



ISTA
Seed Quality Assurance

ISTA Secretariat

Address: Richtiring 32, 8304 Wallisellen
Post Address: Richtiarkade 18, 8304 Wallisellen
Switzerland

Press Release

34th ISTA Congress Unites Global Seed Experts in Christchurch

In May 2025, the city of Christchurch proudly hosted the **34th ISTA Congress**, uniting over 153 delegates and global experts in seed science, testing, and regulation from 32 countries. This landmark event, organised by the **International Seed Testing Association (ISTA)**, was co-hosted by the **Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)**, **AsureQuality**, and the **New Zealand Seed Authority (NZSA)**, and took place at the **Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre**.

The Congress commenced with a vibrant Welcoming Reception, offering a warm introduction to New Zealand's cultural richness and a space for delegates to reconnect. On Monday and Tuesday, attention turned to the **Seed Symposium** on "*Seed Quality for Global Food Security and Biodiversity*", exploring the latest research and practices in seed quality, technological innovation, and the critical relationship between seeds, resilience, and sustainability.

Key topics included:

- New technologies in seed testing and imaging
- Seed quality, germination, dormancy and environmental factors
- Plant health, contaminants, and microorganisms
- A dynamic forum on *New Breeding Techniques*, spurring conversations on regulatory challenges and scientific progress

The event also featured a Poster Session.

A Discussion Forum on new breeding technologies and their global legal status was well received and fostered a dynamic discussion among the delegates.

These two days concluded with a memorable Gala Dinner held at the iconic Christchurch Art Gallery.

Midweek, the Congress featured meetings of ISTA's **Technical Committees**, emphasising on new proposals for the ISTA Rules, availability of new learning materials and developments in seed testing technologies. Besides revisions to the ISTA Rules for Seed Testing, a new Seed Health method for the detection of *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *lycopersici* in *Solanum lycopersicum* (tomato) seed was added to the 2026 ISTA Rules.



ISTA
Seed Quality Assurance

ISTA Secretariat

Address: Richtiring 32, 8304 Wallisellen
Post Address: Richtiarkade 18, 8304 Wallisellen
Switzerland

The event culminated on Friday, 9 May, with the **ISTA Ordinary General Meeting (OGM)**, during which:

- A new **Executive Committee (2025-2028)** under the leadership of ISTA President Ernest Allen was elected
- Two distinguished contributors - **Steve Jones** and **Berta Killermann** - were honoured as **Honorary Life Members** for their lifelong service to ISTA and seed science as a whole

From groundbreaking insights to cultural immersion, the 34th ISTA Congress was a powerful testament for the vital role ISTA plays to global cooperation in strengthening seed systems and quality standards for a more food-secure future.

For more details and to access the Seed Symposium presentations, as well as an image gallery of the Congress visit: [ISTA Congress 2025](#).