

## Preface

The XX1st International Conference on Virus and other Graft Transmissible Diseases of Fruit Crops was the first one held under this new title but was a continuation of a series of conferences that originated with a meeting in 1954 in Wädenswil, Switzerland. This meeting was entitled Symposium on Fruit Tree Virus Diseases and was held by a small group of international plant pathologists who were interested in the few virus diseases of deciduous fruit trees then known to occur in Europe and North America. The subsequent meetings became progressively wider in scope and increasingly concerned with viruses *per se* and virus diseases of fruit trees and small fruit crops worldwide. Furthermore, the scope of these meetings came to include diseases caused by phytoplasmas and viroids when these organisms were identified as new and serious pathogens of fruit crops.

In 1973 the organizing committee accepted the invitation of the International Society for Horticultural Science to become one of the working groups set up by its Plant Protection Commission. This meeting was entitled IXth International Symposium on Fruit Tree Virus Diseases.

Proceedings of the first eight meetings were published as supplements of different phytopathological journals. Extended abstracts were published for the meetings in 1954 and in 1958. With one exception, the proceedings since the 9th meeting were published by ISHS in *Acta Horticulturae*.

After discussions and approval by the current Scientific Committee it was decided to return to a meeting organization outside the auspices of an international organization and, thus, the 2009 conference was held not in association with the ISHS. This decision was approved during the business meeting at the 2009 Conference in Neustadt. At the same time it seemed appropriate to identify and establish a new title for the conference. The goal was to establish one name covering both the Tree Fruit and Small Fruit Crops subject areas and to include viroid and phytoplasma diseases, that previously were referred to as virus-like diseases when little or no information was available on these pathogens.

It was therefore decided to hold the 2009 and future meetings under the title International Conference on Virus and other Graft Transmissible Diseases of Fruit Crops. A new organization, the International Council for the Study of Virus and other Graft Transmissible Diseases of Fruit Crops (ICVF) was formed. The organization is represented by a Management Board consisting of two chair persons and an elected secretary. One chair will always be the organizer of the previous meeting and the second chair is the organizer of the following meeting. The secretary is elected for three years during the Conference Business Meeting. The ICVF Management Board addresses issues relevant to the ICVF between conferences.

The Management Board is supported by a Scientific Committee. It has a maximum of 25 members, who must be active researchers in their field of expertise, and who should be selected so as to provide a balance of representation across geography, crops and specialty. Retirees will automatically leave the Scientific Committee at the next conference and, at the same time, a total of five members will be replaced by newly elected members. The Scientific Committee will propose the appointment of new members, who must be approved at the Conference Business Meeting.

The members of the Scientific Committee discuss and advise on scientific, policy and organizational issues that are relevant to the continued development of the ICVF. They are also responsible for peer review of proceedings from the ICVF meetings and all other scientific information that is posted on the ICVF website.

The current Management Board set up a permanent website at: <http://icvf.jki.bund.de/>.

This website offers membership to scientists interested in diseases of fruit crops caused by viruses, viroids, phytoplasmas or unknown graft transmissible agents. Any issues related to future meetings of ICVF will be posted on the website.

The papers contained in this volume of the "Julius-Kühn-Archiv" report the Proceedings of the XX1st International Conference on Virus and other Graft Transmissible Diseases of Fruit Crops. The manuscripts submitted were reviewed by the organizers of the 2009 Conference with the support of the Scientific Committee and some professional language editing. All papers will be available for download as PDF documents with no charge through the ICVF website. The complete Programme and Abstracts of the Conference are also available for download.

The organizers of the 2009 Conference

Wilhelm Jelkmann and Gabi Krczal