

Press Release
2013 NAPB / PBCC Meetings
Tampa FL June 2-5 2013

For Immediate Release:

The National Association of Plant Breeders (NAPB) and the Plant Breeding Coordinating Committee (PBCC) held their joint 2013 Meeting June 2-5 in Tampa, Florida. Speakers addressed issues associated with the challenges, opportunities, and trends in plant breeding and biotechnology. Many speakers dealt with how scientists charged with developing improved varieties of food, feed, fiber, bioenergy, and greenspace crop plants can utilize the latest in scientific knowledge and equipment to meet the global need to accommodate an additional two billion people by 2050. Discussions on how to combine traditional plant breeding techniques with new technologies such as genomics, global positioning, and bioinformatics were the centerpiece of this year's meeting theme: *Positioning Plant Breeding for the Future*. Other topics included the need to sustain public plant breeding programs for both plant improvement research and plant breeding education for the future health of the nation. A major need identified among this year's speakers was the need to increase societal understanding and thus appreciation for the contributions of plant breeding and agriculture to food security and environmental sustainability on national and global scales.

This year's NAPB meetings were hosted by the University of Florida, with local arrangements directed by Dr. Barry Tillman, Professor and peanut breeder with the Florida Agricultural Experiment Station. The meeting featured four sessions and nearly 30 invited speakers who addressed topics essential to discussions about how the U.S. might position Plant Breeding in the future. Session themes were 1) Excellence in Plant Breeding, 2) Plant Breeding Education 3) Populations and Phenotypes, and 4) Data Collection, Archiving, and Analysis. Dr. Molly Jahn of the University of Wisconsin, set the theme of the meetings with her plenary presentation entitled "*Agricultural Sustainability and the Future of Plant Breeding*." Tours arranged by the host, University of Florida, included the fresh tomato and juice orange breeding programs at the UFL Gulf Coast Research and Education Center (GCREC), as well as Dole blueberry breeding and production research farm near Tampa.

Graduate student participation in NAPB is encouraged and highlighted during their annual meetings. This year graduate students competed for an opportunity to give oral presentations of their plant breeding research. Winners Carmille Bales (Michigan State University), Jozer Mangandi (University of Florida), and Rebecca Nitcher (University of California at Davis). Fifty-three students presented their research through posters at the meeting and three students received recognition for their research and their poster presentation: Steve Becker (Colorado State University), Jill Recker (North Carolina State University), and Gerardo Nunez (University of Florida).

Winners of the three NAPB professional awards for 2013 were Dr. Seth Murray, Texas A&M University for the Early Career Achievement Award, Dr. Roger Boerma, Georgia Seed Development and Professor Emeritus, University of Georgia for the Impact in Plant

Breeding Award, and Dr. Johnie Jenkins, Research Geneticist, USDA-ARS for the Lifetime Achievement Award in Plant Breeding.

Dr. David Stelly, outgoing President of NAPB, and Dr. Allen Van Deynze, Chair of the PBCC, presided over this year's meetings. Incoming NAPB President, Dr. Elizabeth Lee from the University of Guelph and PBCC incoming Chair Dr. Patrick Byrne, Colorado State University, assumed their new roles at the meetings along with NAPB Vice President Dr. Barry Tillman and PBCC Vice-Chair Dr. Jamie Sherman from Montana State University. Dr. David Francis, Ohio State University, was elected Secretary for NAPB and Dr. Michael Gore from Cornell University was elected Secretary for PBCC.

Details of the 2013 meeting, including the meeting program, abstracts, and a Meeting Reports with detailed information on Session, Tour and Workshop contents can be found at the NAPB website (<http://www.plantbreeding.org>). The 2014 annual meetings will be in Minneapolis, MN on August 5-8, immediately preceding the American Phytopathological Society meetings Aug. 9-13.

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