

O P E N I N G A D D R E S S

by Stanisław Zięba, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and
Food Economy of Poland

to the 7th International Rapeseed Congress, Poznań,
May 11 to 14 1987

Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my privilege to welcome all of you on behalf of the Polish Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Economy. I wish to express my great satisfaction that the International Rapeseed Congress is being held in Poland for the second time to review the problems connected with the production and processing of rapeseed and to discuss the latest results and achievements in this field. The fact that the International Consultative Group for the Research on Rapeseed - GCIRC - has chosen Poznań for the debates of this Congress is not only understood by us as a favour but above all as an appreciation of our achievements in this domain. During this Congress our scientists, breeders and specialists are given a valuable opportunity to compare their work, methods and results in research and production with those of leading scientists and specialists from all over the world. The Congress also provides an excellent chance to make personal contacts and create closer cooperation between specialists working on rapeseed in different countries.

The winter rape is of great importance in Polish agriculture and food economy. It is practically our only oil plant. Poland is among the greatest growers of this plant. The rapeseed production in our country has increased markedly in the last few years and exceeded 1.300.000 tons in 1986.

In the reports that will be presented at the Congress a lot of attention is given to the work aimed at breeding the rapeseed and to the achievements and new prospects that are opening in this field.

Plant breeding is one of the most important factors affecting the progress in obtaining new plant forms of higher and higher value.

The introduction of new technologies in production and processing, great achievements in the application of new means of chemical plant protection enable to take the greatest possible advantage of the results of breeding studies without lessening anywhere their importance. The changes in the production of rapeseed in Poland result from rational utilization of those achievements.

A turning-point in this matter was brought about by an improvement on the chemical composition of rapeseed oil and meal. Polish breeders have made a significant contribution to this achievement. The former very good varieties now gave way to zero erucic varieties, and recently a double low Jantar variety has come into production. The meal of the latter variety has a very low level of glucosinolates and is a very valuable fodder with a high protein content.

Jantar is the first licenced winter rapeseed variety the quality of which is up to the standard of Canola, the Canadian spring rapeseed.

Those results were obtained by means of classical methods of breeding, that is hybridization and recombination, making use of modern methods of chemical analysis. These methods will still be employed and modernised. We realize, however, that we cannot confine ourselves to classical methods of breeding. We have employed interspecific crossings and mutagenesis for many years. Nowadays the methods of tissue cultures, especially haploidisation by anther culture become more and more important in our studies. The studies on the systems of male sterility are a preparation to use the effect of heterosis in hybrid varieties.

The incessant improving of the methods of plant growing and plant protection is an important factor of increasing the rapeseed production. We have good achievements in this

field as well.

As early as in the sixties a modern technology of rapeseed cultivation was worked out and put into practice. This technology is constantly improved as the progress is made in the methods of plant growing, soil fertilizing and plant protection at the same time it is being adapted to meet the requirements of new improved varieties.

The introduction of the double low variety has caused a turn in the utilization of products obtained from rapeseed.

The rapeseed meal stopped being a by product of little value and has become a highly demanded fodder with a high protein content. This requires an adaptation of the technological process of oil mills so that the rapeseed meal does not lose its valuable feeding properties. The feeding experiments now extensively conducted will allow to establish the optimal ways of utilizing the new kind of rapeseed meal.

We are carrying out our programme of food self sufficiency, ready to take up cooperation in trade, production and scientific and technical progress. The GCIRC is the organization qualified to stimulate such a cooperation on an international scale.

It is also our wish that the 7th International Congress complied with your expectations.

I wish you most fruitful debates and pleasant stay in Poland.

Thank you for your attention.