




IAPPS NEWSLETTER

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NEW APPOINTMENT FOR IAPPS GB MEMBER PROF. MOHAMED BESRI

 Prof. Mohamed Besri, IAPPS Governing Board member and IAPPS Coordinator for Region II (North Africa/Middle East) has recently been nominated as a member of the Hassan II Academy of Sciences and Technology. The academy, established under the patronage of the King Mohamed VI of Morocco has as its main objectives:

- Promotion and development of science and technology
- Development of a national research policy:
- Funding scientific and technical research programs:
- Integration of scientific and technical research activities in the social and economic environment at the national and international levels:

On behalf of the IAPPS family, I wish to congratulate Mohamed for this outstanding achievement.

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AN OVERVIEW OF THE HORTICULTURE RESEARCH CENTER (CIAA) IN BOGOTA, COLOMBIA

The Horticulture Research Center (Centro de Investigaciones y Asesorías Agroindustriales, CIAA) was founded in 1991 and sprouted from the necessity to formulate innovations for processes, products and services of the national horticulture sector. CIAA's activities focus on a range of vegetable crops (e.g., lettuce, tomato, cabbage, and spinach), flowers and tropical fruits while there is an emerging interest to develop research lines in aromatic & medicinal herbs, indigenous vegetables and potato. Excellent facilities are available to host (inter-)national students, with currently 10-15 students -from several Colombian institutions- involved in (thesis) research per semester. Students generally stay in Bogota (15 min drive) and commute to the center. Research at CIAA is defined around 5 key themes: Integrated Pest Management, Sustainable Agriculture, Climate Control, Soil Fertility & Plant Nutrition and Participatory Research.

Integrated Pest Management

CIAA has well-developed research facilities for IPM - with a main emphasis on developing biological control in tomato, lettuce, carrot and roses. IPM recommendations are increasingly being formulated at the agro-ecosystem level and landscape ecology research has recently gained a foothold in this unit. Additionally, the laboratory provides diagnostic services for insect pests, viral and fungal diseases and micro-organisms (e.g., in plant tissues, irrigation water, organic matter or soil), efficacy assessment of biological control agents, quality control of horticultural produce. Diagnostic tools include ELISA, selective media and morphological identification.

Sustainable agriculture

This research unit conducts activities on certified (organic, 'clean') production and associated commercialization of this produce. Research and extension activities are carried out to promote GAP protocols for nationally and internationally marketed vegetables and fruits. CIAA launched the label 'Eurofresh' for vegetables cultivated under IPM schemes and irrigated with uncontaminated water (a key concern in the region), while significant progress is made to secure a stable market for organic horticulture.

Climate Control

In the high Andes, certain vegetables and flowers are grown under greenhouse conditions. CIAA has pioneered research on the production of some crops (e.g., tomato) under these conditions and has evaluated various

greenhouse types and management schemes. This research unit has started to evaluate the production of tropical fruits (e.g., *Cyphomandra* spp., *Solanum quiroense*, *Passiflora* spp.) in greenhouses. A commonly used tool is mathematical modeling to quantify effects of certain temperature/irrigation regimes.

Soil Fertility & Plant Nutrition

Soil fertility is a key concern for many (small-scale) vegetable growers in the region. CIAA has targeted its research and extension activities on the improvement of soil (and water) resources for agricultural use. This unit has evaluated organic fertilizers, optimized hydroponic systems and developed diagnostic services for the horticulture sector. As of present, the laboratory carries out physical and chemical analysis of soil, organic matter and plant samples - for individual growers as well as companies (to fine tune fertilization regimes).

Participatory research

The objective of this program is to identify needs and priorities of local farmers and validate some of CIAA's research findings at farms in the region. Methodologies are being defined to streamline such processes and promote agro-ecological innovations while building farmers' decision making capabilities, promoting a healthy farm environment and contributing to community development. Current interests are in the development of participatory research/extension approaches, building on the experience from Farmer Field Schools or CIALs worldwide.

For more information on our activities:

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SEMINAR REPORT: CROP PROTECTION IN ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

A National Seminar on "Crop Protection in Organic Agriculture" was held in Sousse, Tunisia, on April 11, 2007 and was organized by the Technical Center of Organic Agriculture (CTAB) with the collaboration of the FAO Sub-Regional Office for North Africa (SNEA). Besides representatives of the above organizers, experts and technicians from the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources at central and regional levels, universities, institutions, NGOs and farmers also actively participated at the seminar. The following topics were presented and discussed:

- FAO efforts in the development of organic agriculture
- Organic agriculture in Tunisia: actual situation and future perspectives
- Crop protection in the light of organic agriculture regulations
- Crop protection of organic date palm, olive tree, and horticultural crops

A visit to the CTAB experimental station was organized. The participants had the opportunity to visit the composting station and the research trials on protected and open field vegetables.

The main conclusions and recommendations of this seminar are summarized as follows:

- To set up a national committee of experts in plant protection for organic agriculture and food quality in order to better harmonize research and extension programs
- To collect all research results and experts' knowledge related to plant protection in order to establish a good collaboration between technical and scientific institutions and organic operators
- To encourage farmers and processors to offer healthy organic products
- To develop action research programs for transferring to farmers the research results related to organic plant protection
- To strengthen the extension services by organizing training sessions in plant protection (biological control, good agricultural practices, monitoring and evaluation, etc.) with the active participation of farmers.
- To facilitate the supply of necessary biological control equipment and inputs to the local market at a reasonable price.
- To propose a research project for North Africa on Research/Development/Extension in IPM under the framework of a production strategy in organic agriculture aiming at good quality and sufficient quantity of food. The assistance and support from FAO, CIHEAM, OADA and others are highly requested.

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IAPPS Mission: to provide a global forum for the purpose of identifying, evaluating, integrating, and promoting plant protection concepts, technologies, and policies that are economically, environmentally, and socially acceptable.

It seeks to provide a global umbrella for the plant protection sciences to facilitate and promote the application of the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to a the world's crop and forest ecosystems.

Membership Information: IAPPS has four classes of membership (individual, affiliate, associate, and corporate) which are described [here](#).

The *IAPPS Newsletter* welcomes news, letters, and other items of interest from individuals and organizations. Address correspondence and information to:

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