

# CPVO Seminar

## SPEAKERS

## **Martin Ekvad**



Martin Ekvad brings a wealth of experience in intellectual property law and plant variety protection to his current role as Director of Legal Affairs at UPOV (International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants), a position he has held since October 2023.

Prior to joining UPOV, Martin established Ekvad Consulting (2021-2023), where he provided specialized advisory services primarily focused on intellectual property rights and EU regulatory affairs. This entrepreneurial venture followed his distinguished ten-year tenure as President of the Community Plant Variety Office (CPVO) from 2011 to 2021, where he led the organization responsible for granting intellectual property rights for new plant varieties throughout the European Union.

Martin's leadership at CPVO was preceded by eight years (2003-2011) as Head of the Legal Unit within the same organization, where he developed deep expertise in plant variety protection law and related intellectual property matters.

His foundation in legal practice was established during his seven years (1996-2003) working as an Avocat at prestigious law firms—Linklaters in Brussels and Magnusson Wahlin Advokatbyrå in Stockholm—where he specialized in intellectual property rights and competition law. Martin began his legal career serving in the Swedish civil court system from 1994 to 1996.

Martin holds a law degree from the University of Lund in Sweden and enhanced his legal education with a Master of Laws (LL.M.) from the renowned King's College in London.

## Francesco Mattina



Mr. Francesco Mattina is the current President of the CPVO since 1st February 2022. An Italian national, educated as a lawyer with a degree in law from the University of Parma, Italy, he holds specialisations in European Union Law, from the European College of Parma, and in Intellectual Property Law, from the University of Alicante, Spain. Francesco Mattina joined the CPVO in 2013 after a first experience in the EU public sector as a senior legal advisor in industrial property at the European Union Intellectual Property Agency (EUIPO). Since 2013, Francesco Mattina held various management positions at the CPVO. From 2013 to 2017, he was the Head of the Legal Unit. From 2017 until his current appointment, Francesco Mattina was Vice-President of the CPVO.

## Herbert Dorfmann



Mr. Herbert Dorfmann is an Italian national and Member of the European Parliament from the Group of the European People's Party (Christian Democrats) since 2009. He serves as a Vice-Chair of the Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly and Member of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development; the Subcommittee on Tax Matters; the Delegation for relations with Mercosur; and Delegation for relations with the People's Republic of China. Mr. Dorfmann holds degree in Agronomy from the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of Piacenza. Between 2005 and 2009 he served as a Mayor of Velturno (Bolzano) and as a Regional chairman of the South Tyrolean People's Party between 2009 and 2024. His professional roles include also Head of the Agricultural Department of the Bolzano Chamber of Commerce (1995-1997), Director of the South Tyrolean Farmers' Association (1997-2006), and Secretary General of the Assembly of European Wine Regions (AREV) (2005-2009).

## **Sandra Gallina**



Ms. Sandra Gallina is Director-General of Health and Food Safety at the European Commission (DG SANTE) since 2020. Italian national, she holds a diploma in Interpretation from the University of Trieste in Italy. Sandra Gallina joined the European Commission back in 1988. Her professional experience within European Institutions includes numerous roles: Deputy Director-General of DG SANTE in 2020, Deputy Director-General of DG TRADE (2018-2020), Director of "Sustainable Development; Economic Partnership Agreements - African, Caribbean and Pacific; Agri-food and Fisheries" at DG TRADE (2015-2018).

## João Negrão



João Negrão is the Executive Director of the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) since 1 October 2023. João originally joined the EUIPO as head of the Executive Director's Cabinet in 2010 and between 2011 and 2020 he was Director of the International Cooperation and Legal Affairs Department of the EUIPO. Between 2020 and 2023 he has held the position of President of the EUIPO Boards of Appeal. Before joining the EUIPO, João held different positions in the Portuguese public administration, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/General Directorate for EU Affairs, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and the Ministry of Justice/National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI). In 2001, he joined the INPI in the international relations cabinet, becoming the Head of Cabinet in 2004. In 2008, he was appointed Director of International Relations and Promotion of Innovation at INPI. João Negrão holds a Master's degree in law and a bachelor's degree in international relations. He also has a number of high level qualifications in Public Administration Management (National Institute of Administration), Leadership Management and High Performance People Skills for Leaders (London Business School) as well as IP-related courses, such as a general course on IP (WIPO Worldwide Academy) and a specialised course on the practice and functioning of the IP system in the USA (USPTO).

## Maud Faipoux



Ms. Maud Faipoux is Director General for Food at the French Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty since 2022. Agricultural advisor to the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister since January 2021, Ms. Faipoux previously served as an advisor in plant sector to the Minister of Agriculture and Food. A graduate of the Paris-Grignon National Institute of Agronomy (INA-PG) and the National School of Rural Engineering, Water and Forests, she began her career at the Nord-Pas-de-Calais regional environmental department, before taking on the role of head of the agricultural economics department of the Calvados departmental directorate of territories and the sea between 2007 and 2012. From 2012 to 2016, Maud Faipoux held responsibilities within the general management of economic and environmental performance of companies at the Ministry of Agriculture. She headed the *Agriculture, food, fisheries* sector of the General Secretariat for European Affairs for four years, between 2016 and 2020.

## Edgar Krieger



Dr. Edgar Krieger is the Secretary General of CIOPORA since 2004. CIOPORA is a community of breeders of asexually reproduced horticultural plants: an independent non-profit and non-governmental organization seeking to establish effective IP protection systems for horticulture. Dr. Krieger is German national and has extensive experience in the field of Intellectual Property protection for plant innovation. Before CIOPORA, Dr. Krieger worked as a lawyer at an international law firm specializing in IP protection, particularly Plant Breeder's Rights, advising breeders in numerous court cases up to the European Court of Justice. He holds a Law Degree from the University of Bonn and a Degree in Business Administration from the Aachen University of Applied Sciences. Dr. Krieger completed his doctoral dissertation on the topic "Farmers' Exemption in Germany" at the Philipps University of Marburg.



## Garlich von Essen



Mr. Garlich von Essen is the Secretary General of Euroseeds. Mr. Essen is German national and he studied Agriculture and Economics at the University of Göttingen.

He started his professional career in the European Commission's DG Agriculture before graduating in Administrative and Political Sciences from the College of Europe. Before joining the seed industry in 1999, in the years between 1994 and 1999 he worked in the European Parliament where he focused on agricultural and structural policy and

specifically on the EU's R&D policy and funding instruments.

Joining Euroseeds in 1999 as Director Public Affairs, he became Secretary General of the organisation (named ESA: European Seed Association at that time) in 2004. Within Euroseeds, Garlich von Essen is responsible for the overall management of the association and its staff, for the development of strategic policy campaigns on Euroseeds' priority issues and for the positioning of Europe's seed industry vis-à-vis EU and international bodies and decision makers. He advises the Euroseeds Board and Executive Committee and takes specific responsibility for outreach and advocacy strategy and planning.

## Tim Edwards



Tim was born to horticultural parents in Shropshire in 1962. After working on nurseries in the UK and Europe and studying horticulture at Writtle Agricultural College he took over the running of the family business in 1986, on the death of his father, and worked there, at Boningale Ltd, until selling the business in 2023. He now works as a Horticultural Consultant.

Tim was involved in Trade matters for many years, representing nursery stock growers and suppliers in both the 'Horticultural Trades Association' and the 'National Farmer's Union in the UK, where he Chaired the Amenity Suppliers Group, sat on the HTA's Ornamentals Committee and on its Council. In NFU he served for many years on the 'Board for Horticulture', representing Nursery Stock.

For both HTA and NFU, Tim represented the UK at the European Nursery Stock Association (ENA) and at the International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH). He became President of ENA in 2014 and was re-elected to that position in 2016, finally retiring from in June 2018. In that time he repositioned the organisation as the principle Nursery Stock lobbying organisation within Europe. He served for six years as Vice President of the AIPH and again was heavily involved as that organisation transformed itself into the organisation it is today.

His involvement in Trade issues and his understanding of the structure of the Trade pushed him towards plant health matters and he represented nursery producers at the Scottish Government's 'Scottish Tree Health Advisory Group'. He also sat on the UK's 'Plant Health Advisory Forum' and represented growers in the joint HTA / NFU approach to devising a biosecurity strategy for the Trade. He was a leading player in the UK initiative set in motion by the then Prince of Wales, now King Charles, that led to the creation of the Plant Health Alliance in the UK.

## **Michiel Klompenhouwer**



Mr. Michiel Klompenhouwer is Managing Director at PLANTUM: the Dutch trade association representing 300 companies in the breeding, propagation and cultivation sectors. Mr. Klompenhouwer studied Environmental Management and Agricultural Economics at the Wageningen University & Research in the Netherlands. He has profound knowledge of the agricultural and horticultural businesses in the Netherlands as he has been working at Rabobank for more than 20 years as Director of Food & Agri Corporate Region Central Netherlands.

## Fleur Tuinzing-Westerhuis



Fleur Tuinzing-Westerhuis specializes in technology-related intellectual property matters, with a focus on patents and plant variety rights. In her daily practice, Fleur represents a wide variety of domestic and international companies that are active in technology-intensive business sectors, such as agrifood and biotech. Fleur is an experienced patent litigator and is one of only a handful of lawyers in the Netherlands with extensive experience in litigation relating to national and Community plant variety rights. Furthermore, Fleur has experience in leading multi-jurisdiction litigation teams and assists clients in implementing customs seizure actions based on the EU Anti-Piracy Regulation. Over the past 20 years, Fleur has litigated in various cases before the Dutch courts, the Dutch Board of Plant Varieties, Community Plant Variety Office and the Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market.

Fleur has extensive experience in drafting and advising on licence agreements, R&D agreements, manufacture and distribution agreements and advising on technology transfer and protection of trade secrets. Furthermore, Fleur frequently assists in technology-related transactions and corporate restructuring. Among Fleur's recent highlights, over the past year she has advised clients on patent and plant variety infringement matters, licensing and technology transfer and joint development programs.

Fleur co-heads the Houthoff Agri-Tech and Life Sciences group and is a Member of the AIPPI Standing Committee on Genetic Resources and Chair of the AIPPI Plant Variety Right Committee. Fleur regularly lectures on the protection of innovations and enforcement of intellectual property rights, including at the CIOPORA Academy, the global association of breeders in the fruit and ornamental industry and at the BioBusiness Summer School for pharma PhD students.

Fleur studied at the University of Groningen (the Netherlands) and at the Università La Sapienza in Rome (Italy). She started as a lawyer at Simmons&Simmons in February 2004 and joined Houthoff in September 2008.

## Antonio Villarroel Lopez de la Gama



Antonio Villarroel has been working for the plant breeding and seed industry since 1995, when he joined as Lawyer and Managing Director GESLIVE, the organization created by main breeders operating in Spain to provide licensing, royalty collection and enforcement services.

From 2006 he is also the CEO and Managing Director of ANOVE ("Spanish National Association of Plant Breeders"), from where he actively participates in the seed

industry international organizations: Treasurer and member of the Board of Directors of Euroseeds (European Seed Association); member of the Coordination Groups "Intellectual Property" and "Illegal Seed Practices" at ISF (International Seed Federation); member of CIOFORA' Working Group "Enforcement".

He is also a member, as legal expert, of the Spanish Commission for the Protection of Plant Varieties of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. Mr. Villarroel has a Law Degree from Universidad Complutense of Madrid. He published several articles and regularly lectures on IP and plant breeders' rights in several Spanish Universities (Politécnica Madrid, Córdoba, Alicante).

## Hedwich Teunissen



Since 2023, Ms. Hedwich Teunissen is Managing Director of CROP-XR: a Dutch research institute based within Utrecht University that can be described as a public-private partnership uniting experts, scientists, farmers, companies, non-profit organisations, governments and students who collaborate with each other to make agricultural production less vulnerable to climate change and less dependent on artificial fertilizers and chemical pesticides. Ms. Teunissen holds a PhD degree at the University of Amsterdam focusing on the molecular interaction between tomatoes and common pathogens. Her research on plant-fungal interactions was further exploited during a post-doc study at the Max-Planck-Institute for Terrestrial Microbiology in Marburg, Germany. For more than 18 years, she has been a Senior Scientist at Naktuinbouw R&D where she was responsible for the research and development in the field of variety identification.

## Manuel Tornel



Dr. Manuel Tornel is Director of the table grape team at IMIDA-ITUM. He is an agronomist engineer with a PhD in agricultural research and leads the table grape team at IMIDA – the Murcian Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Research and Development. Spanish national, Dr. Tornel is breeder of 20 new grape varieties already being grown in Spain and he is passionate about innovations that drive the Spanish viticulture. Together with ITUM (the Murcian Society of Research and Technology of Table Grapes), they have developed a genetic breeding program to obtain new varieties of seedless table grapes, using biotechnological techniques. Dr. Tornel is frequently invited as speaker at prestigious international congresses around the world where he highlights the importance of research and genetic improvement in the future of wine production.

## Pat FitzGerald



Mr. Patrick FitzGerald has over 35 years of working experience in plant breeding and he has been internationally recognised as an innovator in the plant industry. He founded FitzGerald Nurseries in 1990. Since then, the company has grown from a traditional family farm into Irelands leading young plant nursery. Currently, Mr. Fitzgerald is CEO of Beotanics Group that includes three successful companies in the field of crop development and plant-based food innovation: Beotanics Ltd Ireland, FitzGerald Nurseries Ltd, Ireland and Nativaland Lda Portugal. Early in his career, he served as chairman of Ireland's Nursery Association, as a member of the European Nursery Association Committee in the 90s. Bringing innovations in international horticulture, Mr. FitzGerald has proven his ability to develop and produce new plant varieties for international markets and work with other breeders in maximising their genetics. Pat FitzGerald studied horticulture at Kildalton agricultural college in Co Kilkenny, Ireland and he is board member at Bord Bia – The Irish Food Board.



## Basile de Barry



Mr. Basile de Barry is Managing Director at Sakata Vegetables Europe. Mr. de Bary began his work experience in 1998 as a USA Product Development representative at Clause SA and then worked as a Europe Development Representative at Harris Moran Seed Company from 2000 to 2003. Following that, he held the position of India Sales & Marketing Manager at Clause India from 2003 to 2007. From 2007 to 2012, Basile de Barry served as the France Sales Manager at HM-CLAUDE, and then they became the Italy Subsidiary Manager from 2012 to 2015. Basile de Bary is French national and has an engineer degree in Agronomy and Food Science from ENSAIA - Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Agronomie et des Industries Alimentaires in Nancy. Sakata started as a Japanese company and grew up to an international group – currently Sakata Seed Corporation is operating on four continents. The company's business is focused on plant breeding, seed production and sales

## **Annie Genevard**



Ms. Annie Genevard is the French minister of Agriculture and food security since 2024.

Ms. Genevard represents the 5th constituency of the Doubs department in the National Assembly of France since 2012. She served also as the Vice-president of the steering committee of the Association of Mayors of France between 2014-2017. Between 2002 and 2017, Ms. Genevard was the mayor of the town of Morteau. Author of a report submitted to the Prime Minister on Act II of the Mountain Law in 2015, rapporteur of the law on the modernization, development and protection of mountain territories. Ms. Genevard is President of the France-Japan friendship group of the National Assembly and she is certified professor of classical literature.

## Yolanda Huerta



Ms. Yolanda Huerta is Vice Secretary-General of the International Union for the Protection of New Plant Varieties (UPOV) since 2023. Spanish national, Ms. Huerta joined UPOV in 2001 as Legal Counsel and between 2017 and 2023, she was Director of training and assistance. Ms. Huerta provides strategic and legal advice on international, administrative, constitutional, and contract law relating to the Organization, as well as guidance in drafting legislation governing plant breeders' rights and explanations on the provisions of the UPOV Convention. Ms. Huerta has vast experience in legal affairs as an intellectual property lawyer. She previously worked as a Legal Officer at the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) where she used to give legal advice to governments in the field of patents, trademarks, geographical indications. She used to deliver lectures at the Faculty of Law in University of Barcelona as an Associate Professor. Ms. Huerta is Bachelor of Laws from the University of Barcelona, and holds a Master degree in International Law from the University of Montreal. She published numerous articles and gave lectures on different topics in the field of international intellectual property law.

## Olivér Várhelyi



Mr. Olivér Várhelyi is the EU Commissioner for Health and animal welfare since 2024. He previously served as the European Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement from 2019 to 2024. Commissioner Várhelyi has worked on EU related issues throughout his professional career. From 2015 to 2019 he held the dual roles of Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Hungary to the EU, having served as Deputy Permanent Representative of Hungary from 2011 to 2015. From 2008 to 2011, Várhelyi headed the Commission's Unit for Industrial Property Rights in the Directorate General for Internal Market and Services. Várhelyi was part of the team that negotiated Hungary's accession to the EU: initially, as Head of the Legal Unit at the Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Head of the Cabinet of the Deputy Head of the State Secretary for Integration of Hungary (1998-2001), and later in Brussels as Legal Counsellor at the Mission of Hungary to the EU (2001-2003). In 2003, he assumed the post of Head of the Legal Service at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the EU.

In 2006, Várhelyi returned to Budapest to become Head of the EU Law Department in the Ministry of Justice. Born in 1972, Várhelyi earned a master's degree in European legal studies from Aalborg University, and he holds a law degree from the University of Szeged's Faculty of Law and Political Sciences.