

The International Working Conferences on Stored Product Protection

Permanent Committee

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Origins of the IWCSPP*

The First International Working Conference on Stored-product Entomology was held in Savannah, Georgia, USA from 7-11 October 1974. Stored-product entomology was the subject of the first three conferences, after which it was decided to broaden their scope, so as to attract, as well as entomologists, engineers, mycologists, and others working in postharvest research.

It would be true to say that the original idea for what became the IWCSPP was born of a feeling among U.S. stored-product entomologists that they were adrift in a backwater of the noble profession of U.S. entomology. In the 1960s and 1970s, those of us at the Stored-Product Insects Research and Development Laboratory seemed always to be hosting entomologists from all parts of the world, who were traveling with remarkable frequency and regularity to various laboratories to learn what were the new problems and what progress was being made in their solution. There was no such round of visits to other laboratories for us. Also, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), a major employer of US stored-product entomologists, professed no great interest in encouraging wider publication of research results or in providing funds for attendance at scientific meetings. Food manufacturers, another large employer of stored-product entomologists, were not eager to have their problems and solutions published or discussed at scientific societies. Thus, US stored-product entomologists played a minor role in professional entomology meetings. Even at the annual general meeting of the Entomological Society of America one rarely heard more than 5 or 6 papers from the stored-product entomology fraternity. Branch and State meetings suffered similarly.

During a discussion at the Miami meeting of the Entomological Society of America in 1970, while Dr. John Brower, Dr. Phillip Harein, Dr. S.R. Loschiavo, Mr. E.W. Tilton, and myself were lamenting our lot within the profession even more vocally than usual, it was suggested that a specialist stored-product entomology meeting be held. US stored-product entomologists were polled on this during 1971 and we found that there was great interest in such a meeting. In 1972, when I attended the International Congress of Entomology in Canberra, Australia – where Mr. Bill Bailey and his associates of the Stored Grain

* A contribution by Dr. Robert Davis, Vice President of Pest Management Consultants and Associates, Inc., Savannah, Georgia 31410, USA, who was the Founding Chairman of the Permanent Committee for the International Working Conferences on Stored-Product Protection. We are sad to report that Dr. Davis passed away on February 17, 2006.

Research Laboratory, CSIRO Division of Entomology, put on a fine program on stored-product entomology – I was able to survey a large group of the world’s entomologists on their desire for a stored-product conference. There was good support.

At the USDA Stored-Product Insects Research and Development Laboratory, we decided to investigate the possibility of holding such a conference in Savannah. A committee composed of Drs. J.H. Brower, Edward G. Jay, Patrick P.T. Lum, Michael A. Mullen, and myself undertook to investigate the possibility. We soon encountered problems. We learned that our control over the conference would be greatly restricted if it were held at the laboratory. We would, for example, have to submit all invitees for government approval, as well as the program agenda and the program dates. Our committee was broadened when it was joined by three members of the Department of Entomology, University of Georgia: Drs. Horace O. Lund, Head of Department, Preston E. Hunter and U. Eugene Brady. We next consulted an attorney and incorporated our committee as a non-profit educational corporation with a three-year lifetime in the State of Georgia. This allowed us to establish a bank account and to be free of taxes, and facilitated soliciting of funds. The USDA agreed to provide services-in-kind, such as postage, stationery, photocopying and typing assistance.

Through a series of committee meetings, a program agenda was established with five areas of general interest:

1. Tropical Stored-Product Entomology

Symposium convener	W.H. Jepson, England
Panel discussion leader	Fred Ashman, Malawi

2. Biology, Ecology and Integrated Control

Symposium convener	J.H. Boczek, Poland
Panel discussion leader	S.C. Saxena, India

3. Pesticides, Toxicity and Insect Resistance

Symposium convener	E.J. Bond, Canada
Panel discussion leader	C.E. Dyte, England

4. Radiation and Other Physical Means of Insect Control

Symposium convener	Moshe Calderon, Israel
Panel discussion leader	F.L. Watters, Canada

5. Pesticide Residues, Tolerances and Registration

Symposium convener	L.S. Henderson, USA
Panel discussion leader	E.E. Turtle, FAO, Italy

Each topic area was divided into a symposium composed of 4 or 5 invited speakers, and a panel for discussion of these topics that was moderated by a scientist knowledgeable on the symposium subject. Questions and some debate from the floor were permitted. Contributed papers were neither encouraged nor discouraged. The intention was that the conference participants would utilize their time in listening and then discussing amongst themselves in a structured manner, problems and solutions related to the important topics brought to the conference by the speakers.

The committee sought funds from agribusinesses in the USA and elsewhere. Many agribusinesses contributed directly to scientists they had worked with or were working with in various countries. They advised us of this fact so that we could plan our expenditure of funds accordingly. Many others provided

direct financial support to the Organising Committee. All funds collected by the committee went to support the program and were used to bring speakers to the conference. The costs of the conference per se were paid out of the participants' registration fees. These fees also covered the cost of publishing and mailing the conference proceedings at the conclusion of the meeting.

The program for the First International Working Conference on Stored-Product Entomology consisted of 50 symposium and panel presentations and 27 submitted papers. Attendance exceeded all expectations, with 214 agricultural scientists, marketing specialists and administrators from 27 nations. Special invitation addresses were presented by Mr. T.W. Edminister, Administrator, Agricultural Research Service, USDA, and Dr. Curtis W. Sabrosky, President, XV International Congress of Entomology.

Toward the end of the conference, at an informal meeting of participants, a Permanent Committee for International Working Conferences on Stored-Product Entomology was elected. The committee was charged with maintaining contact with participants and with establishing a mechanism for holding similar meetings in the future. The membership of the inaugural committee was:

J.H. Boczek, Poland
E.J. Bond, Canada
M. Calderon, Israel
D.P. Childs, USA, Secretary
M. Connell, Australia
R. Davis, USA, Chairman
H. Dell'Orto Trivelli, Chile
C.E. Dyte, England
A.H.M. Kamel, Egypt
S.C. Saxena, India
T. Ajibola Taylor, Nigeria
S. Utida, Japan
P. Wheatley, England
K. Whitney, USA

Conference participants also passed a resolution on "Preservation of Staple Food Stocks Following Production", as follows:

This Conference, being cognizant of the urgent need for action to provide and preserve a food supply to all mankind, confirms the great importance of losses during storage and transportation – representing wastage of human endeavor, natural resources and energy – which could be greatly reduced by implementation of methods currently known in our applied science.

It was consensus that each conference participant was free to take whatever action he deemed appropriate regarding the utilization and distribution of the resolution. The resolution was sent to a number of Heads of States and to the United Nations Secretary General.

The sentiments in the resolution remain as valid today as they were then, and the International Working Conferences on Stored-Product Protection have become an important means of discussing and disseminating information on the latest methods for preserving staple food and feedstuffs.

Robert Davis