovation, known as Horizon 2020, the European Commission plans to establish a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) on the Bioeconomy, bringing together the whole bioeconomy value chain in order to accelerate innovation and market access of bio-based products. This PPP is intended as an industry-led initiative allowing for continued and dedicated support to relevant projects, as defined by industry. Currently, a group of industrial stakeholders (ranging from the paper industries to biotech, biorefinery, farmers... and breeders of course!) is drafting a vision document that will be submitted to the COM on 31 May. The ESA Secretariat has been actively involved in these discussions to make sure that plant breeding is considered as the very start of that value chain. Specifically, ESA's contribution will focus on the chapter on biomass supply (what type of breeding research is needed to provide quality biomass at a competitive price) and on the value chain approach of the PPP (scope and organisation of the value chain). The Secretariat has also actively promoted the initiative towards the membership, via the Working Group Research & Innovation and key Sections such as Maize and Oil & Fibre. Interested companies should contact the ESA Secretariat before 15 May 2012. The final submission date of the vision paper for the PPP is set for 31 May 2012. (JP)

ESA Annual Meeting 2012 in the Sheraton Brussels!

We would like to remind you can still register for the early bird fee at the ESA Annual Meeting in the Sheraton Hotel, Brussels. Following a highly successful meeting with a record attendance in Budapest last year, we now return to Brussels ; and we will try hard to fulfil the high expectations of our members and guests to live up to the standard we set. Please find further information on the registration, programme and general information by clicking on the following link:

<https://esa.conceptum.eu/default.aspx>

(KB)





EP Event urging for “Generational Renewal in the new CAP”

On April 12, ESA participated in the roundtable discussion entitled “Sowing the Seeds to Harvest in Future: Supporting Young People into Farming” on the subject of generational renewal in European agriculture and young farmers measures in the CAP. The event was hosted by CEJA, the European Council of Young Farmers, and Slovenian MEP Milan Zver



(EPP) with further key speakers such as German MEP Albert Dess (EPP), French MEP Michel Dantin (Rapporteur on the Proposal for single CMO), and Jesper Pedersen (Chairman of the Special Committee Agriculture for the Danish Presidency) amongst others. Attended by over 150 people, including MEPs, journalists and young farmers across Europe, the event was followed by a press conference in which Joris Baecke, President of CEJA, explained once more: “The number of young farmers in Europe today is failing fast. We have reached a point where only 6% of farmers across the European Union are under the age of 35. If we do not stop the imminent age-related crisis, then environmental protection, job creation, biodiversity conservation, and food security will be under threat.” Supporting these demands, ESA currently looks into options to join a shared initiative to make young farmers more vocal via the European institutions. (KB)

MEP Milan Zver with the European Council of Young Farmers, explains the necessity to make young farmers more vocal via the European institutions.

European Patent Office announces new Director

Margot Fröhlinger, the director for intellectual property in the European Commission’s internal market and services department, has become a temporary principal adviser in the same department. The move is a prelude to a three-year secondment to the European Patent Office, where she will serve as a principal director. The European Patent Office (EPO) is one of the two organs of the European Patent Organisation (EPOrg), the other being the Administrative Council. (vE)

Plant breeding innovation

The “Agriculture and Life Sciences in the Economy” Unit, under the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), has commissioned a study on the potential of public-private partnerships in plant breeding research to meet the future needs of the bioeconomy. The JRC is the scientific body of the European Commission, and a key institutional partner for assessing and promoting science-based policies. In the context of this study, the



ESA Secretariat and several ESA members attended a workshop in Brussels on 11 April that brought together key stakeholders to discuss potential overlaps and crossovers between the public and private breeding sectors. The main issue was to identify areas where public breeding research could support private breeding programmes, and identify gaps in research that are currently not covered by the private sector and where public research could play a role. From the discussions, three main areas for public research priorities were highlighted: focusing on long-term development in line with envisaged market strategies and private sector pre-breeding programmes; bridging the gap between markets of political nature (to fulfil certain political priorities) and effective markets (where there is an economic interest for companies to invest); and supporting companies to cope with the impact of climate change on breeding and agricultural production. As a follow-up, the ESA Secretariat will monitor progress of the study and provide the organizers with a short report on the outcome of the workshop. (JP)

Preparing Use of Social Media

On 4 April ESA attended the workshop “Virtual Europe: How Social Media connect the European Union and its Citizens” organized by the University of Kent.



Amongst others, the following core questions were raised and discussed: How can Members of the European Parliament and other European institutions benefit from social media? What role will social media play in the next European Union elections?

The three high level speakers and experienced social networkers, Raffaella de Marte (Social Media and Press Officer of EP President Martin Schulz), Steve Clark (Head of Web Communication in the European Parliament) and Dana Manescu (Press Officer of the European Council) clearly turned the afternoon into a valuable coaching on e-communication. They all equally stressed the impact of social media, particularly of the three most common networks *facebook*, *twitter* and *linked in*, and illustrated its raising importance as the communication tool of the future with examples from everyday life. Though the events' focus was mainly on the European institutions, the rather general remarks will certainly help ESA in setting up social media tools in the forthcoming months. The event was well attended and concluded by a fruitful roundtable discussion as well as networking reception. (KB)

The next ESA Newsletter is to be published on 31 May 2012