

## From the President

The *Ninth International Rapeseed Congress* was held in Cambridge, United Kingdom, in July 1995. It was attended by almost 700 delegates from 40 countries and brought together all sectors of the oilseed industry: researchers; plant breeders; nutritionists; traders; regulators; processors and end-users. Over 400 scientific papers were presented covering: breeding and biotechnology; nutrition and chemistry; agronomy and physiology; crop protection; and industrial utilisation. The success of any scientific congress rests not only in the quality of the papers presented, but also in the informal discussions, exchanges of information and debate that occurs throughout the meeting: both of these aspects of the *Ninth Congress* were highly successful.

The application of biotechnology was a common and central theme throughout the *Congress* and in the concluding discussion the following **CONGRESS STATEMENT** was promulgated:

**The *Congress* agreed that the responsible application of biotechnology to oilseed rape/canola holds great promise for the wider and improved utilisation, nutritional qualities and productivity of this crop - the world's third most important source of edible oil and also a significant source of high quality protein feedstuff.**

**It was further agreed that the transfer of desirable traits, after proper consideration of environmental and safety issues, will allow continuing improvement which is already underway through conventional breeding, and provide genetic enhancement of this important crop. This will provide benefit to the environment, the food chain and industrial utilisation.**

The *Ninth Congress* was a success both scientifically and financially. The work that underpinned the meeting was considerable, and I would like to thank all those who contributed; especially the Organising Committee, the editors of the Proceedings, GCIRC and the sponsors. Even the British weather played its part, although it was almost too good, and the demonstration field plots were very close to harvest. Overall, although it was hard work, it was satisfying and enjoyable.

GCIRC itself is in good health and 36 members attended or sent a proxy to the General Assembly. It was also very pleasing to welcome ten new members. There were two resignations and we thank them for their past contribution: Dr Simo Hovinen, who is no longer active in the oilseed rape sector, and Dr Dwight More, who has stood down as the Canola Council representative. It is, however, very sad to record the death of Dr Torsten Cedell, who has made a great contribution to GCIRC and to the rapeseed industry over many years. He will be greatly missed by all his friends and colleagues.

We now look forward to the Technical Meeting in Germany, based on Göttingen, 8 and 9 April 1997 and beyond that towards the *Tenth International Rapeseed Congress* in Australia, based on Canberra, in September 1999. Rapeseed faces an exciting future and GCIRC has an important role in fostering communication and co-operation between all those involved in the crop and the related industry.

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