



PRESS RELEASE

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ESA advertises for a new Manager Intellectual Property and Legal Affairs

The European Seed Association's Brussels based General Secretariat has started the procedure for the recruitment of a new Manager Intellectual Property and Legal Affairs to further boost its expertise and in these crucial areas for the plant breeding industry

ESA is the voice of the European seed industry, representing those active in research, breeding, production and marketing of seeds of agricultural and ornamental plant species. It represents 37 national seed associations (and with that more than 1000 seed businesses in the EU, most of them SMEs) and 55 direct company members.

ESA's mission is to work for fair and proportionate regulation of the European seed industry, freedom of choice for customers in supplying seeds as a result of innovative, diverse technologies and production methods and for effective protection of intellectual property rights relating to plants and seed.

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“Strong legal expertise is needed within the permanent staff of the Secretariat to effectively support our membership”, explains Garlich v. Essen, Secretary General of ESA. “With our current Legal Advisor leaving and in view of the many challenges ahead for the seed industry, we also want to strengthen this expertise, in particular in the area of intellectual property protection, a core issue for sustainable plant breeding, even further”.

Europe's seed industry is coming to a number of crossroads over the coming years. Next to the ongoing work for the revision of the EU's seed marketing legislation ('Better Regulation') that will end with the adoption of a new legal framework some time in 2012, similar evaluations have been started for a revision of the plant health legislation, the GM food and feed regulation and the Directive on the deliberate release of GMOs into the environment. And the existing legal framework for the protection of intellectual property rights consisting of the Community plant variety rights system and the Directive on biotechnological inventions is likely to come up for a review as well – and with that a core issue for the sustainable future of Europe's plant breeders.

The association considers legal expertise to be crucial element in preparing proposals for discussion by the ESA members and for advocating final positions to decision makers, von Essen underlines. “In view of these developments and in line with our objective of taking ESA as an organisation to the next level, we will develop the advertised position into a truly horizontal one with a clear focus and priority on IPRs and legal and regulatory matters. We are convinced of both, need and timing of this change and focus, and of the benefits for our members and our association.”

