



July 2013 Feature Story:

"From The Inaugural IBA Blackcurrant Horticultural Conference".

The inaugural IBA Blackcurrant Horticultural Conference was held in the beautiful hilltop village of Waldenburg, Germany last month.

134 delegates from 19 countries attended and continued the tradition of the IBA's unique global family approach to business and learning and networking. (Delegates from Russia, Romania, Italy and Iceland were welcomed for the first time!)

This year the event included a special forum with presentations by some of the world's leading blackcurrant agronomists and plant-breeders. The topic was 'Climate Challenge'. The verdict? The global blackcurrant industry has an exciting future despite the challenges. The industry has the scientific expertise and collective will to meet those challenges. Importantly, the unique phytochemicals in blackcurrants that could provide new health and wellness solutions for consumers are possibly enhanced by some anticipated climate change challenges!



Some of the wonderful hosts in Germany with the (most delicious and flavoursome) official Conference Blackcurrant cake

In addition to the science and marketing presentations delegates enjoyed two wonderful days of traditional German hospitality, visiting German blackcurrant plantations and juice factories, a BBQ night featuring the most fork-tender pork spare ribs ever (cooked by the German BBQ Grill Champion), a traditional German country dinner, field-days showing the latest agricultural technology, and a visit to the Mercedes Benz Museum in Stuttgart, and a wonderful farewell lunch from the Conference Hotel Executive Chef featuring braised duck leg in a truly superb blackcurrant sauce.

All in all a unique, memorable event: well done 'Team Germany!'

And make a note in your diaries for the next IBA Conference: 3-6 June 2014, Poland!

Bill Floyd, Editor