

KSVS Symposium on Plant Variety Protection
3 September 2015, Seoul Korea

Welcoming Address

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I am Yoon Moo-Kyoung, Director of Plant Variety Protection Division, Korea Seed & Variety Service.

On behalf of Korea and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, let me welcome all distinguished guests home and abroad.

I am very much honored to meet all of you.

First, I would like to express my gratitude to representatives of East Asia Plant Variety Protection Forum member countries for their participation in this symposium through paper presentations and discussions.

Special thanks must go to participants from Japan, Netherlands, USA and China which are all top priority target countries in that Korean breeders wish to file their applications. It is also a great honor and pleasure for us to have Mr. Peter Button, Vice-Secretary General of UPOV as a key-note speaker.

The Korean government is fully aware of the significance of plant intellectual property right system. The East Asia Forum member countries have also exerted great efforts to grow together in the field of Agriculture and Seed Industry through steady communication. I wish today's symposium, held together with East Asia Plant Variety Protection Forum, can bear meaningful and rewarding fruits.

Though Korea's variety breeding history is long at the national level, the breeding history on a civilian personal unit is relatively short. But Korea's entering into UPOV was a great turning point in that not only large-scale seed companies but also even individual breeders have now wider understanding and awareness on breeders' rights.

At this juncture when the international seed trade is ever actively increasing, each government needs to share information on system operation enabling people of the world to share each country's attractive varieties.

Since the implementation of Variety Protection System in 1998, 18 years have passed. Over 8,000 domestic and foreign varieties have been filed for application. Domestic varieties account 78%. while foreign-bred varieties, 22 %. Foreign breeders filing application in Korea had exerted great efforts at the initial stage of operating our system.

Various difficulties lie in the seed trade. Many hurdles at each phase from crossing the national borders to reaching out to the local consumers. Such administrative processes are not easy for breeders to handle.

Since such processes seem to be much difficult for unexperienced breeders, I sincerely hope today's gathering can serve as a pump priming to suggest practical solutions in jumping over one hurdle after another.

I am truly confident that today's symposium can be a precious information-exchange arena not only for Korean breeders but also for foreign participants. The goal of the East Asia Plant Variety Protection Forum is also to foster mutual understanding and harmony on each country's system. Let's work hard together so that consumers can get abundant benefits of agriculture through good-quality varieties by understanding other countries' systems and situations and by operating them harmoniously.

Let me conclude my welcoming address by expressing my wish for the development of operating the Plant Variety Protection System in all member countries of the East Asia Forum and for the national enrichment through agriculture. Thank you very much.