

Biennial Workshop on the Smut Fungi

This publication is composed of the contributions presented during the XVth Biennial Workshop on the Smut Fungi, which was held in Prague, Czech Republic, June 11–14, 2006.

Bunt and smut fungi have afflicted crop production since the beginning of recorded history. These obligate parasites, highly specialized in pathogenicity, cause some of the world's most destructive crop diseases affecting both yield and quality.

The Biennial Smut Workshop is an informal gathering of international scientists, regulators, and industry personnel concerned with all aspects of smut and bunt fungi and the diseases they cause. The meeting synergizes collaboration and the knowledge base of this important group of plant pathogens, and provides a forum for the exchange of current information, research results, experiences, and ideas.

The Biennial Workshop on Smut Fungi arose from a two hour discussion of a group of researchers after a meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in Missoula, Montana in 1978. Other meetings with wider participation followed, concentrated not only on topics of quarantine concern but including essentially all aspects of research of numerous species of the smut fungi: Corvallis, Oregon, USA (1980), Logan, Utah, USA (1982), Honolulu, Hawaii, USA (1984), Ciudad Obregon, Sonora, Mexico (1986), Winnipeg, Ontario, Canada, (1988), Frederick, Maryland, USA (1990), Athens, Georgia, USA (1992), El Baton, Mexico D.F., Mexico (1994), Calgary, Alberta, Canada (1996), Pullman, Washington, USA (1998), Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico (2000), Dallas, Texas, USA (2002), Idaho Falls, Idaho, USA (2004).

XVth Biennial Workshop on the Smut Fungi, Prague, Czech Republic (2006) brought the meeting to European continent. Forty specialists from 14 countries participated in this event presenting 18 oral contributions and 7 posters. The meeting was concentrated on pathogenesis, epidemiology and disease forecasting; population genetics and genomics of *Ustilago* and *Tilletia* species; molecular biology of host-parasite interactions and resistance; variety development for sustainable agricultural systems; chemical, cultural and biological control and other topics.

The next meeting will be organized in 2008 in Beltsville, Maryland, USA.

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