

## GUEST EDITORIAL

## Guest Editorial

DOI: 10.1111/j.1757-837X.2012.00133.x

This special issue of *Quality Assurance and Safety of Crops & Foods* focuses on the 1<sup>st</sup> ICC India Grains Conference, which was organized in partnership with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT).

India is a remarkable country. Not only is it the world's second most populous, it is also an astounding agricultural success. In the past 30 years, India has had a true green revolution. The country is now nationally food secure. Agriculture accounts for some 16% of GDP and 10% of export earnings. In 2011, there was a record production of wheat and rice of 86 and 89 million tons, respectively. With an average GDP growth rate of 7.5% over the period 2000 to present and rising living standards, grain food manufacture is also growing rapidly. It was therefore fitting that ICC in partnership with ICRISAT, with its headquarters in Hyderabad, should host the first ever ICC India Grains Conference. This ground-breaking 3-day meeting was held New Delhi in January 2012 and attended by some 120 delegates, of whom 50% were local, with the international delegates coming from 16 different countries.

Several VIPs from the Indian scientific community most kindly participated in the conference, notably Dr S. Ayyappan, Director General of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), who delivered the opening address; Dr S.K. Dutta, Deputy DG Crop Sciences, ICAR; Dr V. Prakash, Nutrition Society of India President; and Dr Kiran S. Sharma, CEO of ICRISAT's Agribusiness Platform. Additionally, Dr William D. Dar, DG of ICRISAT, delivered the conference keynote address.

This QAS issue highlights in abstract form some of the most relevant conference papers from Indian and international scientists. There are also short papers by Prof Ravi

Chibbar of the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, and Dr Sain Dass of the Indian Maize Development Association, summarizing the conference session on crop improvement, and by Dr V. Prakash and Prof John Taylor on Indian and African trends in cereal food technologies and the need for Indian and international networking programmes. Lastly, there are full papers by Dr Kedar Rai and co-workers of ICRISAT on iron and zinc biofortification of pearl millet, and by Dr Vasudeva Singh and co-workers of the Indian Central Food Technological Research Institute on developing ready-to-eat nutritious cereal flake products. 'Power-points' of a number of the conference papers can additionally be found at <http://india2012.icc.or.at/>.

We are particularly pleased to report that the 1<sup>st</sup> ICC India Grains Conference in Partnership with ICRISAT has led to the creation of an ICC India Taskforce of distinguished international and Indian agricultural scientists under the leadership of Prof Ravi Chibbar. The ICC India Taskforce is mandated with discussion on emerging grains-related issues of mutual interest and the development of a strategy for collaboration between Indian and international agricultural and food science researchers.

John R. N. Taylor  
ICC Immediate Past-President  
Chair: Conference Organising Committee  
[John.Taylor@up.ac.za](mailto:John.Taylor@up.ac.za)

Jan Willem van der Kamp  
Chair of the ICC Academy  
Chair: Conference Scientific Committee  
[jan-willem.vanderkamp@tno.nl](mailto:jan-willem.vanderkamp@tno.nl)