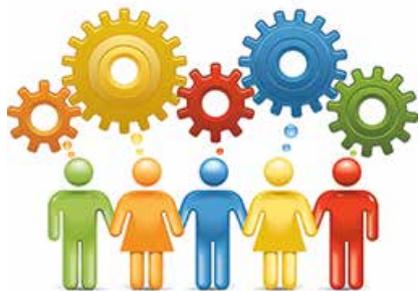


Breeding plants to cope with future climate change

Papers from the Breeding Plants to Cope with Future Climate Change conference will be published in the AAB Aspects of Applied Biology series, and will be available in December 2015. Pre-orders will be taken from 1 December

(see AAB web site for details)



Researchers from across the globe met at Leeds in June at a conference to discuss the challenge of breeding plants to cope with climate change. The conference, which was jointly hosted by Africa College, University of Leeds and the AAB, brought together around 100 leading plant scientists, plant breeders and crop and climate modellers from international and national research institutions, universities and agro-industry from across the world.

Climate change poses a major threat to food security and solutions require a multi-disciplinary approach. The conference programme reflected the breadth of expertise and research approaches necessary to address this major challenge with sessions on new ways to improve yield; crop production in the face of climate change; genome plasticity in relation to biotic and abiotic stress responses; responses of crops to climate change; pathways to innovation; breeding plants to cope with climate change; climate change models and their applications: targeting climate information for crop breeding.

Highlights of the event were the significant number of excellent talks from the younger members of the scientific community and the lively discussions throughout, particularly in the evening networking dinners. The breadth of expertise was impressive and invited speakers included, among others: Prof. Christine Raines, University of Essex, who talked about synthetic approaches to improving photosynthesis; Prof. Julia Bailey Seres, University of California, who discussed her research on Sub1 rice; Prof. Andy Challinor, University of Leeds who discussed his research on climate change and crops; and the crop efficiency trait research carried out at Bayer Crop Science by Matthew Hannah. Many of the talks will be made available online in due course, through the AAB website.

Professor Christine Foyer, who chaired the conference, said: "This is a time of uncertainty about the impacts of climate change on crop production and agriculture. Africa College has demonstrated a way forward by promoting joined up thinking between plant scientists, breeders, climate change scientists, crop modellers and agro-industry. This conference brought together leaders in all these fields as well as younger researchers. Together we can be better prepared to face the looming."

Africa College, which has its 5th anniversary this summer, is an international research partnership working to find sustainable answers to hunger and malnutrition in Africa. It works with

leading research institutes based in Africa, such as the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture and the International Centre of Insect

Physiology and Ecology, which aims to conserve ecosystems and support rural livelihoods that conserve biodiversity.



Prof. Michael Thomashow, Michigan State University, Michigan, USA discussed his research on the regulatory pathways that control plant freezing tolerance at the 'Breeding Plants to Cope with Future Climate Change Conference'.



Prof. Julia Bailey Seres, University of California discussed her research on Sub1 rice in a talk entitled Waterproofing plants at the 'Breeding Plants to Cope with Future Climate Change Conference'.



Delegates at the 'Breeding Plants to Cope with Future Climate Change Conference', hosted by Africa College and AAB at the University of Leeds, 16-18 June 2014.



For the latest news from the society of Biology - go to link below:

<http://www.aab.org.uk/images/society%20of%20biology%20news.pdf>