

ISHS

Activities' Report - Year 2024

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1. Introduction

Continuous and assiduous activities and collaborations in the field of horticultural science continued in 2024 after ISHS held the International Horticultural Congress IHC 2022 Horticulture for a world in transition in Anger, France in 2022, in keeping with the four-year organization of IHCs, whose inception dates back to 1959. Each congress was, and is, dedicated to a key topic in the Horticultural Sciences sector (fruits, vegetables, ornamentals, medicinal etc.), emphasizing the role of research, industry and policy in making meaningful and sustainable changes in these production sectors.

On June 4, the Annual Meeting of the Council was kept online, and the NRC participated in it, also to discuss in novo business model, optimization of the content of Acta Horticulturae, and last preparation of the new eJHS journal.

2. Main activities carried on by ISHS during 2024 relevant for Italy and for CNR

In 2024, there have been numerous participations in various meetings, conventions, and gatherings also in view of the great commitment that our nation will sustain in the 2026th support of the IHC26 (International Horticultural Congress), scheduled to be held in Tokyo, with the theme “Exploring the Diversity of Horticulture.” Biodiversity is indeed the “flagship” of our country, which from the North to the South offers a huge amount of productive aptitudes, a unique basket of agricultural products whose designation of origin and uniqueness are abundantly recognized. Sustainability of the production chain in the strategic sectors of agriculture, support for competitiveness and development of advanced research, in addition to increased opportunities for collaboration, are the most significant activities that have been pursued by the national and NRC representation. Numerous activities that took place during the year within the working groups must be considered relevant. Horticulture plays a key role in providing people with food, health support and contribution to climate change mitigation, the pitfalls of which it can also address through varietal choices and microclimate protections. Reducing losses and waste in production (quantifiable now at around 30 percent) and changes in eating habits can also help reduce negative climate impacts.

During 2024 IHS organized 32 Congresses, many of which were attended by Italian researchers at the expense of their own research funding.

3. Activities carried on within the Union during 2024 and impact on the Italian scientific community

. CNR representatives, having been part of the IHC Ambassadors Group in 2022, participated in the Hort Forums, ISHS Horticultural Debate Forum 2023, to understand and bring back to the national level the many calls for updates on innovations in the field. In addition, CNR representatives participated in-person and online in several meetings, keeping in mind and cultivating opportunities to support the national scientific community in the continuation, and new creation, of international collaborations and cooperations.

4. Evaluation of the participation in terms of benefits and membership cost

The evaluation of the cost/benefit ratio is very positive, also considering the focus of ISHS on supporting research, popularization and dissemination of topics directly related to food production, welfare and income, also supporting agribusiness and directly related industries (e.g., mechanical, chemical, energy).

There was also the opportunity to co-organize with SOI a very important manifestation in the field in Rimini at MACFRU from May 5 to 8 2025, where many researchers in Italy will converge.

It is important to remark the activities in favor of young people, for their major involvement also as co-conveners for a greater professional growth, included also short presentations and thesis awards.

5. Evaluation of Italians' attendance and how to improve interest and involvement

The direct involvement of the CNR is very appreciable, both for the Institution and, in general, for the 'entire national community with which it has worked in constant agreement. ISHS has more than 100 Italian Members, including Chairs of Divisions, of Workgroups, Honorary members and Council Representatives. Interest and involvement are already very high, with close interactions in several areas.

6. Italian experts with important roles within the Union or within related Commissions and Programs (if known)

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7. If Union with CNR Commission, short summary about the 2024 CNR Commission activities

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8. Notes (if any)

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9. Conclusions

The scientific, networking, visibility and continuous modernization activities carried out by ISHS deserve full participation and attention from the Italian community and, specifically, the CNR.

Bologna, June 16, 2025...