

REPORT

11th European Foundation for Plant Pathology Conference Kraków, Poland

The 11th European Foundation for Plant Pathology (EFPP) conference was held in Kraków (Poland) from 8th to 13th September 2014. The conference was organized by the Polish Phytopathological Society on behalf of the EFPP. The honorary patronage was provided by Marek Sawicki – Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Poland and Adam Wasiak, Director General of the National Forest Holding “State Forests”.

The conference was preceded by the meeting of the EFPP Board and invited guests. The meeting was attended by 15 persons from 10 countries. The honorary participant of the meeting was Dr. Deena Errampalli – the President of the Canadian Society for Plant Pathology.



The EFPP Board and guests at the 11th EFPP Conference in Kraków

In front, from left to right: Dr. Arne Hermansen (EFPP treasurer, Norway), Prof. Piet M. Boonekamp (EFPP vice-president, The Netherlands), Prof. Małgorzata Mańka (EFPP president, Poland), Dr. Martin Verbeek (EFPP general secretary, The Netherlands). *Middle row, from left to right:* Prof. Tatiana E. Şeşan (Romania), Dr. Deena Errampalli (the honorary guest of 11th EFPP Conference, Canada), Prof. Małgorzata Jędryczka (Poland), Dr. Lesley Torrance (UK). *Back row, from left to right:* Prof. Piotr Sobiczewski (Poland), Prof. Maria I. Clara (Portugal), Prof. Maria M. Lopez (Spain), Dr. Petr Komínek (Czech Republic), Prof. Radovan Pokorný (Czech Republic), Dr. Victoria Luksha (Belarus), Dr. Natalia Sklimenok (Belarus), Prof. Nenad Keča (Serbia)

At the meeting the activity and budget of the EFPP was presented and discussed, with a stress on enhancing local societies to cooperate within the Foundation. The report of Prof. Mike Jeger, Editor-in-Chief of the European Journal of Plant Pathology, was presented by Prof. Piet Boonekamp. The rank of the Journal improves constantly. One EJPP special edition per year, devoted to a particular subject, has received a good reception. The Editor would encourage groups of researchers to bid for the next volumes of the kind, particularly after conferences and meetings.

The Board decided to organize EFPP conferences every three years, instead of two years till now, with the next conference scheduled for 2017 (location to be appointed).

Over 300 participants from 42 countries and 5 continents attended the conference: Canada (11), Czech Republic (31), France (6), Germany (15), Israel (4), Italy (5), Latvia (6), Lithuania (9), Netherlands (15), Norway (4), Poland (125), Russia (5), South Korea (7), Spain (3), Sweden (10), United Kingdom (16), two participants from Brasil, Bulgaria, Japan, Republic of Belarus, Romania, Republic of South Africa and one participant from Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Iran, Libya, Portugal, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates and USA.

The title of the conference was **Healthy plants – healthy people**. During the opening session welcoming addresses were presented by: Prof. Małgorzata Mańka – Convenor and President of the EFPP and of the Polish Phytopathological Society, Prof. Piotr Sobiczewski – Chairman of the Scientific Committee, Prof. Włodzimierz Sady – Rector of the University of Agriculture in Cracow, Dr. Krzysztof Kielak – representative of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development, Dr. Janusz Zaleski – deputy Director General of the Polish State Forests Holding and Dr. Deena Errampalli – President of the Canadian Phytopathological Society.



Participants of the 11th EFPP Conference in Kraków

The scientific program of the 11th EFPP conference consisted of eight sessions:

1. New pathogens and shifts in pathogenicity.
Chaipersons: Prof. Maria I. E. Clara (Portugal), Prof. Steve Woodward (UK)
2. Toxic metabolites of pathogens.
Chaipersons: Dr. Deena Errampalli (Canada), Prof. Zenonas Dabkevicius (Lithuania)
3. Pathogen identification, detection and monitoring.
Chaipersons – part 1: Dr. Tatiana Gagkaeva (Russia), Prof. Martin Barbetti (Australia)
Chaipersons – part 2: Prof. Beata Hasiów-Jaroszewska (Poland), Prof. Andreas von Tiedemann (Germany)
4. Genomics, proteomics and bioinformatics.
Chaipersons: Prof. Maria M. Lopez (Spain), Prof. Laszlo Palkovics (Hungary)
5. Diseases of trees in forests and recreation sites.
Chaipersons: Prof. Paolo Gonthier (Italy), Prof. Nenad Keca (Serbia)
6. Plant disease management.
Chaipersons – part 1: Prof. Piet Boonekamp (The Netherlands), Prof. Tatiana E. Şeşan (Romania)
Chaipersons – part 2: Prof. Dani Shtienberg (Israel), Prof. Henryk Pospieszny (Poland)
7. Plant pathogens in soil, air and water.
Chaipersons: Dr. Biruta Bankina (Latvia), Dr. Bruce D. L. Fitt (UK)
8. Plant disease resistance.
Chaipersons: Prof. Małgorzata Jędryczka (Poland), Prof. Dilantha Fernando (Canada)

Altogether 91 lectures and 179 posters were presented at the sessions.

Although the programme was very tight, as speakers represented different research topics, different countries and various research approaches, each session allowed some time for discussion, which could be then continued at coffee breaks.



On first conference day evening an All-together introductory meeting took place which was an opportunity to meet colleagues and to enjoy Polish folk songs and dances. The conference participants were “blessed” with the Lajkonik’s scepter.



First meetings and talks



Kraków dance and Lajkonik (on right)

There was also a **special session in Wieliczka Salt Mine**, with a lecture on biological monitoring in the treatment salt chambers of the Wieliczka Salt Mine Health Resort and a lecture reminding previous EFPP conferences. This special session and conference dinner took place in Warsaw Chamber of this mine, 120 meters below the ground level, with the floors, ceiling and walls, made up by salt rock.



The miners’ orchestra and the gala dinner in the Warsaw Chamber



At the gala dinner in the Warsaw Chamber plant pathologists were nominated honorary guests of Wieliczka Salt Mine

At the EFPP conference closing session the chairpersons summed up the sessions and announced the Best Poster Award winners. The Convenor of the Conference expressed thanks to the local organizers, in particular to Prof. Stanisław Mazur and Prof. Hanna Stępniewska – vice chairs of the Organizing Committee, Dr. Joanna Kaczmarek and Dr. Marta Bełka – conference secretariat, and Prof. Małgorzata Jędrzycka – secretary of the Scientific Committee and *spiritus movens* of many conference events.



Photo 18. Best Poster Award winners at 11 EFPP Conference in Kraków

Kneeling from left to right: Małgorzata Jeske (Poland), Monika Urbaniak (Poland), Susann Auer (Germany), Agata Motyka (Poland)

Standing from left to right: Michał Oskiera (Poland), Henrik Stotz (UK), Georgia Mitrousia (UK), Paweł Serbiak M.Sc.(Poland), Pavel Matusinsky (Czech Republic), Hanna Stępniewska (Poland), Khushwant Singh (Czech Republic), Camilla Martini (Italy), Natalia Sklimenok (Belarus)

Pre- and post-conference events

ISTA Seed Health Testing Workshop

The conference was preceded by the ISTA Seed Health Testing Workshop, held at the Poznań University of Life Sciences, from 4th to 7th September. It was attended by 30 participants from 14 countries, with 6 invited speakers from 5 countries. The participants had a thorough training in diagnostics of seed pathogens.



Participants of the ISTA Seed Health Testing Workshop in Poznań



Training in diagnostics of seed pathogens at the ISTA Seed Health Testing Workshop

Ramularia Workshop

This Workshop was performed before the opening session of the conference on the 8th September. It was organised by Dr. Neil Havis (UK) and Dr. Michael Hess (Germany). The workshop took place at the conference venue in Kraków. The participants (ca. 60) listened to 11 talks prepared by international teams (Germany, the UK, Switzerland, Poland, the Czech Republic and Argentina). The meeting was concluded with the round table discussion on the future of research on ramulariose.

On September 12th there were two workshops on diseases of Brassicas, the 5th International Seed Health Conference as well as two field trips.

Blackleg Workshop

It was organised by Dr. Marie-Helene Balesdent (France) and Prof. Dilantha Fernando (Canada) and gathered *ca* 80 participants who listened to 17 oral and poster presentations prepared by teams from the UK, France, the Czech Republic, Germany, Poland and Canada. Dr. Balesdent presented the overview of the latest literature on blackleg in international journals. The talks concerned the functions of avirulence genes, plant-pathogen interactions, studies on the populations of *L. maculans* and *L. biglobosa*, risk assessments and disease management strategies. There was also a poster session. The meeting was ended with a discussion led by Prof. Dilantha Fernando.



Clubroot Workshop

The Workshop also gathered a big audience (*ca* 80 researchers), as the disease became a big threat to oilseed rape worldwide. The meeting was organised by Dr. Elke Diederichsen (Germany) and Dr. Ann-Charlotte Wallenhammar (Sweden), in consultancy with Prof. Geoffrey Dixon (UK), who is the founder and convenor of the International Clubroot Working Group (ICWG), but was unable to attend the workshop.



After the welcome address and introduction there was a general talk on the occurrence of the disease in Canada. In total there were 24 oral and poster presentations divided into three parts: fundamental studies of the pathogen, genetics of resistance and disease control. The presentations were prepared by researchers from Sweden, Germany, Poland, the UK and Canada. After the general discussion the participants were informed on ICWG issues (website in preparation).



The participants of the Clubroot Workshop held on 12 September 2014 in Kraków, Poland
5th Conference on Seed Pathology

The 5th Conference on Seed Pathology was organized by Prof. Theresa Aveling (Republic of South Africa) and Dr. Dorota Szopińska (Poland). Ca 40 participants listened to and commented on 19 oral and poster presentations on different aspects of seed-borne pathogens, pathogen transmission and seed testing, prepared by researchers from Israel, Spain, Norway, Poland and the Republic of South Africa.

Field days

Trip to ecological orchard in Żmiąca

On the way from Kraków to Żmiąca, the first stop was in an old traditional village Lipnica Murowana. A wooden St. Leonard's church from XII/XIII century with magnificent painting on the inner walls was to admire there.



St. Leonard's church



Inside St. Leonard's church

In a little village Żmiąca, ca 80 km south-east of Kraków, in the Beskidy Mountains, in ecological orchard plum, apple, pear and sour cherry fruits are produced and processed. The picturesque countryside makes orchard cultivation practices difficult as some of them are situated on steep slopes. The phytopathological problems in fruit production were presented by Prof. Piotr Sobiczewski with special emphasis on bacterial canker of stone fruits (*Pseudomonas syringae*), brown rot (*Monilinia* spp.), *Valsa* canker, cherry leaf spot (*Blumeriella jaapii*), apple scab (*Venturia inaequalis*) and sharka (*Plum Pox Virus*). The participants of this field trip learned also about fruit drying process – traditional by smoke resulting in product ready for sale, and modified – by hot air only resulting in the necessity of product conservation with chemicals before sale. The Żmiąca Brook creates perfect conditions for trout farm so the group enjoyed excellent grilled trout for lunch. The participants could also try other dishes of traditional cuisine of highlanders living in this picturesque region. The trip was guided by Prof. Jacek Nawrocki.



Żmiąca orchards



At the trout farm

Trip to forests of the Ojców National Park

The Ojców National Park of Nature, ca 20 km north-west of Kraków, is a relatively small area of Prądnik river valley with impressive Jurassic limestone rock formations and caves. It is situated at the beginning of the Kraków-Częstochowa Upland area and is included in the *Natura 2000* network. The forest trees in the local ecosystem suffer from trunk and leaf/needle diseases. The disease symptoms were demonstrated and commented on by a forest pathologist, Prof. Tadeusz Kowalski. The Prądnik river is also excellent for trouts and this group also enjoyed them grilled for lunch.

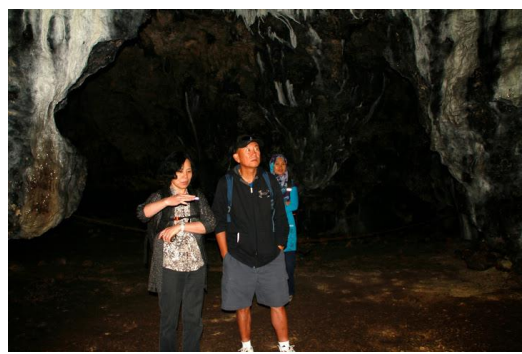
Field trips allowed the participants to get acquainted with some problems of Polish fruit producers, forest pathology and with nature conservation state of art, in particular near to big urban agglomeration.



Hand of God



Hercules Club



In the Łokietek Cave

Both routes concluded with a visit to a historic monastery of the Knight Order of the Holy Sepulchre in Miechów (40 km north of Kraków). The guests visited the historical cloister, listened to short organ concert in the baroque Miechów Basilica and attended the farewell dinner, served in its long old corridors.



Trip to the Ojców National Park, Ogrodzieniec and Błędów Desert

For the participants of workshops and the 5th Seed Health Conference who could not take part in the trips of the field day, a special scientific trip was organized to the Ojców National Park (with unique flora and fauna among amazing lime rocks with fossils, presented and described by Prof. Bogdan Wiśniowski) and to the castle of Ogrodzieniec, where they were received by medieval ladies and knights. They also visited the Błędów Desert, the biggest inland desert in Europe. The meeting was concluded in one of Kraków restaurants serving traditional Polish cuisine.



The Ogrodzieniec castle



..... and its inhabitants



The Błędów Desert



The farewell dinner

We hope that the conference was a good forum for presenting recent research results and exchanging ideas on subjects of mutual interest and it also improved personal friendship between researchers from different countries.

*Małgorzata Mańka
Małgorzata Jędrzycka
Piotr Sobiczewski*

Photos by: Andrzej Brachaczek, Daiva Burokiene, Deena Errampalli, Magdalena Jarosz, Małgorzata Jędrzycka, Małgorzata Mańka, Gabriel Wojcieszek