

Summary (Outcomes in brief)

Delegates from many industries and countries attended
Delegate numbers were well above predictions (148)
Four international keynote speakers provided addresses on emerging issues (soil health, biological control, suppressive soils, and disease suppression)

Emerging needs are:

*Soil health: find and validate indicators, and use these to improve disease controls and their sustainability

*Pathogen assays: increase the adoption of pathogen molecular assays across industries, but ensure that data relate to disease expression in the field

*Biological control: increase our understanding of the interaction of biologicals with other soil organisms to ensure consistency of control; increase research into new biologicals and their commercial production; minimise regulatory issues restricting their usage.

*Alternatives to soil fumigants: increase research into sustainable, commercially successful IPM strategies using a full range of controls and disease prediction strategies.

*Benchmarking potential yields: ensure that across all industries, the effects of soilborne disease on commercial yields have been quantified.

*Cross-industry co-operation: cross-industry research programs were shown to be relevant and potentially very rewarding in providing break-throughs and outcomes.

There was overwhelming support for a second ASDS in 2-3 years time.

Introduction

The First Australasian Soilborne Disease (ASDS) was held 9-12 February 1999 on the Gold Coast in Queensland. One hundred and forty eight delegates attended representing a range of industries (sugarcane, cotton, cereals, pineapples, market garden crops, apples, citrus, bananas, turf grass and others) and countries (Australia, China, France, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, United States and Vietnam). Four international keynote speakers attended and gave stimulating presentations on the following topics:-

Soil health - Dr Ariena van Bruggen (USA)

Root-microbe interactions (and disease suppression) - Dr Joe Klopper (USA)

Biological control - Dr Deborah Fravel (USA), and

Suppressive soils - Dr Claude Alabouvette (France)

Over 80 papers were contributed and these were published in the Proceedings of the First Australasian Soilborne Disease Symposium (ISBN 0 949678 02 3). Ten keynote addresses (one per session) were published in Australasian Plant Pathology (volume 28(1)). Emerging issues at ASDS included soil health, disease suppression, pathogen detection, the loss of methyl bromide in high value cropping systems, biological control and integrated control of soil-borne diseases using a range of control and prediction techniques.