

Proceedings on the ECO-PB workshop on different models to finance plant breeding now available

ECO-PB held an international workshop on ways and models to finance plant breeding especially for organic farming in February 2007 in Frankfurt, Germany. In the workshop different examples and models of financing plant breeding activities are presented and discussed amongst participants. The proceedings of the workshop can be found under http://www.eco-pb.org/09/proceedings_070227.pdf

EUCARPIA-Symposium: Plant breeding for organic and sustainable, low-input agriculture: dealing with genotype-environment interactions

The first EUCARPIA-Symposium on Organic Plant Breeding is going to be held in Wageningen, (Netherlands) from 7 to 9 November. The symposium is carried out under the auspices of

- EUCARPIA – Working group Organic Plant Breeding,
- COST SUSVAR: WG1 Breeding and Genetics,
- the European Consortium for Organic Plant breeding (ECO-PB),
- ISOFAR – section Plant Breeding and Seed Production and the
- Graduate School Production Ecology & Resource Conservation (PE&RC), Wageningen University

The topic areas of the symposium are:

- · Genotype-Environment interaction
- · Breeding strategies
- · Genetic diversity
- · Selection criteria and methods
- · Participatory approaches

The full programme and further information can be found under this link: <http://www.dpw.wageningen-ur.nl/peenrc/index.php?item=Eucarpia>

New reports from the Organic Revision Project concerning organic seed and propagation material

There are three new reports concerning organic seed and propagation material from the Organic Revision Project available on the web site of the Organic Revision Web site:

- Seed born diseases in cereals, legumes and vegetables
- Quality characteristics of varieties to be used in organic farming
- Criteria list and evaluation guide for a derogation regime

For report download see: <http://www.organic-revision.org/>

Seed health guides for organic crops published

As a result of a research project on seed health in the German 'Federal Scheme of Organic Farming' two guides on seed health of organic crops have now been published in a limited number. One guide deals with seed health in arable crops and another one with seed health in vegetable crops including some herbs medicinal plants. The guides are written in German and can be ordered at FiBL Germany.

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'Opportunities for farm seed conservation, breeding and production'

is the title of a new European Project in the 6th framework programme. The overall objective of the Farm Seed Opportunities project (FSO) is to contribute to conservation, improvement and management of agro-biodiversity on farm. A science and marketing based framework, involving all the relevant actors, will be proposed through the development of methodologies for plant breeding strategies. The innovative partnership of FSO includes public scientific institutions, peasant networks and organic farmers' associations from six European countries. Integrating public and private competences and farmers' knowledge about varieties and seeds will allow an approach of participatory innovation and development aiming at:

- Organizing participatory plant breeding and seed production in Europe and
- providing practical recommendations for policy makers regarding the implementation of seed trade and variety protection laws in order to facilitate the commercialization of seeds of landraces, conservation varieties and special amateur varieties with respect to the directive 98/95/EC.

Farmers' knowledge based on local experiences will be integrated with scientific knowledge in the experimental test fields: different local varieties (maize, bean, spinach and wheat) of France, Italy and Netherlands will be grown in different localities from their origin along with a set of modern varieties. The idea is to test and analyze the different capacities of these varieties to evolve and adapt to change if cultivated in different environments and with different techniques.

IFOAM Organic World Congress 2008

Cultivate the future is the title of 16th IFOAM Organic World Congress which will be held from June 18-20 2008 in Modena, Italy.

The Organic World Congress has two main tracks: the Systems Values track for presentation and exchange of practical experiences from farmers, consumers, campaigns and cooperation; and a Scientific Research track, where current academic research and others will be presented and discussed. Only papers with a relation to Organic Agriculture can be accepted. The deadline for the submission of the contribution is October 15th.

Further information and the full programme can be found under http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/owc/Organic_World_Congress.html

World Congress on the Future of Food and Farming

Under the auspice of several organisations e.g., IFOAM (Organic Agricultural Movements), Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, EED (Protestant Church Development Service), ABL (Family Farmers Union in Via Campesina), SOS (Foundation on Future Farming) a world congress on the future of Food and Farming titled is going to be held in Bonn, Germany, 12 – 16 May 2008.

The primary goal of this event is to discuss how farmers, consumers, food producers and their communities can cooperate to enrich and defend this diversity. 'Planet Diversity' should be a bold message to the government representatives of the Rio-Convention on Biodiversity and its Biosafety Protocol to make biological as well as cultural diversity the starting point and true goal of their negotiations.

The organizers see a global movement from different directions coming together for the common

cause of defending diversity against destructive and threatening tendencies in agricultural production, land use and food production. 'Planet Diversity' shall bring together representatives from local and regional grassroots movements and institutions working on food and agricultural innovation and reconciliation based upon cultural and biological diversity.

For further information see: www.planet-diversity.org