

PREFACE

Potato Late Blight is one of the most devastating diseases worldwide. The yearly losses reach up to 10–15 % of the global crop, which is comparable to the total potato production in the EU countries. There are several national and international programs and initiatives to stimulate progress in breeding potato cultivars resistant to Late Blight. Here, the Global Initiative on Late Blight (GILB), joined by researchers from all continents, several finished and ongoing EU programs directed to the progress in Late Blight research as well as the Cornell–Eastern Europe–Mexico (CEEM) International Collaborative Project in Potato Late Blight Control need to be mentioned.

The Crop Improvement Center for Sustainable Agriculture (CICSA), the IHAR's Center of Excellence, is directed, among others, to the stimulation of an international collaboration in improvement of various crops by organizing of conferences, workshops and trainings.

In our case it was the channel to push forward the initiative to joint discussion and work on Late Blight project proposals, which was an interesting item for the members of old and new EU projects and other related national projects.

The the Polish Ministry of Science and Information Technology, CICSA and CEEM were the sponsors of the workshop "Towards integration of Late Blight control in European potato production, breeding achievements and pathogen knowledge", held in Falenty on January 14–18, 2004, including the publication of this issue comprising the papers presented at the workshop.

The EUCABLIGHT, an ongoing Concerted Action on Potato Late Blight Network for Europe funded by 5FP of EU, is a natural consortium of scientists and breeders dealing with Late Blight problems in potato production. This alive and active society involves the majority of participants attending the workshop in Falenty. A significant contribution to the workshop outputs was also made by the members of the previous EU concerted action "European network for development of an integrated control strategy of potato Late Blight" (EU.NET.ICP), who took part in our event.

The papers and posters presented at the workshop as well as fruitful and lively discussions, yielded tracing out the goals and objectives for the future research, intended to make progress in reducing losses in potato production due to Late Blight disease.

Ewa Zimnoch-Guzowska