The 14th Symposium on Plant Protection advocates adapting effectively and efficiently to a new era of change

On 21th November has been presented, in the headquarters of the Andalusian Regional Council of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development (CAPDER)**, the 14th edition of the** Symposium on Plant Protection **which will take place on 25th, 26th and 27th of January of 2017 in Seville. Under the motto "Towards Change", this event aims to offer the keys to adapt efficiently and effectively to the new scenario of agri-food production, marked by rigid community regulations regarding phytosanitary issues and new challenges and strategies derived from climate change.**

The presentation of the next edition of this Symposium, organized by the Association of Agricultural Technical Engineers of Western Andalusia (Coitand), was carried out by the president of said entity, Antonio Vergel, the general director of Agricultural and Livestock Production, Rafael Olvera, and the president of this event, Mari Cruz Ledro.

> Olvera stressed the importance of further progress in plant health to ensure the production of food

Vergel said that *"without phytosanitaries it is impossible to ensure the production of food for a world population in continuous growth and by 2050 is expected to exceed nine thousand million people."*

> For the president of the Coitand, the shortage of phytosanitaries and active substances adds to the aggravating of bad agricultural practices (lack of control in health of seedlings, invasive herbs, etc.)

During his speech, the Director General of Agricultural and Livestock Production of the CAPDER has ensured that "the fight against pests and diseases has always been a priority for producers, since an uncontrolled plague or misuse of techniques to fight against diseases can ruin a crop or make the productions collected in a campaign unfeasible, with the consequent economic loss of time and labor".

Therefore, he has encouraged reflection on the "present and future of plant health, taking into account the current scenario, conditioned by factors such as climate change, new regulations in this area, *and the presence of new harmful organisms in the European Union (EU), such as Xylella fastidiosa for example".*

> Director General of Agricultural and Livestock Production: "agriculture faces many challenges, and, without a doubt, crop protection, and pest prevention and control are some of the most relevant"

On pest control, Rafael Olvera highlighted the important work that farmers have been doing in Andalusia in sustainable or integrated pest management, which has undergone important advances in recent years. It has also highlighted the increasing incorporation of qualified professionals and consultants into the agricultural sector, increased training in plant health, or the importance of research in the public and private spheres.

The long path taken in Andalusia in terms of integrated pest management has been made possible by the sector's commitment to the rational use of resources to guarantee the future of its farms, together with investment and years of work.

"Today, Olvera added, we are pioneers and leaders in sustainable crop management, an example of innovative agriculture, focused on the market and the consumer, thanks to an increasingly professional sector, *concerned with promoting methods of control compatible with the environment.*

Risks for new pests, such as Xylella fastidiosa or fungi such as the black spot of citrus, make this Plant Health Symposium more necessary than ever

"In order to deal with the emergence of new diseases and pests, Olvera has pointed out, from Andalusia we worked with the Andalusian Plan of Vigilance in Plant Protection and with an extensive network of laboratories." He also highlighted the commitment of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development "to transfer knowledge to the sector through the use

of new technologies" and has set as an example the Network of Alert and Phytosanitary Information (RAIF), where getting detailed information about the situation of the crops.

Meanwhile, the president of the Coitand Association of Agricultural Technical Engineers of Andalusia (Coitand), Antonio Vergel, has warned that "every time we have less phytosanitary tools to control weeds, pests and diseases of crops." In that context, he has referred to integrated pest management and the sustainable and effective use of plant protection products as the only tools and methods to use in the immediate present and in the near future.

Finally, Symposium president Mari Cruz Ledro presented the second progress of the Symposium program and pointed out that *"global challenges such as climate change, sustainable development, nature protection, food safety, and health Human, among others, are challenges that need to be addressed through common strategies, right investments and innovative methodologies.* Faced with these global challenges, the training and experience of agricultural technicians is a valuable asset. "

> For the president of the Symposium, "the figure of the agricultural technician is essential in a sector that requires great preparation and is increasingly governed by business criteria of integral quality"

14ªedition

In its edition next year, the Symposium will have 16 keynote presentations and will host an area with 23 exhibitors where companies from the sector and public bodies will participate, among others. In addition, there will be 9 commercial presentations and 4 technology rooms of phytosanitary manufacturers.

During its first day, an overview of the future of plant health will be analyzed, focusing on European farmers and the phytosanitary industry. In addition, *the current situation of biostimulants, climate change in community policies and the relationship of bioeconomics to plant health will be studied.*

On the second day, on the 26th, *special attention will be given to the phytosanitary problems of different crops (Xylella fastidiosa, Mayetiola destructor (wheat mosquito), red fruits, horticultural crops and almond trees).* It will also deal with new technologies applied to plant health (remote sensing, modeling of olive groves and pests), *with the latest advances in the improvement and efficiency of crop management, presenting innovative products and encouraging debates on The new challenges in agriculture.*

The third and final day, 27 January, will analyze the new Plant Protection Regulation, plant health in the export of agricultural products, the regulatory framework in the EU for the approval of active

substances and *there will be a round table on the registration of Phytosanitary problems in the EU, the new challenges.*

Second advance of the Symposium of Plant Protection