



## IAPPS NEWSLETTER

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### BRITISH CROP PROTECTION CONFERENCE (BCPC) PESTS & DISEASES 2002

The world faces a challenge of how food production can meet consumers' expectations and this year's BCPC Conference focused on Pests & Diseases, considering the problems related to pesticide use, food safety, nutrition, environmental concerns and sustainable food production.

**BAWDEN LECTURE:** The conference opened in the traditional way with the Bawden Lecture presented by Dr Jørgen Schlundt, Co-ordinator of the Food Safety Programme, World Health Organisation (WHO). His lecture, 'Risk and Benefits of Biological and Chemical Plant Protection Strategies-Food Safety Aspects considered recent developments in food production and how pest and disease control have contributed to food safety systems in the developed world and have helped prevent food borne diseases. This was put in the context of food scares which have shaken consumers' confidence on food safety. In his lecture Dr Schlundt explained the new risk analysis framework which will enable producers, consumers and stakeholders in food safety to be more actively involved in the management and risk communication process. He believes that the new risk-based approaches will make their way into all parts of the global market including the developing countries, which are rapidly becoming important agricultural producers. These countries now have the potential to 'leap forward' into preventative systems focusing on risk. The benefits of this are significant in improving food safety, national health and export potential. Sustainable development of agriculture at a global level is of interest to everyone and will generate improved production efficiency and product safety. Developments in crop protection chemicals have led to safety improvements and now a more holistic approach to evaluating the problems relating to pesticide use are focusing more on the risks through poor handling and disposal practices. New methodology to assess exposure to chronic hazards, along with an assessment of risk related to combinations of hazards, are now being considered and in the future these should be handled in an open risk-based framework dominated by efficient risk communication. The contribution of GM and organic farming to global food production was also evaluated in the context of global food safety.

**BCPC MEDALS AWARDED:** BCPC this year awarded its highest accolade, the BCPC Medal, to Professor Clive Edwards, Dr Trevor Lewis CBE and **Professor Phil Russell**. The presentations were made, by recently elected BCPC President **Dr Barry Thomas** on the opening morning. **Professor Clive Edwards**, a faculty member in the Department of Entomology at the Ohio State University, is recognised as a world authority on earthworms and his book *Ecology and Biology of Earthworms* is now in its third edition. Dr Trevor Lewis is currently chairman of BCPE Ltd. He has lectured and presented papers world-wide, published numerous scientific papers and books on his particular interests, the biology and ecology of thrips and leaf-cutting ants, insect distribution in crops and pheromone monitoring systems. Professor Phil Russell, who now works as an independent consultant, has played an important role over the years as an authority on fungicide use and the management of resistance. He was heavily involved with the Fungicide Resistance Action Committee (FRAC), becoming Chairman of the Central Steering Committee in 1991, and he played a central role from the industry side, in the production of the European Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) Guidelines on resistance risk assessment for regulatory purposes.

#### CORE TOPICS:

- As always at this conference, one of the core topics was **new compounds for pest and disease management**. It is these sessions which provide organisations with the opportunity to introduce new products and formulations and highlight new chemicals which have not previously been reported at scientific meetings or in the scientific literature.
- The interactive nature of **formulation chemistry and application dynamics** is of particular interest in these interlinked fields of research. Platform and complementary poster sessions are focused on formulation and application technology which have significant commercial and environmental interest. Opportunities for enhanced delivery of crop protection products and more targeted application were also presented.
- Current concerns about the widespread use of crop protection products has resulted in an increasing interest in the development of **effective biological alternatives**. Platform and poster sessions concentrated on advances underpinning the development and use of biological control methods. This included investigations which enhance the understanding of the responses of herbivores and natural enemies to spatial arrangements

- of vegetation in agricultural systems and the interactions between plants, pests and natural enemies.
- **Transgenic crops** are grown commercially in a number of countries around the world in increasing amounts, but there still is great controversy about their safety and use and this will be a topic in focus for the coming years. Two presentations included in this session focused on progress in developing transgenic resistance to viruses, and an analysis of the attitudes of European consumers to growing and consuming GM food.
  - A session on "**Global Aspects of the Safe use of Pesticides**" demonstrated the need to agree global standards to ensure the safe use of crop protection agents in different environmental and cultural conditions. Speakers described the difficulties faced by third world operators and explained the importance of standardising technical specifications. Some new tests, designed by FAO to ensure the safe and effective use of products in the field, were highlighted and how industry is currently facing the challenges and tackling the key issues.
  - Other platform and poster sessions in the conference included topics such as **neonicotinoid insecticides, the fate and effects of pesticides in the environment, ICM in field vegetables, seed treatment, organic farming and resistance.**

Further details of the whole conference are available at the BCPC web site [www.bcpc.org](http://www.bcpc.org) Conference proceedings are also available.

**ADDITIONAL FEATURES:** A new feature in the 2002 conference was the introduction of two Discussion Fora as part of the actual scientific conference programme. The first forum posed the question 'Is Field Pathology and Diagnosis a Dying Art? Does it Matter?' The case for the field pathologist was presented followed by the case for new technology and the resulting debate considered whether or not the move toward laboratory based diagnosis was the correct way forward. The second Forum 'Managed Approaches to Pest Control - Barriers and Constraints' considered whether a managed approach to Integrated Pest Management is cost-effective and what the risks are. Speakers briefly reviewed the issues from different perspectives and a lively debate followed.

Two further evening events took place. The first was a discussion session which debated the topic "Crop protection research - Who decides? Who benefits?". The second event enabled delegates to have a hands on experience of IT packages relating to crop protection and management. With new advances and constant change in the industry there is always something new for delegates at the BCPC Conference which is now regarded as the leading international event for the crop protection industry.

**NEW LOCATION FOR FUTURE BCPC CONFERENCES:** The conference will transfer from its home at Brighton for nearly 30 years to a modern venue (SECC) at Glasgow in 2003. Further details will be placed on the BCPC web site, [www.bcpc.org](http://www.bcpc.org) when they become available.

## **MONDAY SYMPOSIUM: THE GLOBAL CHALLENGE - SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION**

In previous BCPC conferences, controversial issues have often been the focus of the Monday Symposium, which precedes the main BCPC conference, and this year was no exception with a subject entitled '*The Global Challenge - Sustainable Food Production*'. Chaired by Mike Calvert, Royal Agricultural Society of England, the Monday Symposium considered the importance of sustainable food production, as well as the challenges imposed by legislation, population dynamics, climate change, international trade, diminishing resources and, of course, the ever-changing nature of pests and diseases.

For food production to be sustainable it must deliver food products that satisfy the needs and aspirations of the customer whilst coping with the diverse factors that affect agricultural production practices. The nature of market demands and impinging factors vary with time, and are often specific to particular geographical regions. Furthermore, legislative constraints are likely to have a major impact on available pest and disease control agents and also affect international trade which will place greater demands on quality assurance schemes and protocols.

Speakers from China, USA, Belgium, Switzerland and the UK explored how market demands and factors have developed and how they differ between the major regions of the world. Building on these observations will enable the development of crop protection strategies to meet the global challenge of sustainable food production over the next 25 years.

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IAAPS 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.

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

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