

Workshop 6

World Avocado Society Planning Session

Chair: Mike Browne

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Secretary: Jan Toerien

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The primary questions for last evening's planning session were the following: (i) Should a World Avocado Society be formed? (ii) What should its goals be? and (iii) How should it be organized and financed?

In preparation to answer the questions, discussion developed as to the merits of such an organization.

Many prospective goals were discussed in relation to communication and cooperation in the production research area and for using the World Avocado Society as the organizing body of World Avocado Congress. Several delegates voiced reservations as to the possible scope and size of the organization and the expenses it might incur. The need for germplasm protection was identified as a cause for great concern as certain areas of germplasm are faced with the dangers of extinction.

A general position evolved throughout the meeting that a World Avocado Society would be a beneficial organization, but it is extremely important to have the initial functions of such a group be on a small scale and focused on goals which can be achieved without a large financial commitment.

Dr. Mary Lu Arpaia proposed the formation of a World International Avocado Society; the proposal was seconded by Dr. Stiker. The proposal was put to a vote and was accepted by an overwhelming majority.

It was further proposed by Robert McNeil and seconded by Len Francis that this organizing body consider the organization of the next World Avocado Congress and edit and distribute information as the main objective. This passed unanimously.

Representatives from several countries were suggested to serve on an initial organizing committee. The members of this committee met this morning (April 26, 1991) for the purpose of electing a chairperson. After a general discussion, the group appointed Hank Brokaw and Mary Lu Arpaia as Co-Chairs.

Present at the meeting were: Mary Lu Arpaia (California), Miguel Vilchez Barros (Spain), Sixto Bisono (Dominican Republic), Hank Brokaw (California), Ilan Eshel (Israel), Ramon Paz Vega (Mexico), David Rankin (Australia), Jack Shepherd (California), Jan Toerien (South Africa), Tony Whiley (Australia), and George Zentmyer (California).

A confidence exists that, through the leadership of a talented organizing committee, the formation of this International Avocado Society will be very meaningful for all of us associated in the avocado industry worldwide.