

FRUIT NETWORK

3.3. Fruit Network

Working Groups: *Malus/Pyrus*, *Prunus* and *Vitis*.

The **Fruit Network Coordinating Group** consisted of seven members: Marc Lateur, Belgium and Emilie Balsemin, France (Interim Co-Coordinator); Daniela Giovannini, Italy, replacing Daniela Benediková, Slovakia as of September 2010; Stein Harald Hjeltnes, Norway; Erika Maul, Germany; Jesus Ortiz, Spain and Matthew Ordidge, United Kingdom.

The Eighth Meeting of the Working Group on *Prunus* was held on 7-9 September 2010 in Forlì, Italy.

Lists of agreed molecular markers for fingerprinting cherry, apple and pear accessions are being finalized, as well as guidelines for taking photographs of the accessions.

Survey of the collections revealed that the main problems that the *Prunus* accessions are facing are health status (because of virus infections) and lack of funds for the maintenance of the collections due to decreasing national budgets for activities such as identification, collecting, introduction, evaluation and regeneration; some very old field collections need urgent regeneration. In order to overcome this situation with possible solutions, a model based on successful examples of national networks of fruit tree conservation will be described and proposed for adoption.

The ECPGR *Prunus* Database was improved with new search features and the possibility of hosting phenotypic and genotypic data.

The procedure to select accessions for the European Collection has been tested with cherry accessions and the Group is in the process of finalizing agreed selection criteria.

Specific standards for conservation of *Prunus* accessions were discussed and a consensus document is in the process of being finalized. The task of preparing a specific safety-duplication methodology was assigned to a small Task Force. A new version of the primary descriptors for almond, apricot, cherry, plums and peaches was proposed.

The Network is planning for the harmonization of the four European Fruit Databases and the sharing of tools to assist in assessing trueness-to-type of the European accessions. The French National Institute for Agronomic Research (INRA)-Bordeaux is completing the ECPGR *Prunus* Database structure with ECPGR project funds and extending it to other *Prunus* crops. In order to share efforts and harmonize the Fruit Databases, INRA-Bordeaux offered to share this new *Prunus* Database version as the new structure for the ECPGR *Pyrus* Database.

Outlook for 2011: The *Prunus* Database structure will be tested for adoption by the *Pyrus* Database. *Malus* and *Vitis* Databases also need to plan for their further development with ECPGR project funds.