

Global seed sector gathers in Istanbul amid ongoing trade discussions that threaten seed availability and food security

ISTANBUL, TURKEY, May 19, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Delegates from more than 70 countries have gathered in Istanbul for the largest seed industry event in the world, the [World Seed Congress 2025](#), amid disruptions to global trading systems.

The International Seed Federation (ISF), in collaboration with the Turkish National Organizing Committee, inaugurated the Congress, which brings together more than 1,600 seed industry professionals and seed sector insiders from around the world.

Under the theme "Discovering Bold Horizons," delegates at the Congress will address pressing challenges in plant breeding innovation, seed movement, food systems, and sustainable agriculture.

Among this year's key issues is the impact of current global unrest in the area of trade policy and agreements, which could disrupt the international movement and supply of seeds, threatening global food security in the face of ever-increasing challenges related to climate change and geopolitical conflicts.

Arthur Santosh Attavar, President of ISF, who is also Managing Chair of the international seed company Indo-American Hybrid Seeds, highlighted the crucial role of international seed trade in the stability of food systems globally: "As an inherently global sector that relies on the free movement of seeds across borders, the seed sector thrives on exchange and connection. But today, trade barriers like tariffs present a major challenge for all seed firms globally, in addition to the already highly fragmented regulatory landscape and trading systems."

Michael Keller, Secretary General of ISF, said: "Every day, seed companies worldwide must comply with various phytosanitary regulations, plant breeding innovation regulations, such as those related to the use of genome editing, and laws on intellectual property protection to bring new varieties to the market and transport seeds globally. The ongoing tariff discussion adds another layer of complexity – and unpredictability – which is not very helpful when running a business or making investment decisions."

Keller added: "In light of everything that's happening in the world, all value chains need to be re-examined. In the face of growing challenges to food systems, such as climate change and

conflict, we must not forget that global food security is impossible without international cooperation – and this is what this Congress is all about: bringing together the diversity of ISF members and partners to work together towards our vision of a world where quality seed is accessible to all, supporting food security and sustainable agriculture.”

The Congress will feature sessions on the contribution of improved seeds to climate-resilient food systems, the role of seed companies in biodiversity conservation, battling illegal seed practices, and misinformation in the seed industry, among others.

The choice of Istanbul as the host city underscores Türkiye's leading role in global agriculture. The country has a commercial seed breeding legacy dating back to the 1880s and today ranks [first in Europe](#) and among the top 10 globally for agricultural production.

"We are proud to welcome the global seed community to Türkiye," said Burak Gönen, Co-Chair of the National Organizing Committee. "As a bridge between continents, cultures, and innovation, and a world leader in agricultural production, our country is a fitting venue for this prestigious event. This Congress is a unique opportunity to share our strengths, foster new partnerships, and work together to advance solutions for a more secure and sustainable agricultural future."

"Hosting the global seed community in Türkiye is both an honor and a shared responsibility," said Yıldırım Gençer, Co-Chair of the Turkish National Organizing Committee. "This Congress is not only a platform for knowledge exchange, but also a moment to strengthen international agreements and highlight the essential role of seed in building resilient food systems for the future – in Türkiye and around the world."

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