

Press Release Donau Soja
Monday, 19th June 2023

Vienna is Soya Capital of the World this week Today marks commencement of Europe's first Soya World Conference

The 11th World Soybean Research Conference (WSRC11) commenced today, for the first time taking place in Europe. 150 years after the first globally significant presentation of soybeans at the 1873 Vienna World Expo, nearly 800 scientists, food and feed producers, processors, and soya experts hailing from 51 countries are meeting at the Vienna Austria Center and the city's World Museum. Donau Soja, a Vienna-based not-for-profit organisation, is acting as host. Professor Johann Vollmann of the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (BOKU) is acting as chairman of the scientific committee. The themes of the conference are sustainability advances in breeding, agriculture, and processing, as well as innovations within supply chains. Professor Johann Vollmann, Director Jingyuan Xia of Plant Production and Protection Division (NSP) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Matthias Krön, Founder and President of Donau Soja, and the Austrian Minister of Agriculture, Norbert Totschnig, spoke at today's opening.

In his statement, Professor Vollmann said: "This conference is first and foremost a research conference, with over 500 submissions from leading scientists hailing from all major soybean-producing countries. Collaboration in research and science is urgently needed to mitigate the consequences of climate change, and to minimize the environmental impacts of the soybean. Through this, truly sustainable soybean production is a distinct possibility in the near future. This transition would include a reduction of inputs through agronomic and genetic efficiency improvements, new approaches to livestock feed use, and enhanced direct utilization of soybeans in human diets. These themes will be addressed in over 30 scientific sessions, plenaries, workshops, and poster exhibitions. 150 years after the Vienna World Expo, the scientific soybean community is here once again to find answers to the challenges lying ahead of us."

Matthias Krön of Donau Soja emphasised the conference's international significance: "Soya is the world's most important source of protein, both for direct food production and animal feed. How this wonderful plant is grown, processed, traded, and used plays a major role in the future of humanity. A sustainable future, without hunger, overexploitation, and biodiversity loss, while building and maintaining regional supply chains, is a major global challenge. We, as the European Soybean Organisation, want to take the opportunities provided by the coming week here in Vienna to find solutions to this challenge alongside scientists, producers, processors, and NGOs from all over the world. Additionally, and crucially, we want to send essential impulses to the world on how soya can become a global force for good, on how Europe can achieve the protein transition, and on how science can contribute to the creation of a more sustainable world."

Jingyuan Xia of the FAO put forth a set of new approaches: "We propose a strategic approach to a sustainable soybean value chain through optimization and minimization of production systems to overcome the major existing and emerging challenges. This concept promotes optimized use of natural resources and minimized application of agricultural inputs by diversifying cropping systems, adoption of innovations, new varieties, technologies and integrated approaches. Thus, enhancing soybean production contributes to achieving Sustainable Development Goals, and fostering international cooperation among relevant stakeholders."

The Austrian Minister of Agriculture, Norbert Totschnig, welcomed the international audience and shed light on the role of Austria and Europe: "Austria is a small country with a total cultivated area of around 1.3 million hectares, yet ranks among the top five soya-producing countries in the EU. It is an honour for Vienna, for Austria, and for Europe that this conference is taking place here to discuss the globally important scientific issues facing us today, whether that be food security or sustainability. For me, increasing the degree of self-sufficiency is a priority, achievable through expanding areas under cultivation or by using protein resources more efficiently. Austria has already published a national protein strategy and is currently campaigning for an EU-wide equivalent alongside many other Member States."

Website of the World Soybean Research Conference: [World Soybean Research Conference WSRC11 | Vienna 2023 \(wsrc11vienna.com\)](https://www.wsrc11vienna.com)

Book of Abstracts: [Soybean Research for Sustainable Development | Zenodo](#)

Download handouts here

Press Enquiries and Interview Requests

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