

Spain-UK Plant Biotechnology event

22 – 23 February 2022

The Embassy of Spain Office for Cultural and Scientific Affairs, in collaboration with the Society of Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom (SRUK/CERU), is organising an event on Plant Biotechnology on the 22nd and 23rd of February 2022. With this event, we aim to bring together researchers and companies working on this topic. The main objectives of this event are:

- To raise awareness of the importance of plant biotechnology to face some of the challenges we will face in the following decades, such as food provision and the climate crisis.
- To highlight the cutting-edge and world-leading research performed on this topic in both Spain and the United Kingdom.
- To enhance the collaboration between academics and Spanish and British companies working in the agricultural sector.

The event will take place online to facilitate the participation of researchers and companies from both countries. The event will be open to the public, with previous registration required.

The event will span over two days. The first day will start with a short presentation from each of the research institutes participating. Afterwards, there will be four sessions focused on the following topics:

- Alternatives to chemical fertilisers and soil microbiology
- Approaches to increasing crop yield.
- Infection and resistance.
- Breeding and quality improvement techniques

Each of the sessions will count with some short talks from academics affiliated with those research institutions participating and from agri-tech companies. They will also include a round table to discuss the future perspectives of the topic and to identify those areas where there is room for collaboration.

On the second day, there will be a round table focused on the importance of the plant biotechnology research. Academics, companies and policy-makers will take part in this discussion.



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Tuesday 22nd February

09:00 – 09:20 Welcome and opening

- **Miguel Oliveros Torres** – Counsellor for Scientific Affairs, Embassy of Spain in London
- **Javier Pardo Díaz** – Intern in Science Diplomacy, Embassy of Spain in London
- **Carmen Sánchez Cañizares** – Director of Institutional Relations, Society of Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom (SRUK)

09:20 – 10:20 Presentation of participating research institutions.

- **Centre for Plant Biotechnology and Genomics (CBGP)** - Antonio Molina
- **Centre for Research in Agricultural Genomics (CRAG)** - María Lois
- **Subtropical and Mediterranean Horticulture Institute “La Mayora” (IHSM)** - Enrique Moriones
- **Institute for Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology (IBMCP)** - Pablo Vera
- **John Innes Centre (JIC)** - Christopher Darby
- **Rothamsted Research** - Javier Palma-Guerrero
- **Biovegen** - Gonzaga Ruiz de Gauna

10:40 – 12:40 Session 1: Alternatives to chemical fertilisers and soil microbiology

Chair: Javier Pardo-Diaz, University of Oxford

- **Alba Pacheco-Moreno**, John Innes Centre
How do barley plants promote a healthy soil microbiome?
- **Carmen Sánchez-Cañizares**, University of Oxford
Shaping microbial physiology through carbon and nitrogen metabolism
- **Beatriz Lagunas**, University of Warwick
Legumes, getting the time right
- **Luis Rubio**, Centre for Plant Biotechnology and Genomics
Is it possible to engineer nitrogen fixing cereals?
- **Microomics Systems S.L.** - Pedro Iñaki González-Torres (CEO/COO)
- **Symbio** – Deidre Charleston (Research and Technical Manager)

14:00 – 16:00 *Session 2: Approaches to increasing crop yield*

Chair: Marina Millán-Blázquez, John Innes Centre

- **Laura Siles**, Rothamsted Research
Dissecting yield: from ovule to seed
- **Cristina Ferrándiz**, Institute for Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology
Increasing fruit and seed production in monocarpic/annual crops
- **Iñaki Hormaza**, Institute of Subtropical and Mediterranean Horticulture
Sustainable strategies to improve yield in horticultural systems
- **Juan Carlos del Pozo**, Centre for Plant Biotechnology and Genomics
How to be a root and survive a heat wave
- **Abiopep S.L.** – Yolanda Hernando Saiz (CEO and Funding Partner)
- **Corteva Agriscience** – Ricardo Carrasco (Senior Research Manager) & Fernando Parque (Field Technician)

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Wednesday 23rd February

09:00 – 10:20 Round table: *Plant biotechnology to tackle the challenges of the 21st century*

Moderator: Javier Pardo - Science Diplomacy Intern, Embassy of Spain in London

- **Jose Juan Sánchez** – Deputy Director General for Internationalisation of Science and Innovation, Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation
- **Emma Markham** – Senior Research Portfolio Manager, Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
- **M. Isabel Díaz** – Full Professor in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Centre for Plant Biotechnology and Genomics
- **Josep M^a Casacuberta** – CSIC Associate Professor, Centre for Research in Agricultural Genomics
- **Cristina Barrero Sicilia** – Lecturer in Biomedical Science (Genetics), University of Hertfordshire
- **Martí Munar Palmer** – Predoctoral researcher, Centre for Plant Biotechnology and Genomics

10:40 – 12:40 Session 3: Infection and resistance

Chair: Berta Gallego Páramo (Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew)

- **Núria Sánchez-Coll**, Centre for Research in Agricultural Genomics
New strategies to fight emerging bacterial wilt diseases in plants
- **Jonathan Jones**, The Sainsbury Laboratory
Replacing chemistry with genetics for the control of potato late blight
- **Javier Palma-Guerrero**, Rothamsted Research
Developing sustainable approaches to protect wheat roots from take-all disease
- **Javier Martinez-Perez**, John Innes Centre
Unlocking the biocontrol potential of kiwifruit Pseudomonas
- **Antonio Molina**, Centre for Plant Biotechnology and Genomics
Plant immunity mediated by cell wall derived signals: lessons and applications to sustainable agriculture
- **Bioiberica S.A.U.** - Nuria Sierras Serra (Head of R&D Plant Health)
- **Syngenta UK Limited** - Deepak Kaundun

14:00 – 16:00 Session 4: Breeding and quality improvement techniques

Chair: Natalia Miguel-Vior (John Innes Centre)

- **David Posé**, Institute of Subtropical and Mediterranean Horticulture
Targeted breeding and circular bioeconomy of horticultural crops
- **Sergio Cerezo Medina**, Rothamsted Research
Genetic and genomic approaches to understand agronomic and metabolic traits in the Salicaceae

- **Amparo Monfort**, Centre for Research in Agricultural Genomics
Genomic Assisted Breeding strategies in fruit trees and other plants
- **Sara Lopez-Gomollon**, University of Cambridge
Small RNAs for crop improvement
- **Antonio Monforte**, Institute for Plant Molecular and Cellular Biology
Using wild species and unadapted germplasm to improve crop quality
- **Phytoplant Research S.L.** - Eva Madrid (Breeding and Cultivation Researcher)
- **AVASA (Agrupación de Viveristas de Agrios S.A.)** - José Cuenca (Technical Director)

16:00 – 16:10 Closing remarks

All the times in this programme are GMT (London)

The Embassy of Spain in London does not necessarily endorse the opinions and thoughts presented by the participants at this event

Event organised by



In collaboration with

