



CIP Participates in 2015 World Potato Congress and Planning for 2018

CIP has played an increasingly prominent role in the World Potato Congress (WPC): the world's largest gathering of potato experts and industry representatives. Not only did CIP leadership give presentations at the 9th World Potato Congress (WPC), held in Beijing, China in July of 2015, but the Center was also closely involved in a Peruvian Government campaign that convinced WPC organizers to hold the next congress in Peru.

The triennial WPC brings together hundreds of potato scientists and representatives of government, agriculture and food industries from at least two dozen countries for several days of speeches, exhibitions and networking. It is held at a different venue each time, and is organized by the non-profit World Potato Congress Inc., founded in 1993.

The 9th WPC took place July 28-30 in the Badaling International Convention Center, in Yanqing District, on the outskirts of Beijing. It was held in conjunction with several other events focused on potato, which together attracted thousands of participants.

CIP representatives played prominent roles in the WPC and related events. Director General Barbara Wells gave a keynote speech on the role of potato in global food security, and delivered the opening address for the International Workshop on Potato-Derived

2015 Annual Report

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Staple Food Products and Industry Development. CIP Board Chairman Rodney Cook chaired a WPC keynote session, while CIP's Deputy Director General for Research and Development, Oscar Ortiz, gave a speech on potato diversity and utilization in Peru. Lu Xiaoping, Director of the CIP-China Center for Asia Pacific (CCCAP), and several other CCCAP scientists also participated in the congress.



In her keynote speech, Wells noted that: “The world is producing and consuming potatoes more than ever before. The opportunities to provide pro-poor varieties and technologies where potato already exists are clear.” She then challenged attendees to work together to “Connect the dots between what you do and these opportunities. No matter what your role in the industry is, there is a place for you to

contribute to food security around the world.”

CIP will have ample opportunity to showcase its work to strengthen food security and incomes with potato when Peru hosts the 10th WPC in 2018. Personnel at CIP headquarters in Lima, Peru, worked closely with representatives of Peru's National Institute for Agricultural Innovation (INIA) and other institutions to convince WPC leadership to choose Peru to host the next congress, and CIP will participate in a committee that helps to organization the event. This is the first time that the WPC will take place in South America.

The 10th WPC will be held in Cusco, the former capital of the Incan empire, perched high in the Andes in a region where people have been growing potatoes for thousands of years. CIP researcher Miguel Ordinola, who worked with INIA on the campaign to get the WPC to come to Peru, explained that the country's selling points included the fact that it lies within the most important center of origin of the potato and houses the world's greatest potato biodiversity, with approximately 3,000 native varieties.

“The genes and genetic diversity of those native potatoes could hold solutions for many of the problems that potato farmers face around the world,” said Ordinola.

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