

ISF ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT, DONALD COLES

Nyon, Switzerland – Australian seedsman and business leader Donald Coles has succeeded Eduard Fito as President of the International Seed Federation (ISF), the 10th person to hold the position since the merging of FIS and ASSINSEL in 2002. He will serve a term of two years.

Donald Coles was former First Vice President of the ISF Executive Committee from 2018-2020. Eduard Fito will continue to serve on the ISF Executive Committee as Past President for another two years.

The ISF Executive Committee, after the first ISF General Assembly by written procedure, is composed of:

- Donald Coles, President
- Marco van Leeuwen, First Vice President
- Eduard Fito, Past President
- Christoph Betschart, Treasurer
- Marc Cool, Chair of the Breeders Committee

“The role of agriculture in the steady supply of quality, healthy food has been greatly highlighted during the COVID-19 crisis. Today seed is widely recognized as an essential good and a key element in food production,” said Coles. “This gives us further determination to ensure the efficient movement of quality seed in order to continue to deliver benefits to the entire value chain. In addition, it is very important to ensure continued innovation. New plant breeding methods can continue to contribute solutions to the global challenge of building sustainable food systems in the face of climate change as well as meeting an ever-growing consumer demand for quality, healthy food. Seed creates food in a matter of weeks.”

Donald Coles is Managing Director of Valley Seeds Pty Ltd. and is a past Director of the Australian Seed Authority. In 2012, he was elected President of the Australian Seed Federation. He has held national positions within Australian Government agencies and affiliated bodies such as the Gene Technology Regulator.

His career of over 40 years spans supply chain management, quality assurance systems, retailing and retail supply. During this time, he has been directly involved in breeding new plant varieties, specifically the development, maintenance and auditing of trial protocols for forage, turf seed and cereals.

“Changing leadership from various regions and seed sectors provides an excellent dynamic for ISF and is a showcase of the diversity that ISF represents. With the new leadership under Donald Coles we will prepare, in these unprecedented times, a clear way forward based on the upcoming renewal of the ISF Key Strategic Objectives 2021-25 and the recognition of seed as the essential element of food production,” said Michael Keller, ISF Secretary General. ISF ushers in a new chapter as the seed sector faces the enormous task of responding to climate change, fulfilling an increase in global food demand, the need for more sustainable food systems (producing more with less), supporting farmers of all sizes globally as well as other stakeholders in the value chain in order to maintain food security.

“I am looking forward to working with our members from around the world. More than ever, collaboration is necessary to continue to maintain sustainable food systems post COVID-19. Partnerships will play an important role in addressing challenges and arriving at solutions in a collaborative manner,” said Coles.

Contact

FRANCINE SAYOC
Communications Manager, ISF

+41 22 365 44 20
+41 22 365 44 21
f.sayoc@worldseed.org

About ISF

ISF is the voice of the global seed sector. It has represented the interests of its members since 1924, and represents 96% of the international seed trade today. With a global reach extending to members around the world and official observer status in intergovernmental and international organizations, ISF is uniquely positioned to assist in the development of government policy and business strategy.

www.worldseed.org

