

## Press Information

May 18, 2012

# May 18, 2012: the first and international *Fascination of Plants Day*

Today, May 18, the fascination and importance of having plants on our planet will be in the spotlight worldwide. Launched under the umbrella of the European Plant Science Organization (EPSO, Brussels), the *Fascination of Plants Day* has been adopted by 39 countries, 29 from Europe and 10 from North- and South America, Asia, Australasia and Africa. More than 580 institutions - ranging from botanical gardens to plant research centres - are hosting different kinds of public and media events which are all closely related to basic plant science, agricultural research, environmental conservation, biodiversity, education and arts. The public as well as journalists and the media are invited to attend press conferences, to explore laboratories or to visit greenhouses, field stations or field sites, museums, and other exhibitions. People will have the opportunity to talk with plant scientists and discuss basic and applied research in plant biology. A very special event is a plant video competition launched in Australia.

**Up to date information** about the *Fascination of Plants Day* can be accessed via [www.plantday12.eu](http://www.plantday12.eu). Material for the media and press (pictures, logos, etc.) is freely available in the **PR-toolbox** via <http://www.plantday12.eu/pr-toolbox.htm>.

### **Contact for questions and further information:**

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**National contacts / event contacts:** at [www.plantday12.eu](http://www.plantday12.eu) select respective country / event

### **Mission and Background of the Fascination of Plants Day**

The coordinated activity of the *Fascination of Plants Day* will plant virtual and constantly germinating seeds in the collective mind of the European and World Public recalling that plant science is of critical significance to the social, environmental and economic landscape now and into the future. Plants are unique organisms. They can produce sugars just from sunlight, carbon dioxide and water. This ability to directly synthesize their own food has enabled plants to successfully colonize, adapt to, and diversify within almost every niche on the planet and biologists estimate the total number of plant species to be about 250000. These abilities make plants the primary producers of biomass providing animals and mankind with food, feed, paper, medicine, chemicals, energy, and an enjoyable landscape.

## Facts and figures FoPD

May 18, 2012

[www.plantday12.eu](http://www.plantday12.eu)

250,000 plant species

**40,746 unique visitors online**

28,000 plant researchers and staff belong to EPSO membership

3,100 personal EPSO members

**587 followers** on Twitter

**583 institutions** signed up for FoP Day

**577 events** announced for FoPD

227 research institutes and universities represented by EPSO

86 UK institutions signed up for FoP Day

64 Portuguese events announced for FoPD

51 Italian events announced for FoPD

**39 countries** signed up for FoPD: ARG, AUS, AT, BE, BG, BRA, CAN, Chile, CHI, Croatia, CY, CZ, DK,

EE, FI, FR, DE, GR, HU, IND, IE, IL, IT, JAP, LI, NL, NZ, NIG, NO, PL, PT, SB, SV, ES, SE, CH, TK, UK, UKR

34 Polish institutions signed up for FoPD

31 German institutions signed up for FoPD

21 Japanese events announced for FoPD

10 countries outside of Europe signed up for FoP Day

**4 National patronages:** German ministers Annette Schavan (Education and Research) and Ilse

Aigner (Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection), Czech minister Petr Bendl

(Agriculture), Tim Smit - Founder of the Eden Project

1<sup>st</sup> country, Australia, started YouTube competition for FoP Day

39 Countries	583 institutions	577 Events	Countries	Institutions	Events
Argentina	1	1	India	7	16
Australia	14	22	Ireland	6	7
Austria	6	7	Israel	4	
Brazil	3	2	Italy	41	51
Belgium	12	2	Japan	21	21
Bulgaria	1		Lithuania	25	25
Canada	1	1	Netherlands	10	9
Chile	10	10	New Zealand	t.b.a.	
China	11	5	Nigeria	t.b.a.	
Croatia	4	4	Norway	5	14
Cyprus	2		Poland	34	
Czech Republic	21	19	Portugal	61	64
Denmark	5	9	Serbia	4	5
Estonia	4	3	Slovenia	14	27
Finland	34	48	Spain	34	45
France	7	7	Sweden	7	7
Germany	31	30	Switzerland	16	11
Greece	9	10	Turkey	3	3
Hungary	24	38	UK	86	46
			Ukraine	5	8