



## **A full agenda for the next three years** **Christoph Amberger, new president of the European Seed Association**

**(Einbeck, 10/15/2009/No. 37/ho). The new president of the European Seed Association (ESA) Dr. Christoph Amberger, started his presidency with an extensive new work package at this year's general assembly of the umbrella organization of Europe's seed businesses: The establishment of a pan-European quality assurance system for seed treatment, the evaluation of the intellectual property rights system for plant breeding and urgently needed regulations for the marketing of genetically modified seed. Dr. Christoph Amberger (Executive Board member of KWS SAAT AG) was unanimously elected as president of ESA as the successor to François Desprez. His term of office is three years.**

"The issues of seed treatment, intellectual property rights and genetic engineering have been shaping the discussion in the European seed industry for many months. Therefore, these are logically the most important tasks for me on which to focus during my time as president of ESA," said Christoph Amberger in an initial statement after his election. Seed treatment is the most environmentally friendly form of plant protection in agriculture, which has come under scrutiny due to some isolated incidents of unintended abrasion which released plant protection agents into the environment. "This is why I consider the establishment of a pan-European quality assurance system for seed treatment as one of my first challenges in order to safeguard this environmentally friendly form of plant protection for the future," Dr. Amberger stated.

In the future, plant variety protection rights should remain the main instrument for promoting investments in research and development. But reassessments need to be made here in order to ensure that both the use of modern technologies in plant breeding as well as genetic gain will continue in the future. This progress has already begun to slow down with certain crops such as wheat.

The need for action is greater in the field of genetic engineering: "Without any thresholds for traces of genetically modified seeds in conventional seed, great strains will be put on the European agriculture and seed business. It is essential this problem be solved in the near future to reinforce European competitiveness," Christoph Amberger emphasized. Here, ESA will continue to lobby the parties in charge on the European and national levels.

The president of ESA sees an effective and highly competitive European seed business as being a decisive prerequisite for ensuring sufficient and high-quality food and feed production as well as using plants as renewable energy sources for the future under the difficult conditions of climate change. ESA will undertake everything it can to make a decisive contribution toward the achievement of these objectives.

### **Contact person:**

Dr. Henning von der Ohe  
Tel.: 0 55 61 / 311-245  
[h.vonderohe@kws.com](mailto:h.vonderohe@kws.com)