

## ISF ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT, MARCO VAN LEEUWEN

*Nyon, Switzerland* – Dutch seedsman and business leader Marco van Leeuwen has succeeded Donald Coles as President of the International Seed Federation (ISF). He will serve a term of two years, which will culminate in the 2024 centennial celebration of ISF in Rotterdam.

Marco van Leeuwen was former Vice President of the ISF Executive Committee from 2020-2022. Donald Coles will continue to serve on the ISF Executive Committee as Past President for another two years.

The ISF Executive Committee is currently composed of:

- Marco van Leeuwen, President
- Santosh Attavar, Vice President
- Donald Coles, Past President
- Christoph Betschart, Treasurer
- Lorena Basso, representing Ordinary Members
- Marc Cool, representing Associate Members

Speaking at the General Assembly held in Barcelona during the World Seed Congress (16-18 May), Van Leeuwen recognized the tremendous work done in the last two years to restructure the association and bring more expertise into the newly formed Coordination Groups and Expert Groups. He said: "It is important to realize our new journey has just started. Many things still need to be worked out and many challenges are ahead of us. Today we are facing massive turbulence in our sector: enormous inflation, extreme energy prices, a war in Ukraine, and quite a lot of other geopolitical and climatic challenges."

He emphasized the need to collaborate with stakeholders like the UPOV, World Farmers Organisation, World Bank, FAO and non-government organizations. He also noted that society at large and consumers will play an increasingly important role in influencing the seed sector's license to operate, therefore dialogue will remain essential.

"As incoming President and passionate seedsman since the early nineties, I want to contribute to this dialogue and build bridges in order to find solutions to common challenges," said van Leeuwen. "The next two years, together with the new Board of Directors, Executive Committee and ISF secretariat, we will focus on positioning seed more as part of the solution and aim to get things done from our action lists towards our Key Strategic Objectives."

Marco van Leeuwen is Managing Director of Rijk Zwaan, where he has been employed since 1993. As a member of its three-man board, his main focus includes production, logistics and commercial matters. Previously, he held the position of deputy director of the commercial organization where he was involved in, among other things, the international expansion of the company. He is based in De Lier, The Netherlands.

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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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