The seed industry in The Netherlands
Overview and special reference to vegetable seeds

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Plantum and its members

The 380 members united in Plantum are active in the seed chain: from breeding research to seed trade

- turnover € 2.2 billion
- active worldwide
- some 10,000 staff in NL
- Identified as a “top sector” in the Dutch economy
Seeds in The Netherlands

Top exporting countries of agricultural and horticultural seeds:
Vegetable seed export
Euro / Million, 2010

- Netherlands
- USA
- France
- Israel
- Italy
- Chile
- Japan
- China
- Germany
- Denmark
- Spain
- Hungary
Why such a prominent place?

History

Entrepreneurship

Knowledge infrastructure and effective protection of intellectual property

Good collaboration between private sector and Government in regulatory issues
History of the country
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Knowledge infrastructure and protection of intellectual property

Focus on public-private partnerships.
• Private sector has been in the boards of government research institutes, more recently:
  • increased co-funded research.
Planting materials are an explicit component of the “topsectors” in Dutch innovation policy.
Plant sciences capabilities of Wageningen + universities of Amsterdam, Leiden, Utrecht and Groningen connected in one Research School.

IP: the first PBR law in Europe in 1941 – co-founder of UPOV and active in adapting the Acts to changing conditions.
Currently: active in debates on patents in breeding (e.g. unitary patent of the EU)
Different points of view may yield different outcomes
Government – industry collaboration

Official seed testing and variety trials have been regularly adapted to match changing conditions.

Conditions are different for different crops/sectors.
Good collaboration

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Regulation is important to advance the sector. Over-regulation defies the objectives and needs to be avoided.
Conclusion

The Dutch seed sector is thriving, based on
- Historical advantages
- Entrepreneurship and international markets
- Good collaboration between Government and private sector

The sector benefits from good international cooperation in trade-related issues, such as
- open markets
- protection of breeder’s rights
- recognition of all seed quality aspects

In that context, the seed industry of The Netherlands warmly welcomes the ISTA Annual Meeting 2012 !!!!