

TWO B MONTHLY

The Global Biocontrol & Biostimulants E-Newsletter

The major objective of IBMA is to associate biocontrol companies and be a spokesman for policy makers, the public and the media. » declared William Ravensberg President of IBMA in his opening speech at ABIM 2016 in Basel. IBMA gathers 234 members worldwide, including 165 active members and 63 associates. « Our association is growing and this 11th conference is the biggest ever organized”. This was confirmed by David Cary, Executive Director of IBMA at the end of the closing session. “ABIM 2016 closed on Oct 26 after the most successful event ever with 898 delegates from 427 companies in 48 countries across the globe. The program covered many key topics for the biocontrol industry and sets a huge task for us to find great topics and speakers for next year but accept it as a challenge that we are already taking to make ABIM 2017 even relevant to our delegates needs”.

One of the important moments of the event was the remittance of the BBlum award, in its second year. As announced in our Breaking News Alert of Thursday 20th October, three products were shortlisted for the Bernard Blum award for Novel Biocontrol Solutions: Attracap product from the German company Biocare GmbH, Isonet LPF from the Italian company CBC and Romeo from the French company Agrauxine-Lesaffre Agro.

At the ceremony that took place at ABIM 2016, the award went to Romeo from the French company Agrauxine-Lesaffre Plant Care. Romeo is a microbial product demonstrating true innovation as the first cell fraction product to go on the market and also the first product with a systemic-resistance inducing mode of action. It should also help to reduce copper usage with a new mode of action in organic farming, something of concern within that sector.

Commenting on the trophy, Mr. Hugo BONY, General Manager of Agrauxine, said, "we are very proud to present the first biofungicide originating from Lesaffre R&D pipeline. ROMEO aims at becoming a worldwide leader on its markets, demonstrating that white biotechnology is now at the heart of modern agriculture." **2BMonthly** will publish an interview with Agrauxine in our December 2016 issue.

Two keynote speeches and one panel discussion enriched the program. The scientific program with 8 sessions with 29 presentations covered the latest developments in market development, regulatory affairs and novel products for plant protection. The exhibition was at the core of the congress, giving 59 companies excellent visibility. Many presentations covered the emergence of new markets and new technologies: For example, crop protection is not the only sector needing biocontrol. FAO has launched a six year program (WHO Pesticide evaluation scheme) on biocontrol use against the main human vector-borne diseases: malaria, dengue, Chikungunya, Zika, etc. which are all spreading and threatening more than half of the world population. FAO has established a list of recommended bio-larvicides against vectors, including BT *israelensis* strains and *Bacillus sphaericus*.

"Turning ants from foes to friend is an old concept" said Felix Walkers from Biobest. "Ants activity has been well known for a long time. They can be a bodyguard for the plants but also a bodyguard for pests (aphids)." The alternative proposed by Biobest is to give an 'ant diet' based on sugar, that will reduce ants' visits on the crop. Sugar application on the ground could reduce ant activity. Biobest trials show that the size of the aphid colonies is significantly reduced when ants find alternative sugar sources. Another example of a new idea to expand biocontrol potential with a simple concept. This is definitely an additional illustration of a main trait of this industry today: innovators who have ceased to just be dreamers!! The next ABIM congress will take place in Basel in October 2017.

Regards,

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