

Limassol, Cyprus – Candidate city for organizing the 11th International Oat Conference in 2020.

One of the candidate cities for organizing the 11th International Oat Conference in 2020 is Limassol, Cyprus. Cyprus is an island country in the Eastern Mediterranean and the third largest and third most populous island in the Mediterranean. It is located south of Turkey, west of Syria and Lebanon, northwest of Israel and Palestine, north of Egypt and southeast of Greece. The city of Limassol is a city on the southern coast of Cyprus and capital of the eponymous district. Limassol is the second largest urban area in Cyprus, with an urban population of 160,000–176,700. Limassol has been ranked by TripAdvisor as the 3rd up-and-coming destination in the world, in its Top 10 Traveler's Choice Destinations on the Rise. The city is also ranked 87th worldwide in Mercer's Quality of Living Survey (2015). The meeting will be hosted by the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), a newly university established in 2004. Its first intake of students was for the academic year 2007–08. The university provides in total six faculties that students can choose from. The Department of Agricultural Science, Biotechnology and Food Science, is the only department in Cyprus providing undergraduate and graduate degrees in agriculture. There are a number of 4 and 5 stars hotels in Limassol that can provide accommodation in a variety of prices. Since the proposed time of the conference is either Monday March 30th to Friday April 3rd 2020, or Monday April 6th to Friday April 10th 2020, hotel prices are not high season and should be in the range of 80-100 \$USD. The sessions can either be hosted by the university or the hotel or a combination of both places. Anticipated registration costs are not expected to exceed the 600 \$USD. Cyprus has two major international airports, one in Paphos and one in Larnaka. Limassol is situated between the two airports and can be reached within 40-50 minutes. There are scheduled direct flights all-year-round for both airports from a number of European cities, the middle east cities, Dubai and Bahrain. There are also charter and seasonal flights operating in both airports.

If Cyprus is selected for the next International Oat Conference, participants will have for the first time during the conference, the chance to visit *in situ* areas where a number of *Avena* wild species are growing. A number of wild *Avena* species are present in Cyprus, including *A. ventricosa*, *A. wiestii*, *A. hirtula*, *A. clauda*, *A. eriantha*, *A. barbata* and *A. sterilis*. A demonstration field plot with varieties and material provided by the participants will also be planted. Oats are planted in late November – early December, so by the time of the conference plants are anticipated to be at filling stage. No special phytosanitary requirements are necessary for oats, but clean seeds, free from pathogens are essential. During the field trip a demonstration plot on how to regenerate-multiply *Avena* wild relatives will also be included.

A number of interesting touristic sites are in close proximity (within 30 minutes driving) to the city of Limassol, including the ancient port of Amathus, the ancient city Kourion or Curium, the medieval castles in Kolossi and in the centre of Limassol, the archaeological and the folk art museums in Limassol, to name a few. Limassol has recently renovated its promenade in the coastal front, ending in the newly built marina.

During the meeting additional workshops can be scheduled, such as the *Avena* Working Group of ECPGR, and other meetings if requested.

The local organizing committee will include:

Andreas Katsiotis (Professor, Cyprus University of Technology)

Andreas Anayiotos (Rector, Cyprus University of Technology)

Vasilis Fotopoulos (Assistant Professor, Cyprus University of Technology)

Angelos Kyratzis (Genebank Curator, Agricultural Research Institute)

A member from the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment

A member from the professional organization of the Cypriot Agriculturists

A member from the Rural Office of the Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Development and Environment

We're at your disposal for any additional information that might be required.

-Andreas Katsiotis