

Innovation Competition AGRA 2016 - the agricultural Oscars

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In the competition held at the International Agricultural Exhibition AGRA 2016 in Plovdiv, 35 products of 30 companies and scientific institutes from the country competed. Only nine of the innovations in the field of agriculture were admitted to the final. Strong interest was also reported from grain producers at the stands for precision farming, seeds, fertilizers and plant protection products, where preferential conditions for prices and deliveries were negotiated. The initiative has already been held for the eighth time with the active participation of the International Fair Plovdiv and the support of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

At AGRA 2016, a strong impression was made by the new variety "Stundesto", developed by the Fruit Growing Institute in Plovdiv and resulting from many years of work by the specialists from the scientific unit. The new hybrid, which is a cross between a plum and an apricot, won the prize in

the category “Varietal seeds and planting material”. The Research Institute produces and offers fruits and planting material of the main fruit species, including virus-free rootstocks for stone and pome fruit species.

Another variety captured the attention of the jury in the competition program of the international exhibition. The common winter wheat “Gizda”, created by the Institute of Plant Genetic Resources “Konstantin Malkov” – Sadovo, successfully reached the final of the contest. At the institute they develop and study new high-yielding and high-quality varieties and genetic plasma of common winter wheat with ecological plasticity, suitable for the arid regions of the country, in the following priority areas:

- Achieving the necessary drought tolerance to ensure constant and stable yields under the dry conditions of the country.
- Developing new economically efficient varieties suitable for low input levels in production.
- Developing individual elements of the wheat production technology.

Two products were rated as excellent in the category “Fertilizers and preparations for agriculture”: the liquid biostimulant “Amino Expert Impulse”, produced by the Bulgarian company “Ekofol”, and the “Capreno” technology of the German company “Bayer”, represented by “Bayer Bulgaria”.

In the “Animal Husbandry” section, the competition was won by the vitamin-mineral mixture “Lizalik”, developed using proprietary know-how by “Bonmix”, Bulgaria. The favorite in the section “Machinery and installations in animal husbandry” was the device for capturing queen bees, invented by the Institute of Animal Science in Kostinbrod and announced as a world novelty.

The means for the reclamation of eroded terrains, landslides and waste disposal sites, developed by the Institute of Soil Science, Agrotechnologies and Plant Protection “Nikola Pushkarov”, was also assessed as innovative and received an award in the category “Technologies for crop production”.

In “Machinery and equipment for crop production” first place was awarded to the dumper “Madara”, series M 21 – a trailer for bulk cargo of the company “Madara”.

The chairperson of the commission was the Deputy Minister of Agriculture Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tsvetan Dimitrov, and its members included representatives of the State Agency for Metrological and Technical Surveillance, the Agricultural Academy, branch associations and three universities.

The largest number of visitors at AGRA 2016 was in Pavilion 13, where a number of new companies participated, as well as in the specialized beekeeping pavilion. Particular interest was reported at the stands for specialized products in animal husbandry, fruit growing and vegetable production.