

## CEPA and NPMA Global Summit in Portugal attract record attendance from 34 countries

The third Global Summit of Pest Management Services for Public Health and Food Safety, a joint event organised from 4th to 6th June by CEPA and NPMA, attracted its biggest ever audience. More than 300 attendees made their way to Portugal and met in a seaside resort close to Lisbon. There were delegates from five continents – Europe, the USA, Asia, Australasia, Africa and South America. In total 34 countries were represented. Almost one third of the participants were operators, manufacturers and distributors from Portugal and Spain in addition to large delegations from France and China.

The overall theme of this year's event focused on the industry's need to prepare for change and open up to innovation. Previous events – on the French Riviera in 2015 and New York in 2017 – have focused primarily on food safety but this time there was also considerable emphasis on public health and in particular on mosquitoes and the vector-borne diseases they carry.

However, the food safety angle remained very visible on the agenda with Ferenc Varga from Nestlé and Justyna Kostarczyk from the retailer Metro Group providing insights on how to manage pests for their industries. They kicked off one and a half days of presentations with contributions from all continents and all industry sectors.

The highlight of the first day was a panel discussion with experts examining the political dimension and the need for a harmonised global approach to pest management standards looking at the outside pressures on our industry. Explaining the concept of soft legislation through public private partnerships Robert Madelin, now a consultant but formerly the Director General of the European Commission's Health and Consumer Protection Directorate, believed the pest management industry needs to work with allies, partners and sponsors to ensure it is not regulated out of business. Amongst other things, he mentioned the opportunities offered by initiatives such as the Global Sustainable Development Goals. In his view, echoed by a panel including the Portuguese Ministry of Public Health, the Global Food Safety initiative, a major Pest Management operator and the new Executive Director of CEPA, the industry

has to be accepted as an ethical business and therefore perhaps only subjected to limited regulatory intervention.

Day two was dedicated to the annual World Pest Day Observance on June 6th, exceptionally coinciding with the Global Summit this year. The purpose of the World Pest Day celebration is to raise awareness among the public, government and media about the important role that the pest management industry plays in protecting health, food, property and the environment from pest health threats around the world. In their statements both CEPA and NPMA presidents echoed that "with the ever-increasing pest risks due in part to climate change and a growing urban population, the World Pest Day is a moment of pride for the women and men, that work relentlessly for the security and safety of citizens and businesses".

Amongst many high-level presentations underlining the importance of professional pest management services in support of responsibly protecting citizens, their homes, their food, their businesses and the environment in which they live against public health risks, a video message from the World Health Organisation delivered by Dr Raman Velayudhan, Coordinator of the Vector Ecology Management Unit at WHO Headquarters in Geneva was warmly applauded. Dr Velayudhan invited our global community to look at ways to collaborate in joint initiatives.

Judging by the comments International Pest Control collected from organisers and speakers it seems evident that the pest management industry's Global Summit initiative continues to carry considerable promise as we look ahead.

According to Dominique Stumpf, CEO of NPMA, "The vast amount of sharing and education to further the cause of protecting public health, food and property that has been shared at this event is proof positive that when we all work together in the global community to share our knowledge, innovation and technology, we all benefit and further along the process of protecting the public from pests and pest related diseases. We had over 300 attendees from 34 countries that actively participated and are looking forward to the next Summit in 2020."

Henry Mott, President of CEPA, stated that "it was a pleasure to witness the enthusiasm of the attendees at this year's Global Summit. A conscious effort by the organising team was to create an event that was innovative and efficacious. By combining both the more directly relevant pest management lectures with those that delved more into the legislative issues we attempted to appeal to a wider audience.

In terms of the audience it certainly appeared that we reached all four corners of the globe this time with larger numbers than ever before."

Ferenc Varga, Food Safety Expert for Nestlé Quality Assurance and Leader of Nestlé's Global Hygiene Network stated: "As I look back on this Global Summit meeting, I recall the many enthusiastic and motivated participants of diverse backgrounds, ages and circumstances, all united with a single purpose; contributing to excellence in managing and preventing pest issues. Like the previous editions of the Summit, I found the event to be a rejuvenating experience providing inspiration to find ways to make more emphatic contributions to public health. I hope the next Summit will bring an even bigger mix of strategic insights and state-of-the-art educational presentations reaching out to participants from international and national businesses, allowing all to benefit from shared experiences."

Finally, Bertrand Montmoreau, CEPA Past President and Honorary President of CS3D (France), who launched the idea for a joint Summit with NPMA during his tenure in 2013, commented: "This 3rd edition of our industry's bi-annual summit meeting can be proud of having achieved a truly global dimension in promoting the role of urban pest management to responsibly protect citizens and the environment in which they live against public health and food safety risks ... not only geographically speaking but also from the thematic angle." He felt that "future summits should work on deepening our collaboration with WHO and use the combined talents of experts in our newly created Global Pest Management Coalition to develop forward looking content." ■

Roland Higgins, Director General, CEPA