

Invitation to Host the 7th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture, 2017

The World Congress on Conservation Agriculture (WCCA) has been hosted by Spain, Brazil, Kenya, India and Australia, and the 6th WCCA will be held in Canada in 2014. WCCA is the premier international forum for broad discussion of the ideas, issues and impacts of sustainable crop production. It has been particularly valuable in bringing together scientists and practitioners from both the developed world and the developing world, emphasizing the issues and importance of smallholder agriculture.

Early WCCAs were concerned primarily with the scientific, technical and adoption issues of conservation agriculture, but the focus of the conference steadily broadened. Aspects such as consultation, participation and knowledge sharing are now equally important, together with consideration of underpinning policy. The 7th WCCA will see increased farmer attendance and participation on the agenda.

The international organizing committee of the 5th WCCA in Brisbane during 2011 considered bids for the next congress and accepted the Conservation Agriculture Systems Alliance's (CASA) bid to host the 6th WCCA in North America during 2014. CASA is a communication network of North American conservation organizations that work to increase conservation in agriculture. Two CASA members, the Conservation Technology Information Center and the Soil Conservation Council of Canada, serve as co-hosts of the 6th WCCA.

National and regional organizations supporting Conservation Agriculture (CA) are invited to present full bids by 15 May 2014, to host the 7th WCCA. The International Steering Committee will review and recommend one bid for endorsement at the 6th WCCA. The Steering Committee might seek supplementary information from proposers in order to select a final bid.

Important considerations for hosting the 7th World Congress of Conservation Agriculture:

- **Resources**
 - o Human: scientific, practitioner and institutional backing for proposal.
 - o Financial: extent of known and anticipated support.
 - o Endorsement by appropriate national and governmental bodies.
- **Location**
 - o Proximity to significant groups of CA scientists.
 - o Proximity to local examples of CA practice and development.
 - o Relative to previous WCCA's (developed/developing country alternation).
 - o Accessibility from most regions.
 - o Opportunity to foster greater CA adoption in the host country.
- **Logistics**
 - o Cost and convenience of transport, accommodation, communications, etc.
 - o Availability of conference facilities.
 - o Caliber of proposed organizing committees.
- **Themes and organization**
 - o Relevance of themes and content to a majority of CA practitioners and scientists.
 - o Nature of proposed organization.
 - o Potential alliances with other professional organizations.

Bids to host the 7th World Congress on Conservation Agriculture will be received on behalf of the International Steering Committee by Sjoerd Duiker, Pennsylvania State University, at sduiker@psu.edu. Bids should be received by 15 May 2014.