

International Blackcurrant Conference 2016

The International Blackcurrant Association (IBA) was formed in 2008 in Christchurch New Zealand. It evolved from the bi-annual European Conference that has been part of the industry since 1995. The International Blackcurrant Association Conferences are hosted in countries all over the world, they are 2-days-conferences, mainly for European country members, in every uneven-numbered year, and international conferences in even-numbered years, lasting for 3 days.

The first International Blackcurrant conference was held in Christchurch New Zealand in November 2008, and since then the conferences have been held in Copenhagen, Denmark in June 2009, Beaune, France in May 2010, the Netherlands in May 2011, Dundee, Scotland in May 2012, Waldenburg, Germany June 2013, Bialowieza, Poland from 2nd to 6th June 2014, and last year was held in Vilnius, Lithuania.

This year the International Blackcurrant Conference has come to Ashford in Kent, from 14th to 16th June 2016

The Programme for the 5th International Blackcurrant Conference:

The Conference started on the 14th June 2016 with a plant breeding and Agronomy group meeting, the Blackcurrant Foundation hosted a Media Medics reception and Lucozade Ribena Suntory hosted a reception for their UK and New Zealand Growers & advisors.

The session started on Wednesday 15th June 2016 with Session 1 on the research into the health benefits of Superfruit presented by Professor Derek Stewart, FRSC, Mark Wilems and Dr Suzanne Hurst.

Session 2 – Marketing initiatives including marketing British Blackcurrants to consumers, raising awareness of our super berry. This session is presented by Jo Hilditch, The British Blackcurrant Foundation, Dr. Miroslaw Korzeniowski, Crop Manager at Bayer Pol and Dr Piotr Baryła, KSPCP

Session 3 -Health & Superfruit NPD and ongoing research, this session is presented by Jim Grierson (NZ,Grierson ,Dodd Products Ltd-Vitality Health Foods) and Dr. Vasileios Kontogiorgos, Ph.D

Session 4 is about the reports on the global production of Blackcurrants in 2015 and crop forecast for 2016 chaired by IBA Vice-President Anthony Snell

The Sessions continue on the 16th June 2016 beginning with Session 5 on Breeding and agronomy presented by Dr Rex Brennan, Dr Stan Pluta & Dr Piot Baryla

Session 6 is Agronomy & pest management part 2, presented Dr Michelle Fountain, Prof. Jerry Cross and Dr David Buss.

Session 7 is about ‘A European Parliament perspective on our industry’ which is presented by Anthea Macintyre MEP

Session 8 – International Blackcurrant Association AGM

Session 9 is about Agronomy & production presented by Scott Garnett, Dr John Attwood ADAS, Dr Robert Saville & Dr Angela Berrie, this session is sponsored by ICL Ltd

Session 10 is about securing plant protection products for future production– European approach, making the most of mutual recognition presented by Harriet Roberts (Lucozade Ribena Suntory)

The last session of the 2016 Conference is on the results of the new Blackcurrant product competition for the best food product containing blackcurrants and the functional food. The conference closes with closing remarks from the President of the International Blackcurrant Association.

The Benefits of Blackcurrants

All fruits are good for you, but blackcurrants are especially so. In fact, blackcurrants – packed with vitamin C and antioxidants, including anthocyanins – are now part of a select group called “super fruits”. Scientific research has shown that, whether you eat them in a pie, spread them on your toast as jam, or drink them in a cordial, there’s a whole host of benefits to your health and wellbeing.

Currently, the most popular way we Brits get our Blackcurrant fix is by drinking delicious Ribena. Indeed, as much as 95% of Britain’s blackcurrants get squashed into those distinctive purple bottles. But that’s not the only way you can enjoy them. A website, run by the Blackcurrant Foundation, will tell you all you need to know – from how they can improve your health to how to make our scrumptious blackcurrant-inspired recipes at home.