

International Blackcurrant Conference 2018: save the date

From 6th to 9th June 2018, Angers will welcome blackcurrant professionals from all over the world for the next International Blackcurrant Conference. The French call the Loire Valley the “Valley of kings” - or “the Garden of France”. The name already sounds promising: it must be the right place for the organization of the IBA Conference 2018!

Follow information and registrations for the conference on

www.blackcurrant-iba.com/event

the Location



The Loire Valley region (Pays de la Loire) is situated in Western France. It is 300 km southwest of Paris and 90 km east of Nantes (the closest airports). Tourism flourishes here: UNESCO has recognized it as a World Heritage Site in 2000. In its capital Angers - (pronounce it *ã.ʒe*, with a typically French nasal "an") - an impressive castle stands guard over opulent timber houses and Gothic grandeur.

Interestingly, Angers is not only known for its history. It is also a centre for innovation and home to many prominent companies and their research teams. The surrounding countryside hosts the vineyards of the "Aubance", the "Anjou" and "Saumur". And along the banks of the giant Loire river, châteaux and abbeys pay homage to the history of the region.



From Orléans to Angers, the Kings of France frequented the Loire Valley in the Middle Ages. Impressive castles ("châteaux") are all around. This whole region is the most important region of France for horticultural production. Horticulturalists, gardeners and nursery growers produce over 1000 different varieties of plants.

Among apple, pear, peach, cherry and other fruit trees, we can also find berry fields. And among these: blackcurrants - of course!

The Organization

The French Black-and Redcurrant Association (ANCG) will organize the IBA Conference 2018. It had already been the host of the last French IBA conference in 2010 in Beaune (in Burgundy, Eastern France). As blackcurrants are grown in different regions of France (as you can see from the map beside), it will be interesting to have another view of French blackcurrant growing. The organizing team will not be the same. This time, the blackcurrant growers from the Loire Valley, together with the “IDfel Val de Loire” (an association of all economic players in fruit and vegetable growing in the region), are in the driver’s seat.



Save the date

The IBA Conference 2018 will take place from Wednesday 6th to Saturday 9th June.

On the very first day, there will be technical meetings in the framework of another (national) conference for “small fruits”. This conference is co-organized together with the CTIFL. CTIFL is a French experimentation and innovation center for professionals in fruit and vegetable growing. For attendees who also work with raspberries, strawberries or other berries, this day may be a wonderful occasion to take even more profit of the conference.

Or if you prefer, an exciting visit of the New Holland manufacturing unit in Coex will fill the day. The following three days will look like usual IBA conferences with the IBA Annual General Meeting. There will mainly be presentations from researchers in all kinds of fields: agronomy, health, marketing... Meetings, farm visits and visits of factories shall complete the programme. Finally, don’t miss the blackcurrant product contest - and maybe more...

No IBA conference in 2017?

As announced at the last IBA conference in Ashford, the International Blackcurrant Conferences will take place every second year only. Since 2008 and until 2015, four European countries had also organized smaller conferences. But due to high costs for those who participate, for those who organize, and for the IBA, we have decided to keep only bi-annual events on an international level. There will therefore be no conference in 2017.

But it will make the other conferences even more attractive: more to share, more to learn, and a wonderful time to be with “blackcurrant friends”.

Frost in Europe: a nightmare for blackcurrant growers

Terrible night frost in late April 2017 devastates the blackcurrant farmers' hope for a good yield.



What had looked very promising until mid-April turned into a nightmare for many blackcurrant growers all over Western Europe. The first months of the year had been like every year and weather conditions were good. Two weeks of sunshine and warmth in early April brought the blackcurrants to lovely blooming. The bumblebees did their work like usual, humming had been all around, and the growers were happy with a low level of diseases and pests.

Change of meteorological conditions in mid-April all over Europe



But around Easter, the situation changed totally: from 25°C in daytime, the temperatures dropped to 10°C. And then - the meteorological forecasts announced night frost! When Michael Bullinger from Germany inspected his Tisel fields just before the frost, the plants were in full blossom. But it was already clear that with temperatures like -8°C announced for the coming night, none of the bushes would bring any currants. His yield 2017 may not be existing - but he has still hope for a few varieties like Ben Alder and Ben Hope, which had not been blossoming yet. And luckily, temperatures are increasing slowly.

Sad Reports from several growers in different countries

This picture has been taken by Daniel Pröbstle from Günzburg in Bavaria

(Germany): a blooming blackcurrant field covered with snow! One can easily understand what



this means for this

year's yield. Other German growers who were less affected still talk about at least 50% loss.

Growers from **France** said that varieties like Blackdown in Burgundy had already finished blossoming, and currants are growing on the bushes. But other varieties had just started blossoming. And quite logically, the further North we go, the more effects the frost has had in the blackcurrant fields. For France, this is already the second year of strongly reduced yields because of night frost in April - unprecedented conditions, which push certain farmers to stop growing blackcurrants.

Poland reports similar conditions: from 16th April onward, temperatures were below zero; in some regions even below -6°C. Frost losses are already visible, although it is difficult to estimate them precisely today. In any case, as Poland is the World's biggest blackcurrant producer, the damages will have consequences.

Of course, what can be observed everywhere must be assessed locally: the effects of the frost first depend on the blackcurrant varieties. It can also change from one grower to the other within the same country, and even within the same region.

Exceptional conditions?

As a conclusion, we can already foresee that the 2017 harvest will not be memorable in terms of quantity. And according to what we are already being told from climate specialists, we will have to expect more and more extreme weather events of the same kind. They will certainly impact all of our growers in the near future. Spring frost, drought, no frost in winter (although blackcurrants need it), hail and many more surprises of this kind can destroy plantations and reduce the harvests. Global warming is a vast subject, but it is clear that it effects our ecosystem - and blackcurrants are part of it.

IBA Executive meets in Hereford

It had been time to sit around a table and talk: the IBA executive meeting in the United Kingdom on 18th and 19th March allowed us to discuss vital subjects in a small committee and with promising results. Usually, the IBA Exec (president, vice-presidents and General Manager) have regular meetings on skype.



This time though, the list of topics to discuss had become too long. We (IBA vice-

presidents Jens Pedersen from Denmark and Piotr Baryla from Poland, and IBA General Manager Stefanie Sharma from France) therefore decided to drop out our suitcases and accepted IBA president Anthony Snell's invitation to his farm in England. During the 3-hours drive from London to the Western part of England already allowed us to share experiences in the car. Upon our arrival, Anthony welcomed us very warmly at Windmill Hill in (less warm) Harewood End.



Saturday, 18th March: Meeting in the office of Windmill Hill

As a start, discussions about vital subjects within the International Blackcurrant Association kept us busy for several hours. We talked about the 2017 budget, the strategy for the coming year, new and ongoing projects like the IBA quality mark or the IBA smoothie contest, the next conference in France, as well as the organization of a trip to Poland. This trip will take place in June this year. It aims at learning more about the biggest blackcurrant producing country of the world.

Luckily, blackcurrant based refreshments and products (made with the fruits from Anthony's farm!) helped us to stay concentrated. Thomas, one of Anthony's employees from Poland, assured translations from Polish to English and vice versa when it came to complicated matters.

Evening dinner in Hereford with Jo Hilditch



Later on the day, Jo Hilditch, head of the British Blackcurrant Foundation, joined us in Hereford for a most delightful dinner. She is a blackcurrant grower in Herefordshire herself, and brought along her “British Cassis”. But not only this: we have had interesting discussions about Brexit, local specialities and many more...

Sunday 19th March: the British blackcurrant growing situation - meeting with LRS-agronomist Harriet Roberts





On Sunday morning, we continued our discussions until Harriet Roberts, agronomic advisor from LRS (Lucozade Ribena Suntory) arrived. She explained us how the British growers work with LRS. 90% of the British blackcurrant production goes into the production of Ribena, a blackcurrant-based soft drink of English origin. The collaboration between Ribena and the British growers is very close: Ribena imposes precise quality standards and quantities. The growers under contract with Ribena therefore benefit from support of the LRS agronomist. Furthermore, they are sure to sell a certain amount of blackcurrants at an approximate price level fixed for seven years and adjusted every year. Harriet Roberts visits every farmer under contract with Ribena five times a year.





Windmill Hill : an amazing farm to visit

Anthony then drove us through his property. We could see there that, apart from growing blackcurrants for Ribena, Windmill Hill produces other fruits. First of all, 20% of Anthony's blackcurrants are grown organically (variety Ben Tirran). He sells them for yogurts, cordials and juices, or as IQF, through his own website.

But there are also strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries and chuckleberries.





We have seen amazing facilities! Read more about it in our article about Windmill Hill.



IBA quality mark: added value for good blackcurrant products

How can a company give value to its blackcurrant product? Many juices, nutraceuticals, confectionary, sweets and other products with blackcurrants are in the market worldwide. But nothing allows the customers to identify which are good, better, or just ordinary. The International Blackcurrant Association has therefore decided to create an IBA quality mark.

What will the IBA quality mark include?

Everything has not yet been decided – but a few things are certain:



First of all, the IBA label will have its own look and shall be recognizable very easily by the customers. A designer is already working on it, and we are confident that we will have something good to show very soon. The label will, of course, mention that the blackcurrant is the best berry for life! And it will guarantee some important points to the customer in terms of traceability, amount of blackcurrants used to make the given product and several more.

We are working hard on the project, together with IBA members who already agreed on putting the brand new label on their products! We hope to be able to present the products and the label at our next conference.

Added value of the IBA quality mark for processors, marketers and Growers



example of a quality mark

What we plan to do is not just another label to stick on any product. There will be a strict quality charter, to which not any product can easily apply. We will check the products, the applicants, and allow the use of the label only for a certain time – and within limits. We really desire to distinguish outstanding products from

ordinary ones. Because our objective is to give the customers a hint of what is good for them.

Many existing brands may apply for it, as we all know how important it is to show your difference in the market. We hope that it will help to develop the sales of the best blackcurrant products. Our label shall improve the image of such products. And it shall reward the companies who are engaged in making the best for their customers. And finally, it shall reward the growers who work hard to grow the best blackcurrants for the best products.

So: follow-up with the project. we are sure you will all like it!

Blackcurrant product contests: next will be in June 2018!

Do you think that your blackcurrant products are outstanding compared to those of other companies? Or do you produce original things with blackcurrants? Something you think that nobody has ever tried to make? Something so good that you simply want to share it with everyone? Participate in the blackcurrant contest 2018 then!

Flashback: contest 2016



Blackcurrant
product
competition -
overall winner:
blackcurrant
gummy bears
from
Cassismanufakt
ur

Those of you who have been present at the last IBA conference in Ashford certainly remember the first blackcurrant product contest. During this event, several companies presented a huge number of well-known blackcurrant products, like jams or juices.

But we have also seen (and you probably tasted) some very interesting innovative products with blackcurrants - like blackcurrant gummy bears. If you haven't been there, or if you want to recall good memories, check out what had happened! You will also find the brand names of all those who participated in the contest.

Blackcurrant contest 2018

The blackcurrant contest 2018 is already on the way. The French organizing team for the conference in Angers has put the same kind of contest on its agenda. We are all looking forward to even more products, even more participants, and even more innovation! We do not have any details yet - there is more than a year left to go before the event. Still, the outlining will be similar.



Blackcurrant product competition 2016

If your products fit in one of the 3 following categories:

1. Cassis, cordials, juices
2. Food products (Preserves, fruit leathers, pies, confectionary)
3. Functional food (nutraceutical products which offer proven health benefits, made from all elements of the blackcurrant fruit, backed by hard science)

Keep your eyes and ears open! We will call for participants in the contest and start preparing nice rewards for the winners very soon.



Blackcurrant product competition - the winners 2016

A panel of professionals will judge the products according to taste, packaging and several other criteria, and reward the best product of each category.

The blackcurrant smoothie contest of the Austria Juice and IBA New Product Development Unit

The Austria Juice & IBA New Product Development Unit has started its work. Its members have exchanged via Skype, phone calls and emails over the past months. Now, an exciting project is already under preparation: a blackcurrant smoothie contest!

1st Blackcurrant Smoothie Contest in Nuits-Saint-Georges (France)



On 7th July, one stage of the Tour de France 2017 will lead from Troyes to Nuits-Saint-Georges. Until then, there is nothing very spectacular. But if you consider that Nuits-Saint-Georges is in the heart of Burgundy, the region which

1. grows huge amounts of blackcurrants in France
2. where several companies produce the famous 'crème de cassis'
3. where you will find the Cassissium, a unique interpretation center about blackcurrants,

and finally that

4. between 30 and 40 thousand spectators are expected for each stage of the Tour de France,

there is no doubt: something with blackcurrants MUST happen there!



We have therefore decided to organize a smoothie contest. Because smoothies are healthy, in fashion everywhere, perfect for a hot summer day. And perfect also for sportspeople. Many of you know already that blackcurrants have wonderful effects on sportspeople's performance. Blackcurrants reduce muscle fatigue, increase fat burning and improve

recovery after exercise. These are already enough reasons to combine Tour de France and blackcurrants.

Several food bloggers will prepare their version of the best blackcurrant smoothie over the whole day. The people in Nuits-Saint-Georges at that moment will be served a few sips of each and they will vote for their favorite smoothie. Finally, a panel of food professionals will separately vote for the best smoothie.

This event is a wonderful occasion to make bloggers and other food professionals, as well as end consumers, get aware of what they can do with blackcurrants.

A nice opportunity for our superfruit to get publicity among a huge number of people.



Follow us: Best of Cassis, #bestofcassis

More contests to come?



Austria Juice New Product Development Unit

This all sounds nice? No, not only nice, but great! We are therefore thinking of repeating the same event in more cities, other countries, with different participants. And why not with other ingredients and for other preparations? We can duplicate the same kind of contest anywhere, at any time, and for any product.

We can well imagine a contest for the best blackcurrant pastry. Or another one for the best blackcurrant ice cream. If not a blackcurrant smoothie contest, then a blackcurrant dish contest. We will see how the first event turns out, and then think greater!

Learn more about the IBA & Austria Juice New Product Development Unit.

Other blackcurrant market opportunities - lots of ideas and potential for our favorite berry

This idea of a food contest has come up while we were thinking of new blackcurrant products for the world's market. Current food trends (snacking, healthy food, less sugar, organic, ready-to-use...) encourage us to think that blackcurrants have a wonderful potential here. Too many end products do not exist yet, or only in a limited number, or in a few countries. Given the growing awareness of people about its health benefits, the market for existing products could increase through exports.

New end products could also be launched: like **ready-made smoothies** with

blackcurrants. Or **blackcurrant chocolate**, or **energy drinks**, or **energy bars**? They do exist with cranberries and blackberries – why not with blackcurrants? Yet, we all know that the health benefit of blackcurrants is much higher than these fruits! Moreover, the price of blackcurrants is much lower, as they are easier to grow and harvest. Who will launch this kind of products? When will we have **blackcurrant granita** or **blackcurrant coulis** in one of the huge global fast food chains ?



Another concern is: how can people cook with blackcurrants, if they cannot find them in the market? Where are **dried blackcurrants**? Or a **fruit mix** for the preparation of smoothies? Or simply: **frozen blackcurrants** – which are mostly unavailable in many countries.... When will we finally see blackcurrants in several forms (frozen, fresh, dried, **powders**) over the whole year in our supermarkets, so that anyone can buy them at any time?

Will we improve the availability of blackcurrants in the future?

Yes, blackcurrants mainly go into the production of juices. And therefore, the biggest part of the yields ends up as blackcurrant concentrate. We are now launching a blackcurrant smoothie contest, but the smoothies have to be made with concentrate, because nothing much else is available. And even if people like our blackcurrant smoothies, how can they make it themselves – without blackcurrants? They will not find concentrates or purees, no frozen blackcurrants, and not even pure juice (without water and added sugar) – just a few blackcurrants during the 3 weeks of harvesting.



We want to sell more blackcurrants, but we don't offer a sufficient range of products to the end consumer – there is still a lot of work to do! This is a huge challenge for Austria Juice and the NPDU – and hopefully for other research and development units.

Blackcurrant plant protection info now available on www.blackcurrant-iba.com



Of course, every blackcurrant grower wants to keep his or her plantation healthy. And sustainable growing is one of the major concerns of the blackcurrant industry in general. Considering these two facts, the International Blackcurrant Association has decided to act and work on blackcurrant plant protection information.

The newly formed Agronomy & Plant Breeding sector group of the IBA, sponsored by Bayer, has therefore started its work last February. They have collected data from most of the blackcurrant growing countries. This data gives precious information on how these countries handle crop protection: Which products can be used? What do they contain? How much treatments can blackcurrant plantations receive, and when?

Results

Over the past months, the working group has checked the data. We have now finished to put it together for the easy use of our members here. This is only the first project of the sector group, and much more work is under way for the next months in other fields.

Of course, we will update blackcurrant plant protection information every year. We also hope to increase the number of participating countries little by little and add more and more value.

Sector Group members

If you want to know who is behind the sector group, you may check it here!

Blackcurrant in the press worldwide



The IBA keeps on scrutinizing the internet and the press for articles about blackcurrants. They may talk about health benefits, gastronomy, economy or growing methods - and many more. We gather them, save them, and make them available for the visitors of our website.

Yes, you got it: for blackcurrant lovers, any topic related to blackcurrants can be interesting!

Read articles

You can find these articles and read them in their original language on our website. Of course, this collection is far from being comprehensive.

In order to improve it, we are always happy to publish texts that you may have written, press releases talking about your company, or stories which you have read and found interesting to share with other blackcurrant lovers.

Therefore, feel free to send links, pdf files, photocopies etc. to blackcurrant@free.fr, and we will share them on our website.

Currants and Corinths - about the importance of spelling

❌ How surprised I was, when surfing the internet and coming over another blackcurrant festival which I had never heard about - wow! In a place with a strange spelling, making me think of Russia at the first sight, because Russia grows black currants on a huge scale.

But not two seconds later, I realized it was Greek! A blackcurrant festival in Greece? Can you grow blackcurrants in Greece? Zakynthos... where can this possibly be? Only in Northern Greece, of course - or else it would be too warm to grow blackcurrants.

Another 30 seconds of research (wikipedia, google and the like), a few lines to read and a few seconds to think. And suddenly, I found this black currant festival far less exciting. Because it doesn't celebrate my favorite berry, but small dried, sweet and seedless grapes - the Corinth raisin, from the Greek island of Zakynthos!

Currants or Corinths - what is right?

So, why do people need to call Corinths "black currants"? They are grapes (*Vitis vinifera*), not currants (*Ribes*), and there is a proper spelling for these. Their spelling is "Corinths" - removing any doubt about what they really are! And no doubt even more once you taste them. Blackcurrants have a high acidity content (not to say they are sour), whereas Corinth raisins are so sweet that you certainly do not need to add any sugar in your muesli when using them.

In the USA mainly, people refer to Corinths as "currants". Not amazingly, most of the people in the United States don't even know what "real" blackcurrants are. This fact is due to the ban of commercial blackcurrant growing. For a hundred years, our superfruit has not been grown in American fields on a commercial level. Actually, their government feared the White Pine Blister Rust, a fungus which can affect blackcurrants. And unfortunately, it can also affect pine trees, and therefore devastate the American forests.

Luckily, the situation has evolved over the past fifteen years. But the American

population has forgotten blackcurrants, their taste and their uses over a whole century. It is a pity, and we need a big change in the awareness about blackcurrants - to start from the spelling of Corinthians!

Blackcurrant harvest 2016 - a sad story



The blackcurrant growers of the Northern hemisphere have completed the blackcurrant harvest 2016 in July and August. Unfortunately, we have nothing very joyful to report from any country:

United Kingdom

For some of the growers who have contracts with processors, it was just a normal year. If we look at the United Kingdom, the quality of blackcurrants was good, and the amount of blackcurrant harvested of good average; just what is needed by the processors. In fact, traceability, quality control and a strict replanting policy avoid overproduction and guarantee blackcurrants which meet the quality requirement of the processors.

France

In general, the situation is quite similar in UK's neighbour country, France: traceability, quality control and contracts. But this year, the French growers have experienced the worst harvest ever: they had a very low yield, due to night frost during flowering and unexpected heat before the blackcurrant harvest in July.

There is no solution for most of the processors of these currants - who require French blackcurrants, of a specific variety. And they do not grow anywhere else...

USA

If we have a look over the Atlantic Ocean, we can name heat and drought as the major problems for the blackcurrant harvest 2016 in the United States. In fact, the harvest was also unexpectedly bad in America.

Other countries

But most other countries simply faced a recurring dilemma: blackcurrants of good quality, a normal amount of fruit on the bushes, but no market for selling the currants. The growers of uncontracted blackcurrants therefore received, once again, very low prices for their crop.

We can already see the consequences: Some growers have simply decided to stop growing blackcurrants. Nevertheless, everyone would simply prefer a bigger market for our superfruit. Because a higher demand would, of course, partly solve the problem of a high supply level. No doubt, blackcurrants are excellent for our health. No doubt, we can use blackcurrants in many different ways in gastronomy. But unfortunately, not many people know it. We have to work on spreading the knowledge about blackcurrants. This is a priority for growing the market - and growing the market is the only way to get over deceptions like this year.

Our members may view updated information on this year's harvest here.

**The 5th International
Blackcurrant Conference in**

Ashford, UK: a huge success!



Presentation of Ribena
by Peter Harding

From 14th to 16th June, Ashford (United Kingdom) was the place to be for all those involved in the blackcurrant industry worldwide.

More than 120 delegates from 16 different countries enjoyed a very warm welcome by the British organizing team, a lovely selection of high profile speakers and an exclusive overall programme with a perfect conference setup.



The British organizers, Anthony Snell and Sarah

Calcutt

It is impossible to relate everything in detail, but it's worth having a look at what you may have missed - or remind some delightful moments if you were among us.



IBA conference Ashford, 14th
- 16th June

Excellent presentations and speakers:

A wide spectrum of topics has been presented during the two days of our conference by almost 20 speakers from all over the world: new results of the research on health benefits of our superfruit, valuable marketing initiatives and global trends in the food market, agronomy, pest management and plant breeding.

They gave place to discussions and will hopefully lead to nice developments in the future for blackcurrants.



Almost all the speakers were happy to share their presentations for the IBA website. If you could not be in Ashford, you may still read them - and if you were present, you may want to see them again and go through them at your own path.

Check our web-library for the presentations of your interest.

Visit of Britain's Oldest brewer: Shepherd Neame - and Morris dancing!



Visit of the oldest
British brewery

There was not much time for our delegates for discovering Kent - the blackcurrant programme was intensive, but still left a little place for discovering new things. A visit has been organized to Britain's oldest brewer, Shepherd Neame, followed by a tasting of their different beers.



Conference participants
learn Morris dancing

More authentic even: the delegates were introduced to Morris dancing. After examining the professional dancers, the conference participants were given the opportunity to participate themselves.

There are rumors that some of the blackcurrant professionals are thinking

of changing their profession after this visit...

See more pictures of the conference



Visit of John Hinchcliff's farm near Faversham

Visit of a blackcurrant farm and machinery demo

An afternoon tour of an exemplar grower and machinery demo gave opportunity to the delegates to discover British varieties and growing methods.

It was also a perfect setting for the demonstration of machinery of the conference's partners: latest European equipment for harvesting, pruning, spraying and plantation management have been shown by leading manufacturers and suppliers.



Self-driven tractor: the future for farmers?

By the way, if you are a grower, have you ever thought of all the things you could do while not sitting on a tractor for spraying, and being far from plant protection products?

Well, it may be time to think of it: we have been shown a self-driven tractor! The future is already here and now!



Dirk Herdieckerhoff

IBA matters

The IBA President Dirk Herdieckerhoff and General Manager Stefanie Sharma have spoken about what has happened over the past year, and outlined what will be coming during the next year. You may read the president's annual report and the General Manager's report on activities in details.

During the Annual General Meeting, elections have been held for 2 vice-presidents and presidency. The newly elected IBA President for the next two years is now Anthony Snell (United Kingdom). He is being assisted in the Executive by the two vice-presidents, Piotr Baryla (Poland) and Jens Holme Pedersen (Denmark), and the former president Dirk Herdieckerhoff (Germany).

Minutes of the IBA Annual General Meeting will be available soon on the IBA website.

According to what had been planned over the past year, it has been decided to change the IBA rules of association: any individual or company can now become a member of our association! More information on request: info@blackcurrant-iba.com



Blackcurrant product competition

The new blackcurrant product competition

An amazing range of blackcurrant products from all over the world has been presented in Ashford: juices, liqueurs and other drinks, jams, vinegars, purees and more “exotic” products like apple rings or fruit pastes, and some nutraceuticals. Impossible to name all the participants in a short notice like this -

and the panel had difficulties finding the winners.



Blackcurrant product competition –
the winners

In the category of drinks, the blackcurrant liqueur “Cassis de Bourgogne IGP” by Védrenne was found best.

In the category of food products, the “Scottish Blackcurrant Preserve” by MacKays was most convincing.

In the category of functional food, it was Naturege’s “Cassis +”.

An overall winner for the blackcurrant product of the year 2016 has been found with the Cassismanufaktur: two excellent new products have been developed by this small company: gummy bears made of blackcurrant juice and a blackcurrant balsamic vinegar.

Congratulations to the winners, and a huge THANK YOU to all the participants in the contest!



Agronomy & Plant Breeding Sector Group Meeting, 14th June

Meeting of the Agronomy & Plant Breeding Sector Group

The head of the IBA agronomy & plant breeding sector group sponsored by Bayer, Piotr Baryla, had decided to present a table of plant protection products for blackcurrants. The data had been collected beforehand from the members of the sector group from all blackcurrant growing countries, and a (almost) complete file could have been established.

It will be made available on the IBA website soon.



Bayer

See the final report of the sector group.

A second focus was made on blackcurrant varieties in blackcurrant growing countries. In the same way than for the data on plant protection products, representatives of each country have been asked to give information on all the varieties they grow before the conference. The amount of data received has been tremendous and needs further processing before being available to every grower.

You will be informed about the development of the section dedicated to these subjects on the IBA website as soon as possible. In the meantime, you may contact the IBA General Manager for detailed information, or for joining the

sector group.

Do you **LIKE** blackcurrants?

Blackcurrants have their IBA facebook pages in English, French and German:



Blackcurrant - best berry for life

Cassis - petite baie contre stress et tensions

Cassis - lecker gesund

Do you like blackcurrants? Then you should like one of the pages!

There will soon be much more to read on facebook, much more to like, share and spread. Many messages are just waiting to be brought to the people, and facebook is an excellent way to get them through.

Hope to see you soon!