

DISEASE RESISTANCE IN PLANT PATHOLOGY

*6th Conference
of European Foundation for Plant Pathology*

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PROCEEDINGS

(Second Part)

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Participants of the 6th Conference of European Foundation for Plant Pathology

FOREWORD

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to convey to you the best wishes of the Czech Society for Plant Pathology which organised on behalf of the European Foundation for Plant Pathology the 6th International Conference "Disease Resistance in Plant Pathology" which was held from 9 to 14 September 2002 at the Czech University of Agriculture in Prague.

A short history of the European Foundation for Plant Pathology.

The European Foundation for Plant Pathology (EFPP) was established and registered as "Europese Stichting voor Planteziekten" at Wageningen, the Netherlands, in 1989.

- 1. The 1st EFPP Conference was organized in 1990 at Wageningen, the Netherlands, under the presidency of Dr. van Halteren of Royal Netherlands Society for Plant Pathology. General topic was "Biotic Interactions and Soil Form Diseases".*
- 2. The 2nd EFPP Conference took place in 1992 at Strasburg, France, under the presidency of Societ  Francaise Phytopathologie. The general topic was "Mechanisms of Plant Defences".*
- 3. The 3rd EFPP Conference was held in 1994 at Poznan, Poland, under the presidency of Professor Malgorzata Manka, Department of Forest Pathology, University of Agriculture. The general topic was "Environmental Biotic Factors in Integrated Plant Disease Control". The 3rd Conference Proceedings, under the same title, with 111 contributors, were published by The Polish Phytopathological Society in 1995.*
- 4. The 4th EFPP international scientific meeting was called Symposium, and was held in 1996 in Bonn, Germany, under the presidency of Professor H.W. Dehne, Universit t Bonn. The general topic was Diagnosis and Identification of Plant Pathogens. The Proceedings, with 293 contributors, were published by Kluwer Academic Publishers.*
- 5. The 5th EFPP scientific meeting was called Congress, and was held in 2000 at Taormina-Giardini Naxos, Italy, under the presidency of Professor A. Matta, Universit  di Torino. It was organised by The Societ  Italiana di Patologia Vegetale under chairman Professor A. Catara, Universit  di Catania, Italy. The overall topic was "Biodiversity in Plant Pathology". The Proceedings, with 275 contributors, were published by Societ  Italiana di Patologia Vegetale in form of CD-ROM.*
- 6. The 6th Conference of EFPP was hosted 2002 in Prague, Czech Republic, under the presidency of Professor V. T borsk y, Czech University of Agriculture in Prague. It was organised by the Czech Society for Plant Pathology under chairman Professor J. Pol k, Research Institute of Crop Production, Prague. The topic was Disease Resistance in Plant Pathology. There were 315 registered participants, and the Proceedings will be published as a Supplement of the journal Plant Protection Science in two Volumes.*

Nevertheless, plant pathology is an applied science concerned primarily with practical solutions to disease problems in crop production, horticulture, forestry and the environment. The study of plant diseases, and development of methods for their control, continue to be vital elements in the drive to improve crop productivity and quality of the product. The use of molecular genetic techniques has provided new insights into how pathogens cause disease, and how plants defend themselves against it. Recent research on the main topic of the conference, Disease Resistance in Plant Pathology, illustrates that defence mechanisms in plants are finely tuned and integrated systems in which different components act together in a coordinated and complementary fashion to contain infection.

The basic requirements to produce novel, disease-resistant crop cultivars are: sources of genetic resistance; tests to identify and select this resistance; and methods for combining the resistance with other, agronomically desirable characters to produce commercially acceptable crop genotypes.

Another aspect of these broad international conferences has to be mentioned. Over the years there has been a shift towards more fundamental research in plant pathology, either at the molecular or ecological level. Many researchers feel they benefit more from symposia and small conferences or congresses that are focussed on their special field of interest. This, together with tighter funds for international meetings, tends to lower the attendance of large congresses covering a very broad field. Some researchers even ask whether broad mass conferences or congresses still have a future. My answer to this scepticism will remain YES. Such conferences help individual scientists to become or stay aware that his/her own specialised research only functions well as part of the total framework of plant pathology which aims to render services to agriculture, the environment and society. Further, the opportunity to meet the leaders in research on the various group of plant pathogens, and the possibility for interaction with colleagues in other specialties may stimulate the search for new approaches in individual research projects.

As organizers of this 6th Conference of EFPP we are, of course, eager to know how the invited and offered oral presentations as well as posters sessions were received by the participants. Written and oral comments from them have reached us since, stating that the Conference was on a very high scientific level, particularly for the group of younger scientists that took part. I hope that for them the participation in this conference was both rewarding and enjoyable.

Any conference can only be successful if certain, necessary requirements are fulfilled. Foremost of these is the participation of scientists willing to share their results, discuss the present status and their vision of future developments in their particular field. My sincere thanks to those who took part in the Conference! Further, an active Organizing Committee and Scientific Committee are needed. For this my thanks go to Jaroslav Polák, chairman of the Organizing Committee and to Aleš Lebeda who met with most invited speakers at national conferences in (Germany, the Netherlands and the UK). I am also most grateful to all colleagues and members of the Czech Society for Plant Pathology who helped us actively, to the Department of Plant Protection of the Faculty of Agronomy, Czech University of Agriculture in Prague, and to the Research Institute of Crop Production at Prague-Ruzyne.

The success of such a meeting furthermore depends on sufficient finances. Here I want to express gratitude to the European Commission (Thematic Priorities INCO QOL-2001-5.1 Project PLI-CA1-2001-60045) and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Czech Republic (Conference Proceedings) for providing substantial assistance to the conference. The following companies also supported the conference financially and thus contributed to its success and, therefore, many thanks go to Bayer Agrosiences, BASF, Bioreba, Dynex, Loewe, Millipore, Maneko, Mosanto ČR, Opto Team, Trigon and to the Council of Czech Scientific Societies.

*VLADIMÍR TÁBORSKÝ
President EFPP (2000–2002) and
President Czech Society for Plant Pathology*

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