

## ISF JOINS THE CELEBRATION OF THE CLOSING OF A SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PLANT HEALTH (IYPH)

*Nyon, Switzerland* – The International Seed Federation (ISF) celebrates together with the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) the closing of the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH), and hopes to sustain its worthwhile aims of raising global awareness and inspiring people to learn more about plant health.

As the voice of the global seed sector representing thousands of actors around the world, ISF maintains that healthy seeds is the precondition for healthy crops and crucial for agricultural production as well the environment. “Plants are the foundation of life on earth and we are proud to be part of this once in a lifetime opportunity to build engagement around protecting the world’s plant resources from pests. We will continue strengthening our engagement to garner support to highlight the importance of healthy seed to plant health and to support the adoption of the International Day of Plant Health (IDPH),” said Michael Keller, Secretary General of ISF.

The seed industry has been supportive of this initiative from the very beginning. Joining forces, various National Seed Associations (NSAs) and seed companies across the globe have organized different events in support of plant health. ISF also organized a number of events from virtual roundtables to a session with the IPPC IYPH Advocates Mr Monty Don and Diarmuid Gavin earlier this year where we discussed the importance of plant health and also highlighted that plant health starts with seed health.

Keeping seeds, and consequently plants, healthy is crucial to ensure sustainable agriculture and food systems, as well as protecting the environment and ecosystems. The private seed sector is working towards making the best quality seed accessible to all, to support plant health, food security and sustainable agriculture.

“Seed health is a very important topic for the seed industry. Quality seed is an expectation from growers. To meet these expectations, company seed health programs focus on the prevention, detection, and eradication of pathogens,” said Keller.

ISF also takes the opportunity to acknowledge and congratulate Mr Ralf Lopian, Chair of the IYPH Steering Committee for his contribution to this initiative. “Ralf’s energy and commitment to plant health is extraordinary and highly appreciated by the international seed sector,” said Keller.

ISF looks forward to continuing its collaboration with FAO and engaging with stakeholders to bring the message of plant health to a wider audience. Further, ISF is supportive of the successful implementation of the International Day of Plant Health and hopes that this initiative will lead to further awareness and international collaboration between all actors in the food chain including governments and the seed sector on the importance of plant health.

The IYPH Closing Ceremony will take place on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 and ISF will be part of it. Michael Keller, Secretary General will attend and speak on behalf of the seed sector. To register: <http://www.fao.org/plant-health-2020/events/events-detail/en/c/1258706/>

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## 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.

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