



PRESS RELEASE

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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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UC Davis Establishes European Plant Breeding Academy

Building on the success of the Plant Breeding Academy in the United States, the UC Davis Seed Biotechnology Center is partnering with European companies, institutions and associations to offer the "European Plant Breeding Academy".

Scheduled to start in March 2010, the European Plant Breeding Academy is designed specifically to address the increased global demand for trained plant breeders. This premier training program targets working professionals who desire to become fully trained plant breeders. Participation is typically sponsored by their employer. Participants will meet for six sessions of six days each over two years. This schedule will allow participants to maintain their current employment while enrolled in the course. All instruction will be in English.

The instructors, selected from around Europe and the United States, are nationally and internationally recognized experts in plant breeding and seed technology. Idy Van Leeuwen, the owner of the Dutch education company Breedwise, has been selected as one of the lead instructors. She is a highly respected plant breeding and seed technology instructor who works with private companies and institutions in The Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe. Ms. Van Leeuwen will be joined on the education team by the director of the Plant Breeding Academy as well as expert faculty from Europe and the United States.

The European sessions will be held in Enkhuizen, The Netherlands; Angers, France; Barcelona, Spain and Gatersleben, Germany. The first and last sessions will be held in Davis, California. Cooperating partners include, next to ESA European Seed Association, Vegepolys in France, Seed Valley and Naktuinbouw in The Netherlands, the Center for Research in Agricultural Genomics and the Spanish Plant Breeders Association in Spain, and the Leibniz Institute of Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research and the German Plant Breeders Association in Germany.

The following are the dates and locations of each of the six sessions.

Week 1:	March 8 – 13, 2010; Davis, California
Week 2:	June 21 – 26, 2010; Angers, France
Week 3:	October 18 – 23, 2010; Enkhuizen, The Netherlands
Week 4:	February 21 – 26, 2011; Barcelona, Spain
Week 5:	June 20 – 25, 2011; Gatersleben, Germany
Week 6:	September 26 – October 1, 2011; Davis, California

For more information, please see the Plant Breeding Academy website at <http://pba.ucdavis.edu> or contact Joy Patterson at jpatterson@ucdavis.edu or PH 001(530)752-4414.