

Preface

We are delighted to edit the extended abstract book of the “Second International Phytoplasma Working Group Meeting” that will be held in Germany next September 2011.

The group born in Bologna in 2007 is actively working in entomology, molecular biology, and plant pathology to increase and expand knowledge about phytoplasma diseases worldwide. The meeting is the forum for sharing information and strength and/or built new and more intense interactions among participants.

Many exciting findings since the last meeting in the phytoplasma field: pathogenicity factors are starting to be unveiled, insect vector-phytoplasma interaction mechanisms are being discovered and some of the phytoplasma effectors are reported to positively interact with insect vector increasing their fitness, plants infected can be more attractive for insect vector, resistance to phytoplasma diseases is feasible, and more ‘news’ will be reported during this meeting.

We acknowledge that the ‘mutualistic symbiosis’ started four years ago among entomologists, plant pathologists and molecular biologists is fundamental to try to know more about phytoplasma-associated diseases affecting the worldwide agriculture!

The project COST FA0807 ‘Integrated Management of Phytoplasma Epidemics in Different Crop Systems’ founded by the European Union two years ago is also helping the realization of phytoplasma disease of ‘management’; the only way to control the insect vectors populations and diseases is a sustainable and integrated approach. The project is grouping 28 European Countries including Turkey and Israel, and several Countries worldwide mainly among those in which phytoplasma disease knowledge is more present, covering Americas (Canada, Brazil and Chile), Australia and New Zealand, Africa (South Africa and Egypt), Middle East (Lebanon, Iran), and last but not least Mauritius and India and it is open to all other Countries in which there is interest in phytoplasma research. The efforts to mitigate the incidence of phytoplasma diseases in plants is reaching a coordinated international level increasing co-operation between specialist both on basic and applied research.

This meeting is a great opportunity for us, as both organizers and participants, to share mutual experience in such important field to agriculture.

It is a pleasure for the editorial board of the Bulletin of Insectology to publish researches carried out by leading experts in Phytoplasma, a science that may be considered, as emerging in the agriculture field.

Over the four days of the main conference, there will be 120 presentations submitted to the scientific committee before the end of April 2011 plus 19 contributions enclosed in the four Working Group workshops of the COST Action FA0807.

Papers and posters are distributed over 6 sessions; the meeting will be opened by two invited presentations from prominent scientists in the field: the senior member Prof. Karl Maramorosch and the fellow Dr. Michael Kube – representing respectively the History and the Future of Phytoplasma.

All the extended abstracts published in this issue have been reviewed and accepted by the IPWG Scientific Committee. We want to thank the contributors for their diligence in preparing their manuscripts.

Modifications in the layout of abstracts received from authors have been made to fit with the publication format of Bulletin of Insectology. We apologize for errors that could have arisen during the editing process despite our careful attention.

As editors we would like to extend our gratitude to all of the Scientific Committee members. Many thanks also to Davide Montanari for the great assistance during the preparation of the extended abstracts of the second IPWG meeting published as a Supplement of the Bulletin of Insectology 2011 volume 64. Special thanks also to Fabio Montanari for the help in revising the graphic part of the book. Many thanks also to all the members of the local organizing committee that allowed the realization of this second IPWG meeting.

The scientific committee members and the editors discharged their refereeing responsibilities. Any errors could be indicated, till October 31, 2011, by authors sending e-mail to the Bulletin of Insectology secretary. Unintentional substantial mistakes will be corrected adding an errata corripse, as a last page of the ‘electronic reprint’, on the online version of the second IPWG meeting extended abstract book.

Online information concerning the IPWG proceedings is available at www.bulletinofinsectology.org

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