

Global flavor sweetens as international farm event nears

By TOM C. DORAN
AgriNews Publications

NORMAL, Ill. — Representatives from 24 countries have registered so far for the International Farm Management Association's gathering this summer at Illinois State University.

The International Farm Management Congress will be held July 19-24 and hosted by the Illinois Society of Professional Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers and the American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers.

The number of registrants from around the world is expected to increase, based on the amount of academic and professional papers submitted. Registration is required for papers to be presented.

A broad range of countries are represented thus far on the registration roll, including IFMA members from Australia, Great Britain,

Canada, Finland, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland, Slovakia, Denmark and the United States.

Upon entering ISU's Bone Student Center to register, visitors will fittingly be greeted by the "hall of flags," a regular feature at the center.

"What a beautiful setting. It will be very appropriate," said Carroll Merry, ISPFMRA executive director.

Despite the large number of countries in attendance, communication won't be a problem since English is the designated language of the congress.

However, there are some challenges in planning this prominent event.

"We're sensitive to food items because of religion," Merry said.

"Obviously, you don't put a

lot of pork in the menu because of the number of nationalities that don't eat pork. There are also some who don't eat beef.

"So we have to be very sensitive in planning some of the menus with other alternatives. That tends to be the biggest challenge."

All activities will be based out of the Bloomington-Normal area for the weeklong gathering.

There will be three full days of speakers, as well as presentations of academic and professional papers that will cover the theme of the Congress, which is "Food, Fiber and Energy for the Future."

The congress also will include two days of tours of agribusiness and research facilities, as well as local farm operations and other activities.

Day passes for the congress are available to the general public.

Day passes for the morning sessions Monday, July 20, and Wednesday, July 22, will be \$75, and the day pass for Friday's daylong session is \$100.

A registration desk for day passes will be located at ISU's Braden Auditorium. Day passes do not include the lunch, but food is available at Bone Student Center.

Registration for the Tuesday, July 21, and Thursday, July 23, bus tours is available no later than 2 p.m. the previous day at a



AgriNews photo/ Tom C. Doran

A hall of flags will fittingly greet International Farm Management Association members when they register at Illinois State University's Bone Student Center for the International Farm Management Congress, which runs July 19-24.

cost of \$150 if space is available.

The presentations will feature discussion of regional

areas of the United States, as well as agriculture from various corners of the world.

Featured speakers and panelists at the upcoming event include Robert Thompson, Gardner Endowed Chair on Agricultural Policy at the University of Illinois; David Pimental, professor of Ecological and Ag Science, Cornell University; Thomas Dorr, USDA under secretary for Rural Development; Lowell Catlett, regent's professor and dean of the College of Agriculture and Home Economics at New Mexico State University, as well as many others.

The objective of this event is to provide a forum for exchanging ideas, experience and knowledge through presentations and demonstrations.

The congress also provides an opportunity to learn about the host country's agriculture, including its structure and marketing, as well as to stimulate contacts between farmers, teachers, advisors, researchers, policy-makers and agribusiness at national and international levels.

The global congresses are sponsored by the International Farm Management Association, based in Cambridge, England, and held every two years with the most recent being in Ireland in 2007.

The 2011 event will be held in Christ Church, New Zealand.

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Low risk of Stewart's disease on corn predicted

COLUMBUS, Ohio — The risk of Stewart's disease, caused by a bacterium carried and spread by adult flea beetles, is predicted to be low throughout much of Ohio's corn crop this year.

Based on the flea beetle index, conducted by Ohio State University Extension and Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center specialists this winter, Stewart's disease should be a negligible threat in 2009.

"The numbers indicate that the risk of Stewart's disease should be low in much of Ohio, with only Southern Ohio considered to have a low to moderate threat," said Ron Hammond, OSU Extension entomologist with OARDC.

The flea beetle index is calculated as the sum of the average temperatures of December, January and February. Index values less than 90 indicate a negligible disease threat, 90 to 95 indicates low to moderate levels, 95 to 100 indicates moderate to severe and values more than 100 indicate a severe disease threat.

The results covered six locations: Hoytville with a value of 80, Wooster with a value of 79.6, Ashtabula with a value 79.8, South Charleston with a value of 90.4, Jackson with a value of 93.6 and Piketon with a value of 95.1.

These numbers were lower than what was calculated last winter.

"For many years, the win-

ter temperatures have been used to predict the risk of Stewart's disease because higher populations of the flea beetle survive during mild winters than during cold winters," Hammond said.

"Because of a relatively cold January, much colder than normal, the index values are lower than we often see."

Despite the low disease predictions, specialists still recommend growers scout for the insect, especially if they have planted a hybrid that is susceptible to Stewart's disease.

"Beetles survive in the soil

and emerge when soil temperatures warm to about 65 degrees Fahrenheit," said Pierce Paul, an OARDC plant pathologist.

"The flea beetle is a small, black and shiny insect. Once you know it, you can't miss it."

For those growers wanting to take preventive action against the flea beetle, commercially applied insecticide seed treatments Cruiser and Poncho are labeled for flea beetle control.

Stewart's disease is characterized by two major disease phases. One phase is seedling blight.

Young plants develop pale green to yellowish streaks on the leaves. These young plants usually wilt and die and those that survive are stunted and usually produce no ears.

The other phase is the leaf blight stage. Leaf blight is recognized as long, pale green streaks on leaves. As the streaks enlarge, portions turn pale yellow and eventually become brown.

Streaks may run the entire length of the leaf. A few characteristic lesions may be seen early in the season, but numerous lesions are usually not detected until after tasseling.

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