

15th Triennial Symposium of the International Society for Tropical Root Crops

Session IV: Biotechnology for Sustainable Development

Highlights

Moderators: W. Roca and M. Ghislain

Broadly speaking, Session IV comprised three inter-related topics: (i) development of the genomic knowledge base of R&T crops; (ii) development and testing of gene transfer methods for R&T crops; (iii) testing applications of selected bio-technologies for improving priority traits of R&T crops.

Out of the genomic talks was the report (**J. Tohme and C. Fauquet**) of the imminent announcement of the complete sequence of the cassava genome and of an advanced version of the potato genome (**M. Ghislain**). Also, the ground work to develop the genetic resources needed for advancing towards the sequencing of the sweetpotato genome was reported in this Session (**R. Schafleitner**).

New ways to transfer genes into plants were reported. The mini-circle invention that is expected to produce plants with new genes will not be regulated as they are not considered to be GMO (**A. Conner**). Another important report was the discovery of new method for the identification of DNA and RNA not integrated into the plant genome such as unknown viruses (**J. Kreuze**).

Biotech applications for specific traits were reported for physiological trait, pests, and nutrition highlighting once more the tremendous potential of biotechnology to gain knowledge on plant response to changes and how to make changes in plants for better responses to adverse conditions.