2025 World Seed Congress

Press Kit



Discovering bold horizons

Istanbul 19-21 May 2025

congress.worldseed.org



The International Seed Federation (ISF) and the seed sector of Türkiye are excited to welcome and meet you all in İstanbul for the ISF World Seed Congress 2025. Straddling Europe and Asia, İstanbul is an important hub that bridges not just two continents but also vibrant cultures, rich histories, and thriving businesses. As we enter the second century of our association, this congress encourages everyone to discover bold horizons: let's tackle the biggest issues confronting the seed business, strengthen and widen our professional networks, exchange ideas, and trade products.

Organizers









Welcome to the World Seed Congress 2025

The International Seed Federation (ISF) organizes the annual World Seed Congress, the world's largest international gathering of seed professionals. This forum has been bringing seed people together since 1924, when the first International Seed Congress was held in London.

This year, the congress will take place in Istanbul, Türkiye, hosted jointly with the Turkish National Organizing Committee and taking place from May 19 to 21, 2025 at the Istanbul Congress Centre.



As we enter the second century of our association, this congress explores the transformative power of seeds to shape a food-secure future, as the #WorldSeed2025 theme indicates: Discovering Bold Horizons.



The congress will focus on business and innovation, with trade exchanges, meetings, exhibitions and on-site roundtables, complemented by a virtual content platform called Channel World Seed, available via YouTube.

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The 2025 programme will feature key topics related to the seed sector:

- The future of seed trade
- Innovation in plant breeding
- Seeds and sustainable food systems
- Plant health
- Seed resilience
- Seed marketing



What brings us here?

1,500+

delegates from the seed sector, value chain, as well as institutional partners

70 countries represented

panel sessions

75 exhibition booths

300 trading tables

27 hours of trading over **3** days









ISF panel sessions

All panel sessions taking place during the World Seed Congress can be followed live on ISF Channel World Seed.

<u>Click here</u> to watch them live or visit

www.youtube.com/@InternationalSeedFederation



Resilient & nutritious food & feed value chains: The role of the seed sector Monday, 19 May, 13:00-13::50



Keynote Address: Building bridges for sustainable growth Monday, 19 May, 14:30-15:30



Pathways to Prosperity: Unlocking Investment & Market Opportunities Monday, 19 May, 16:00-17:00







Climate Resilience Starts with Seeds: Our roadmap to Brazil COP30

Tuesday, 20 May, 09:00-10:00



How do we build the business case for biodiversity conservation for seed companies?
Tuesday, 20 May, 14:30-15:30



Let's go fishing: Reshaping the ISF strategy 2026-2030 Wednesday, 21 May, 9:00-10:00



ISF Idea Bootcamp – Pitching and Announcement of Winners Wednesday, 29 May, 14:00- 15:00





Channel World Seed

These 30-minute sessions are broadcast live from the Channel World Seed TV studio at the World Seed Congress.

Click here to watch them live.



Funding the Conservation of Crop Diversity Worldwide (with Crop Trust & Plant Treaty)

Monday, 19 May, 11:30-12:00



Plant Breeding Innovation for Climate Resilience Tuesday, 20 May, 11:30-12:00



Illegal Seed Practices – Why is it a risk for the whole value chain?

Monday, 19 May, 14:00-14:30



Sowing Hope, Harvesting Impact: The Seed Sector's Role in Addressing Societal Challenges for a Sustainable Future

Wednesday, 21 May, 10:30-11:00



Harnessing the Power of Biologicals: Innovations & Impacts for the Seed Sector Tuesday, 20 May, 10:30-11:00



Battling Mis/Disinformation in Seeds and Ag: Lessons and strategies from media, youth and agvocates

Wednesday, 21 May, 12::30-13:00



Addressing microplastics in seed treatments
Tuesday, 28 May, 10:00-10:30



ISF Seed Resilience Foundation Launch Wednesday, 21 May, 15:00-15:30

Available for streaming on:





About the Organizers

International Seed Federation (ISF)

ISF (International Seed Federation) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that traces its roots back to 1924 when FIS (Fédération Internationale du Commerce des Semences) was established in London. The current organization of ISF was formed in 2002 following the merger of FIS and ASSINSEL (International Association Plant Breeders), strengthening their respective areas of expertise: plant breeding and seed trade.

ISF believes in a world where the best quality seed is accessible to all, supporting sustainable agriculture and food security. Therefore, it has a mission to promote plant breeding and seed innovation and to create the conditions to ensure the global movement of seeds.

ISF members strive to practice and promote sustainable agriculture and contribute to the highest levels of food security. ISF promotes these contributions to be recognized and facilitates the free movement of seed within a framework of fair and science-based regulations, while serving the interests of farmers, producers, industry, and consumers.

In addition, ISF promotes incentivizing innovation through the protection of

intellectual property rights for seeds, plant varieties, and associated technologies. It also develops rules for seed trade to clarify and standardize contractual relationships between buyers and sellers at the international level.



Finally, ISF fosters cooperation collaboration through the organizes, which enable seed industry stakeholders to identify issues, stimulate strategic thinking and accelerate the adoption of common positions. From 1924, when the first International Seed Congress was held in London, to the present day, it has represented the interests of its associate members widelv and recognized as the voice of the global seed industry.



About the Organizers

TÜRKTED

TÜRKTED was established in 1985 and is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. TÜRKTED is a non profit, independent association with voluntary membership.

TÜRKTED's structure is very similar to ISF's with a Management Board, General Secretariat and working groups. In addition to a Secretary General and assisting roles, there are 51 voluntary members that provide approximately 75% of the total certified seed produced and more than 80% of the seeds exported from Türkiye.



TÜRKTED aims to represent its members at the national level in all the aspects of the seed sector, collaborating the Ministry of Agriculture and other players in the sector in terms of harmonization of rules and regulations and the formulation of seed policies. TÜRKTED would like to see the Turkish Seed Sector as a leading sector

in their region, and well-represented at the international level with increased cooperation and trade with other seed sectors.

TÜRKTED works closely with the ministry in addressing the challenges facing our members. It informs members regularly about developments in seed and plant breeding. TÜRKTED publishes a magazine called TOHUM (which means seed in Turkish) twice a year and distributes it to all members and actors in the sector free of charge.

Turkiye changed its seed policies in 1984, allowing the free formation of seed prices in the market and allowing international seed trade. These two major policy changes have opened the way to establish private seed companies and TÜRKTED was founded in 1985 by these private companies. Since then, TÜRKTED has played an important role in every cornerstone of seed sector developments, such as memberships to ISF, Euroseeds, APSA, ISTA, OECD and in implementing UPOV 1991 the convention.



About the Organizers

It has overseen the accreditation of ISTA and OECD variety registration and seed certification schemes, implementation of seed support schemes, and the preparation and implementation of seed law 5553. TÜRKTED also represents its members in international congresses and meetings as a member of ISE and APSA.

TÜRKTED organized a successful ISF World Seed Congress in 2009 in Antalya. TÜRKTED and TSÜAB will organise ISF WSC this year in İstanbul and TÜRKTED and TÜRKTOB (Turkish Seed Union) will organise APSA Seed Congress in Antalya TÜRKİYF in 2026.

TSÜAB

TSÜAB is a professional organization with the legal status of a public institution. Companies that want to engage in seed activities in Turkey are legally obliged to be a member of TSÜAB, which was established in 2008 with the enactment of Seed Law No. 5553.

More than 1,130 seed companies operating in the seed sector are members of TSÜAB. In addition to integrated companies that operate at all stages, ranging from variety

development to seed distribution and marketing, there are also companies that are active only in certain stages of the value chain, such as production, supply or distribution.

Some 260 of these members are seed breedina companies with R&D infrastructure. The aim of TSÜAB is to and contribute represent the of development the Turkish seed industry within the framework of the authority given to it by law.

Turkey's seed sector is a dynamic and developing sector with a growing presence in national and international markets. TSÜAB is committed supporting members, fostering its innovation, and advocating for policies that enhance the competitiveness of the sector.

One of the main duties of TSÜAB is to represent its members on all kinds of platforms and to defend their rights and interests.









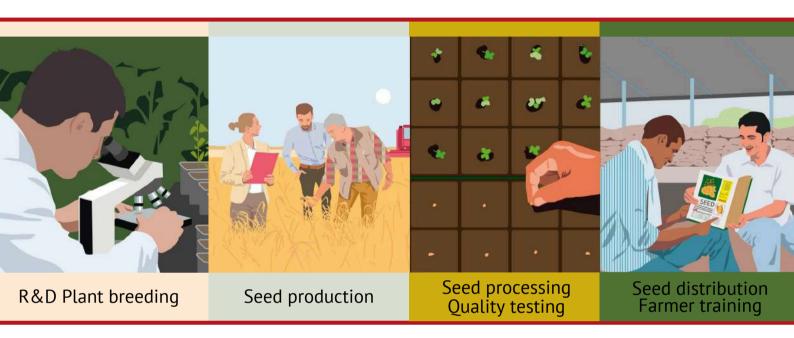
Facts and Figures

About the seed sector





The Seed Supply Chain



The private sector has played an increasingly important role in global seed systems over the last half a century.

52%

of crop science research in developed countries was carried out by the private sector 7.6 million metric tons

volume of seed exported around the world (2022)

\$16.3 billion

estimated global seed export value (2022) 15-30%

of a seed company's yearly turnover is invested in R&D





The work of plant breeders has made a positive impact on global food security

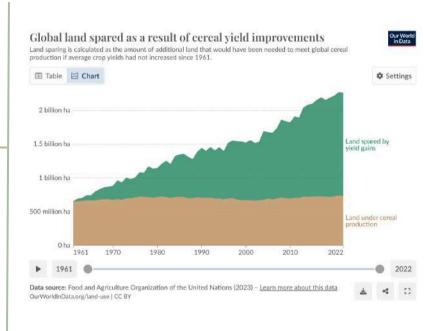
50%

of total yield increases were contributed by improved varieties

Advancements in plant genetics and genomics in breeding can help support:

- Higher production
- Resistance to pests, pathogens, and drought
- Optimal use of natural resources like soil and water

This **reduces the losses** often incurred that can affect food security.



1.53 billion hectares

total land spared as a result of cereal yield improvements



At a glance: The Seed Industry in Türkiye



Türkiye is among the world's leaders in agricultural production. In 2022, it ranked **1st in Europe**'s agricultural economy and in the **top 10 globally**.

Türkiye's agriculture and food industry employed almost 18% of the country's working population and accounted for 6.5% of its GDP in 2022, contributing \$58.5 billion to the GDP.

- In 2022, Türkiye exported around 1,800 types of agricultural products to more than 190 countries, achieving an export volume of \$30 billion.
- In 2023, the country produced 77.7 million tonnes of cereals and field crops, 31.8 million tonnes of vegetables, and 27.4 million tonnes of horticultural products.

Some of the top grown crops in the Türkiye include:







#1

in agricultural production value in Europe.

In 2022...

1,800 types of products

190 countries exported to

billion US dollars in value

In 2023, t million to 31.8 milli 27.4 milli products.

In 2023, the country produced 77.7 million tonnes of cereals and field crops, 31.8 million tonnes of vegetables, and 27.4 million tonnes of horticultural products.

\$1.5

in seed market revenues in 2022.

billion



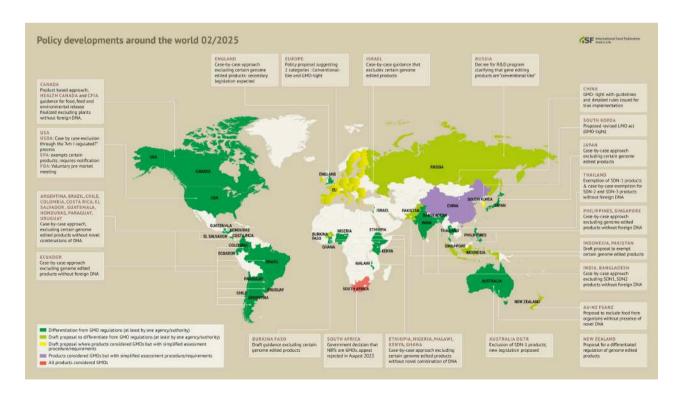
Regulatory trends in seed

Genome editing

Genome-edited products have the potential to contribute to a more resilient and sustainable agri-food system through the development of plant varieties that are more resistant to diseases and environmental conditions or climate change effects in general, improved agronomic or nutritional traits, reduced use of agricultural inputs (including plant protection products) and faster plant breeding. Plant breeding innovations also afford an opportunity for small and medium enterprises to develop specific unique traits in plants in response to local needs.

Genome-edited products have already entered the market in Japan with the high-GABA tomato, in the US with the high oleic soybean oil and the Conscious Green salad, etc. The adoption of new technologies by plant breeders and developers depends on clear, predictable, risk-proportionate regulation and the breadth of its application to potential products.

Although there is much positive movement in the development of global regulatory policy, there is a lingering reluctance to fully let go of past transgenic approaches. Many countries have recently put forth regulations on genome edited products with the adoption of two approaches: one that considers the GMOs path but tries to apply simplified regulations and another that excludes them from the scope of regulations as non-GMOs but requires confirmation.





In this context, African countries such as Kenya and Nigeria were at the forefront of policy development in Africa exempting or excluding certain plants produced through gene editing from regulations that authorize the use of transgenic plants for cultivation, food, feed or processing. Malawi recently joined in this direction. Other regulatory agencies in countries like Burkina Faso and Ghana are drafting guidelines to exclude certain gene-edited PBI products from GMO legislation.

Intellectual property

To protect plant-related innovation and ensure the continuous cycle of innovation, ISF supports Plant Breeder's Rights as provided in the UPOV 1991 Convention, as it balances protection as an incentive for innovation and access to the protected varieties in order to enable others to further improve plant varieties.

Today UPOV counts 80 members, the latest country to join being Nigeria on 27 March 2025. The UPOV system provides a robust IP protection for plant varieties as such and has been available for breeders since the beginning of the 60s.

With the evolution of plant breeding though in the past few decades other IP systems, such as patents, have gained importance in various aspects of plant breeding.

Illegal seed practices

In many regions, depending on the country, up to 50% of the seed sold is produced illegally. Illegal seed practices take on several forms: selling counterfeit seed, fraudulent labelling, intellectual property infringements, regulatory

infringements, trademark infringements and theft of patented material. This impacts not only the African seed sector but also farmers, who are misled with wrong products. This puts their annual harvest and incomes at risk, and consequently the economy of their communities. In a continent where food security is at stake, it is critical to provide farmers with good quality seed, able to provide them with a reliable income.

The absence of sanitary controls can also be a source of disease transmission, a risk that does not exist when certified seeds and legal plants are used. In short, the breeding or purchase of illegal seeds or plants threatens research and compromises the future of agriculture. ISF is strengthening its advocacy with all stakeholders, including government bodies, agencies, judicial systems and international organisations, in order to improve legal systems and enforcement conditions, capacity and skills.





Environment and social responsibility

The UN Food Systems Summit (UNFSS) in 2021 put focus on the role of the private sector for transforming and adapting food systems and to boost nature-positive production systems at scale to globally meet the fundamental human right to healthy and nutritious food, while operating within planetary boundaries."

Since then, nearly 160 countries have also endorsed the COP28 UAE Declaration on Sustainable Agriculture, Resilient Food Systems and Climate Action to create more sustainable and resilient food and agriculture systems.

The seed sector remains committed to the following areas of action:

- Fair minimum wages for seed production and guidelines for ISF members for social rights compliance
- Training for youth on the seed sector's job diversity.
- Collaboration with plant breeding programs and seed technology modules





- Diversity and inclusion: empowerment for women farmers
- Development of Environment and Social Responsibility Industry
- Guidelines like the <u>Forage and Surf Seed</u>
 Production Good Practice Guide
- Partnership with academia, universities and NGOs on innovation and sustainability and farmers adoption of improved plant varieties and seed technologies.

Ahead of COP30 to be held in Brazil in November 2025, ISF, as an official observer to the UNFCCC, seeks to further increase awareness about the seed sector's role and contributions to helping farmers adapt to changing growing conditions, and minimizing the impact of agriculture on the environment.



Speaker Biographies



Michael Keller, International Seed Federation

Michael Keller is Secretary General of the ISF (June 2014 to present), focusing on the vision of a world where quality seed is accessible to all farmers to support sustainable agriculture and food security. In line with ISF's mission, Michael is engaged in creating through collaboration an enabling environment for the private seed sector.

Through long-standing involvement at national and international levels, he has an extensive knowledge and understanding of cooperation within the private sector and with non-governmental and civil society organizations. His field of expertise spans a wide range of topics including seed, agriculture, food security, Sustainable Development Goals, law, policy and advocacy.

In 2022, he was elected Chair of the International Agri-Food Network (IAFN), which is the elected focal point of the Private Sector Mechanism (PSM) of the UN Committee on World Food Security (CFS). He served as Chair of the PSM from 2022 to 2024. He currently serves as a member of the Board of the World Agriculture Forum (WAF).

Prior to joining ISF, Michael worked in the French Senate as a Parliamentary Advisor, as Head of European and International Affairs of the Mayor's Association of France and in different positions at DuPont de Nemours and Pioneer Seed.

Michael studied law in Germany (Law State examination) and holds a post-graduate in law from the Paris-Sorbonne University. He spent time in Switzerland, Tunisia and France for training in international law and political science.







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Arthur Santosh Attavar, International Seed Federation

Arthur Santosh Attavar was elected President of ISF in May 2024. Before his election as ISF President, Attavar served a two-year term as ISF Vice-President (2022–2024) and chaired ISF's Task Force for the United Nations Food Systems Summit in 2021.

Arthur is the Chairman and Managing Director of Indo-American Hybrid Seeds (India) Pvt. Ltd. based in Bangalore, India, which he joined in 1997. He holds a degree in Plant Sciences (Horticulture) from Utah State University. Before joining Indo-American Hybrid Seeds, he worked for seed companies in the United States, Mexico and Costa Rica, focusing on seed production and quality control of high-value vegetable seeds and flower seeds.

"The theme of this year's World Seed Congress could not be more timely. We must embrace bold new horizons and seize new opportunities to navigate an increasingly complex world. The seed sector has always been highly innovative and I look forward to three days of dialogue with colleagues from around the world about the exciting possibilities of the future."

Arthur Santosh Attavar President of the International Seed Federation









Burak Gönen, Co-Chair of the Turkish National Organizing Committee

Burak Gönen is the Co-Chair of the Turkish National Organizing Committee for the World Seed Congress 2025 and is the President of the Turkish Seed Industry Association (TÜRKTED) and High Advisory Council of Antalya Trade Bourse. Born in 1970 in Antalya, Mr. Burak Gönen obtained his high school degree from Antalya college and his Bachelor degree from Lieden Webster University in

the Netherlands, in Business with a double major in Finance and Marketing. He returned to Türkiye in 1994 and worked as an expert in the Institutional Banking department of Garanti Bank in İstanbul for four years. Between 1998 and 2007, he worked as a Director of Marketing, General Director and Board Member of Seto Seeds (SETO Sebze Tohumları Gübre Üretim İnş. Tur. Ve San. Tic. A.Ş). He established AG Seeds (AG Tohum Sanayi Ticaret Anonim Şirketi) in

2007. He has been the President of AG Seeds and Vice President of Seto Seeds.

Mr. Gönen is married with two children; Su Gönen and Ahmet Ege Gönen. His wife, grl Pınar CANAYDIN GÖNEN is a graduate of Faculty of Fine Arts and a Stage Designer.

Mr. Burak GÖNEN has been a member of Antalya Association of Industrialists and Businessmen Antalya (ANSIAD) since 2002 He is a member of the Management Board of ANSIAD in his 4th term. He has been a member of Congress of Galatasaray, a well known Turkish Football Club.

"We are proud to welcome the global seed community to Türkiye. As a bridge between continents, cultures, and innovation, and a world leader in agricultural production, our country is a fitting venue for this prestigious event. This Congress is a unique opportunity to share our strengths, foster new partnerships, and work together to advance solutions for a more secure and sustainable agricultural future."

Burak Gönen, President of the Turkish Seed Industry Association





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Yıldıray Gençer, Co-Chair of the Turkish National Organizing Committee

Yıldıray Gençer is the Co-Chair of the Turkish National Organizing Committee for the World Seed Congress 2025. He serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Seed Industrialists' and Producers' Sub-Union (TSUAB) and the Economic Cooperation Organization Seed Association (ECOSA).

Mr. Yıldıray GENÇER was born on April 18, 1969 in Elazığ and graduated from Elazığ High School in 1985 and from Ankara University, Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Field Crops in 1989. Between 1990 and 2002, he worked as a senior manager in an international company. In 2003, he became a founding partner of the "Metgen Tohumculuk", headquartered in Istanbul, with a branch in Ankara, research, trial and breeding stations in Yalova and Antalya, and in 2013

he founded with his partner the "Pak Tohumculuk", a professional vegetable and flower seedling company in Yalova. Between 2008-2010, he was the Vice President of the Plant Breeders Sub-Union (BISAB) and between 2012 and 2016, he served as the President of the Turkish Seed Association (TURKTOB) and TSUAB for two terms. From 2016 and 2021, he served as the Vice President of TSUAB for two terms.

Gençer, who has been serving as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of TSUAB and ECOSA simultaneously since 2021, is married and has two sons.

"Hosting the global seed community in Türkiye is both an honor and a shared responsibility. This Congress is not only a platform for knowledge exchange, but also a moment to strengthen international agreements and highlight the essential role of seed in building resilient food systems for the future – in Türkiye and around the world."

Yıldıray Gençer, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Seed Industrialists and Producers Sub-Union





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Cary Fowler, former U.S. Special Envoy for Global Food Security

Dr. Cary Fowler is a leading advocate for global seed conservation and crop diversity, who has dedicated his career to preserving the genetic resources essential for food security and climate resilience. Dr Fowler's lifelong work has shaped international policies and initiatives that help to safeguard the

future of seed and agriculture. Dr. Fowler led the first global assessment of plant genetic resources, helping draft the Global Plan of Action and playing a key role in negotiations for the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources. As the executive director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust, he secured funding to conserve 90,000 threatened seed varieties. He was also a key architect of the Scalbard Global Seed Vault.

Dr. Fowler's contributions to seed security earned him the 2024 World Food Prize, along with numerous other honors, including the Right Livelihood Award and the Vavilov Medal. He has authored influential books on crop diversity and has been featured in major media outlets and documentaries.







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ISF World Seed Congress 2025 List of Spokespersons

The following list of in-house experts and invited guests are available for interviews with members of the press. To book an interview, please email Harvey Presence at harvey@marchmontcomms.com and please share your details:

- 1. Outlet, country, description
- 2. Type of interview (written, live broadcast, recorded broadcast)
- 3. Topic and scope of questions
- 4. Preferred time and date of interview

ISF leadership



Michael Keller

Secretary General (since 2014), ISF

Expertise: ISF priorities and key strategic objectives, international outreach,

relations with international organizations (UN etc.)

Languages: English, French, German



Arthur Santosh Attavar

President, ISF (2024-2026)

Chairman & Managing Director, <u>Indo-American Hybrid Seeds (India)</u> Expertise: international seed business; agriculture in India/Asia

Language: English, Hindi



Lorena Basso

Vice-President, ISF (to be elected President in 2026)

President, Semillas Basso (Argentina)

Expertise: international seed business; agriculture in Argentina/South America

Languages: Spanish, English

ISF leadership - Please refer to the <u>ISF Website</u>.



ISF Membership - National and Regional Seed Associations



AUSTRALIA
Katherine Delbridge
CEO, Australian Seed Federation
Language: English

Contact: kdelbridge@asf.asn.au



BRAZIL
Ronaldo Troncha
Executive Director, <u>Associação Brasileira de Sementes e Mudas (ABRASEM)</u>
Language: Portuguese
Contact: <u>ronaldo.troncha@abrasem.com.br</u>



CANADA
Ellen Sparry
General Manager, C&M Seeds / Canada representative to the ISF Board of Directors
Language: English



SPAIN
Antonio Villaroel
Secretary General, ANOVE
Languages: Spanish, English
Contact: Alicia Diaz, alicia@anove.es



SOUTH AFRICA Lukeshni Chetty *General Manager, <u>SANSOR</u>*Language: English



UNITED KINGDOM
Steph Spiers
Head of Business Operations, <u>British Society of Plant Breeders (BSPB)</u>
Language: English



ISF Membership - National and Regional Seed Associations



USA Andrew "Andy" LaVigne President & CEO, <u>American Seed Trade Association (ASTA)</u> Language: English



AFRICAN SEED TRADE ASSOCIATION

Dr. Yacouba Diallo

Secretary General, AFSTA

Language: English, French



ASIA-PACIFIC SEED ASSOCIATION (APSA)
Francine Sayoc
Executive Director, APSA
Language: English, French
Contact: francine.sayoc@apsaseed.org

EUROSEEDS



Garlich von Essen

CEO, Euroseeds

Language: English, German

Contact: Erika Maugeri, erikamaugeri@euroseeds.eu



SEED ASSOCIATION OF THE AMERICAS (SAA)
Diego Risso
Executive Director, <u>SAA</u>
Language: English, Spanish



Invited Guests and Experts



Doaa Abdel-MotaalSenior Counsellor, <u>Agriculture & Commodities Division, WTO</u>
Topics: Global agriculture trade, WTO matters
Language: English, French, Arabic



Niels Louwaars *Advisor, Seed Resilience Foundation*Topics: Youth engagement in agriculture
Language: English, Dutch

For all other requests, please reach out to Harvey Presence, +44 (0) 7582 195497, harvey@marchmontcomms.com.



Media Resources

The International Seed Federation (ISF)

Learn more about the ISF's work on the channels below. For any further media requests, including interviews, please contact Airah Cadiogan, Communications Manager, airah.cadiogan@worldseed.org



Website



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<u>LinkedIn</u>



Facebook



<u>Instagram</u>



Youtube

TSÜAB

Learn more about TSUAB's work on the channels below. For any further media requests, including interviews, please contact Buket Sakmanlı Apaydın, +90 553 420 86 02, buket@tsuab.org.tr.



Website



<u>X</u>



LinkedIn



Facebook



Youtube



Media Resources

TÜRKTED

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