

# Successful Biopesticides conference

Congratulations to Prof. Tariq Butt and all of the team that organized the meeting. This meeting included an impressive mix of representatives from a wide range of commercial, government, regulatory and research organizations.

There were 52 excellent presentation over three days (7-9th September 2015) and a large poster session.

Session topics included:

- *Biopesticides – new solutions for old problems*
- *Behaviour modifying chemicals – major players in future pest control programmes*
- *The agent is not all – new production and formulation strategies for biopesticides*
- *New pest control strategies – optimizing impact*
- *Specific control strategies for different crops – are there general lessons to be learnt?*
- *No risks of biocontrol strategies? Assessment and potential mitigation strategies*
- *Invasive threats - Predicting the future*
- *Workshop and Poster session. Workshop provides training and showcases products.*
- *Funding opportunities for business development and research*

*Networking session: opportunities to develop formal and informal collaborative links.*

There was much discussion about the potential for new pests and diseases to affect the UK with increased travel and movement of plants and soil together with the effects of climate change. The difficulties with replicating the success of laboratory experiments in killing pests, in the field and also problems with the regulations for Biopesticides, their use and commercial production ready for market were also common themes.

We heard from several companies that do have successful commercial products in addition to researchers investigating the specific biological mechanisms and environmental constraints on the use of biopesticide products.

The control organisms frequently mentioned included entomopathic fungi metarhizium and beauveria species, while difficult to deal with pests included wireworms, aphids, fruit flies and moths. The effects on food crops such as potatoes, tomatoes, strawberries and arable crops but attempts to control midges (of particular concern in Scotland) and other insects that carry human and animal diseases were also described.

Botanicals, such as essential oils, that act as a lure for insect pests or to repel them, look to be increasingly useful in the future.

Jill Thompson