



Fascination of  
**Plants Day**  
May 18<sup>th</sup> 2015

# Success Stories 2015

965 events • 56 countries • 589 institutions



[www.plantday.org](http://www.plantday.org) #fopd



EUCARPIA



Please contact us to become a sponsor of the Fascination of Plants Day 2017: [epsos@epsomail.org](mailto:epsos@epsomail.org)

# A Truly Global Celebration of Plant Science



(EPSO). We are very proud to announce that the event was a big success with participants from all continents and cultures joining the initiative to get the world fascinated by plants!

From Bosnia to Bolivia, from South Africa to South Korea, FoPD 2015 truly united a global research community and engaged the public with plant science on an unprecedented scale.



## Over 965 events in 56 countries

In total, 589 institutions in 56 countries around the globe opened their doors in order to stir up people's enthusiasm

about plants and their importance for sustainable production of food, horticulture, forestry, as well as the non-food products such as paper, timber, chemicals, energy, and pharmaceuticals.

Many plant science institutions, universities, botanical gardens, and museums, together with farmers and companies, opened their doors with a variety of plant-



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based events for all the family.

This document contains a selection of just a few of the many success stories from around the world. Much more can be found on the national pages at [www.plantday.org](http://www.plantday.org).

Thank you to everyone who took part and we look forward to seeing you again in 2017!

## FACTS AND FIGURES

### 965 events at FoPD

- Most active in Europe: 207 events in Poland, 127 in Ukraine, 72 in Italy
- In Asia: 39 Japanese events on FoPD
- In the Americas: 15 events in the USA, 14 events in Mexico, 7 each in Argentina and Brazil
- In Africa: 1 event each in Angola, Mozambique and South Africa

**4 National patronages:** Austria's First Lady, Margit Fischer; Czech Minister for Agriculture Marian Jurecka; German Minister for Food, Agriculture, Ilse Aigner; and for Education and Research, Johanna Wanka; the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences

**131,286 unique visitors online**

**1749 followers** on Twitter, 3953 tweets

**2160 likes and 1213 postings** on Facebook

## Thank you to all National Coordinators, sponsors and partners who made FoPD 2015 possible

A big thank you to all the global and national coordinators, organisers and everyone who contributed to make this happen! **Contact** the global coordinators [Trine Hvorslef-Eide](#); [Przemysław Wojtaszek](#); [Calum MacKichan](#) and [Karin Metzloff](#) to get involved in 2017.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all partners and sponsors of this event. At the global level these were: the [Global Plant Council](#); [Plants for the Future European Technology Platform](#) (Plant ETP); [KWS SAAG AG](#) (KWS); [Society for Experimental Biology](#) (SEB); [European Association for Research on Plant Breeding](#) (EUCARPIA); [International Society for Horticultural Science](#) (ISHS); [Plant Conservation Day](#).



**Participating countries:** Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mexico, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, UK, Ukraine, Uruguay, USA, Zambia



## Argentina

FoPD was celebrated in several cities in Argentina: Córdoba, La Plata, Diamante and Esperanza. In Córdoba school groups overflowed the National Academy of Science, the University and the Museum of Natural sciences where exhibits, games and activities were designed for people of all ages.



[Argentina country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Edith Taleisnik](#)



## Austria

In Austria "Making the invisible visible" was the motto of a joint collaboration of the Faculty of Life Sciences of the University of Vienna and the Gregor Mendel Institute (GMI) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. The family event presented exciting hands-on experimental workshops, guided tours, and an international root-race at the flourishing Botanical Garden of the University of Vienna. More than 500 people were excited and fascinated by the deep scientific insight of plants.



[Austria country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Margit Laimer](#)



## Australia

At the ARC Centre of Excellence for Translational Photosynthesis activities included an interactive event looking at plants and the fascinating process of photosynthesis. We discovered the unique signature of plants using chromatography, extracted some plant DNA and explored them under a microscope. Visitors were able to ask questions to a plant scientist and learn some amazing facts about plants and their importance in people's lives.



[Australia country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Natalia Bateman](#)



## Bosnia

In Bosnia the Genetic Resources Institute at the University of Banja Luka organized an outdoor exhibition named "Wild edible and poisonous plants and mushrooms" and a scientific convention on the topic "Genetic Resources for the Future". In Sarajevo there was a promotion of biodiversity and a photo contest.



[Bosnia country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Erna Karalija](#)



## Brazil

Fascination of Plants Day in Brazil, organized by Embrapa (Brazilian Corporation of Agricultural Research) and Fundação Zoobotânica do Rio Grande do Sul in 2015, was a great success!



The event included workshops related to cultivation of plants in pots and production of floral arrangements, guided trips in the Botanical Garden of Porto Alegre, observation of birds and bees, and expositions related to fascinations of plants and ornamental plants in the Pampa Biome.

[Brazil country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Rosa Lia Barbieri](#)



## Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, FoPD was held for first time, and altogether 6 institutions participated. A scientific exhibition was established by setting different tables, where approximately 70 students, scientists, and teachers did their best to fascinate the visitors with their knowledge about plants.



[Bulgaria country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Anelia Iantcheva](#)

# #FoPD Around the World



**Macarena L. Cardenas** @DrMacarenaLC · May 27  
Importance of public engagement [escr.ac.uk/funding-and-gu...](http://escr.ac.uk/funding-and-gu...)  
#publicengagement Enjoyed it #FoPD @UniofReading @drmgoeswild



**Neelima Sinha** @PlantDevo · May 19  
Went to a botanical garden in San Miguel de Allende for #FoPD plants are so cool, thumbs up if you agree



**Spinkybird** @Spinkybird · May 21  
Fascination of Plants Day #FoPD today so here is something special from #Seychellesat50 #CocoDeMer



**Gwen Cowley** @genuine · May 26  
Extracting DNA from flowers @WildflowerNWC @livunillBpec @livunillB #FoPD



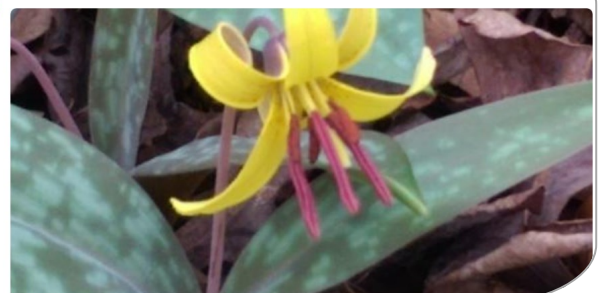
**Willow B.** @Willow\_B\_Well · May 19  
Nothing beats fresh beets! Thanks hard-working #farmers! "@TashasOwn: The beets are looking good! #fopd" #FarmLife



**Botany 2100 Lab** @BOT2100Lab · May 20  
Enormous leaf of rhubarb (*Rheum rhabarbarum*) held by a 6-year-old Homo sapiens. #botany #FoPD



**Dr. Jere Boudell** @Apps4Ecology · May 19  
Trout Lily in the GA Piedmont. #FoPD #botany





## Canada

In Canada, the Spring Wildflower Walk at Riverwood was very well attended. The participants learned about various native and non-native plant species present on the property, their natural history, and provincial conservation status. Riverwood is located within the Carolinian Life Zone, a unique ecosystem found in southwestern Ontario. This zone contains the highest biodiversity in the country, with many provincially and nationally rare species. The participants were excited to contribute to the global energy generated by the Fascination of Plants Day.

[Canada country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Shahrokh Khanizadeh](#)



## Germany

In Germany, the morning of Fascination of Plants Day was celebrated by guided tours and presentations at the Institute of Plant Sciences at Forschungszentrum Jülich.

In the afternoon they built a willow hut that will provide shade in the summertime. The structure will soon be green and sprouting. A green tent for all those, who are fascinated by plants!

[Germany country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinators:** [Joachim Schiemann](#) & [Ulrich Schurr](#)



## China

In China, FoPD was initiated by the Chinese Society for Plant Biology and launched at the Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden, CAS and Shanghai Natural History Museum. Many organizations, such as Shanghai Chen Shan Botanical Garden, Southern China Botanical Garden, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Botanical Society of Yunnan, China and Nan Kai University, held special and interesting public science educational activities. The exhibitions included plants and human lives, transgenic food security, endangered plants, plant-environment and biological energy source. Tens of thousands people took part in the science feast of plants, enjoying and appreciating the fascination of science.

[China country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Zhang Peng](#)



## Hungary

In Hungary, 36 events were organized. The most remarkable aspect was the diversity of participants and programs. Primary and secondary schools, universities, academic research institutes, museums, city councils, botanical gardens, national parks, horticultural companies, agricultural, scientific, and civil associations were all represented among the organizers. The events included excursions, hands-on activities, experimental demonstrations, exhibitions, scientific and educational lectures, watching movies, solving quizzes, gardening, tasting plants, cooking foods, and many other plant-related activities.

[Hungary country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Attila Fehér](#) & [János Györgyey](#)



## Cyprus

In Cyprus school children looked at plants under the microscope and tried their own experiments.

[Cyprus country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Dimitris Tsaltas](#)



## Ireland

In Ireland a national photo competition was launched entitled 'Our Fascinating Flora'. The winner of the 0-9 years old category was Siobhan Kerans with the picture 'Cabbage stars'. Overall held 25 events throughout the country.

[Ireland country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Zoë Popper](#)



# Italy — Fascination of Plants Day Celebrated at the EXPO Milano



## MILANO FEEDING THE PLANET ENERGY FOR LIFE



MILANO  
18-24 MAGGIO 2015

The Universal Exposition in Milan with the theme '*Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*' was the perfect opportunity to celebrate the fascinating role of plants in our lives at one 2015's most major global events.

Hundreds of interested participants walked through the display in Milan city centre learning about the pleasure of plants.

From 18-24th of May The University of Milan organised a whole range of activities including workshops, guided tours, concerts, theatrical performances and conferences.

Overall 72 events were held in Italy at 50 different institutions.

### Interactive exhibition celebrates FoPD success

EPSO, the Plants for the Future European Technology Platform and EPSO's Italian representatives joined forces to showcase the success of FoPD through an interactive exhibition held on the 6th and 7th of October 2015.

Pictures of the interactive displays, clockwise from Top Left: 1) Crop diversity and domestication is key for agricultural productivity, 2) Duckweed plants: from waste to bioproducts, 3) Horticulture Stand, 4) Omega-3 fish oils in Camelina plants, 5) Wheat, the most important food crop in the world, 6) Plantlets to improve the lives of coffee farmers, 7) Display of maize seeds, 8) Pío Beltran animates a game of "The plants in our life"

[Italy country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Martin Kater](#)





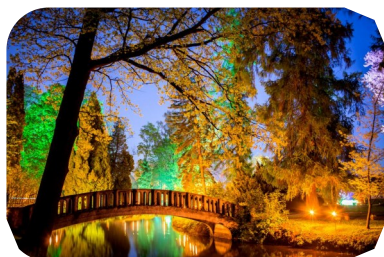
## Lithuania

In Lithuania the Fascination of Plants Day included 16 events in 7 cities organized by 26 institutions.

In Kaunas 10 partners organized "In the Plant World" including a Science Experiment Camp for children and "Night dance of Flowers" light show in the botanical garden.

[Lithuania country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Vida Mildažienė](#)



## Philippines

The Philippines participated in FoPD for a third time, with Camarines Norte State College organising an Organic Agriculture Forum with exhibits and a lecture series.

[Philippines country page](#)

**National Coordinator:** [Arlene C. Alegre](#)



## Mexico

Mexico joined FoPD for the first time in 2015 and 14 institutions organized events throughout the country.

Visitors were of all ages, including at this tree planting event.

[Mexico country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Dra. Harumi Shimada Beltrán](#)



## Poland

More than 200 events were organized from 12 to 22 May in Poland for Fascination of Plants Day. Universities, botanic gardens and research institutes took up the challenge to fascinate people with plants.

In all places, the general public turned up in great numbers. Open days were organized in several research institutions and universities, experimental and field demonstrations, excursions, virtual and real photo exhibitions, film projections among many others were organized. The event was given attention both at the radio and television.

[Poland country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Malgorzata Garnczarska](#)



## Norway

In Norway the Fascination of Plants Day was a great success in Ås, where plants cultivated by students were sold for more than NOK 60,000. The proceeds were used to fund the education of Mkami, a schoolgirl in Tanzania, and provide 10 shelter boxes for families after the earthquake in Nepal.

Around 3-400 people attended, and listened to talks on "Why study plants?", watched demonstrations of biological control of aphids on wheat and urban horticulture, participated in a walk in the University Park and weed garden, and other plant related activities.

[Norway country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Trine Hvoslef-Eide](#)



## Russia

In Russia there were 48 events which attracted more than 1.5 thousand people in cities of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kazan, Kemerovo, Petrozavodsk, Perm, Pskov and Tula. A map of events is available at [plantday.ru](http://plantday.ru). Events included an open day for school children at the Petrozavodsk department of Botany and Plant Physiology, a series of interesting lectures and guided tours were organized in Russian State Agrarian University in Moscow, and in St Petersburg teachers helped pupils plant oak trees and explored local parks to learn how plants can survive in a big city.

[Russia country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Gregory Pozhvanov](#)



# #FoPD Around the World

John Innes Centre @JohnInnesCentre · May 15

I think the plants steal the show @InnerWorlds1 @cmcollins\_hort @drkenfarquhar #FoPD



Amara @bioamara · May 19

¿Conocéis la Rafflesia? Aquí os la presento y os cuento alguna cosilla sobre ella. [lacienciadeamara.blogspot.com.es/2015/05/la-bel...](http://lacienciadeamara.blogspot.com.es/2015/05/la-bel...) #FoPD

[View translation](#)



Dr M @drmgoeswild · May 19

Fascinating conifer cone kidz! @UniofReading #FoPD @PlantDay2015 @RNGherb @John\_in\_Aber @DrMacarenaLC @JSTORPlants



Nash Turley @NashTurley · May 19

Swampy broadleaf forest in SC dripping with Spanish moss. #FoPD



InnerWorldsJLC @InnerWorlds1 · May 20  
Feeding the plants for Fascination of Plants Day on Friday #FoPD @JohnInnesCentre



Macarena L Cardenas @DrMacarenaLC · May 19  
Fascination of Plants: nothing stops plants and science! @UniofReading #FoPD @PlantDay2015 @RNGherb @John\_in\_Aber



Morag McFadyen @MoragMcFadyen · May 18

Jumping at the chance to make DNA from Strawberries in between exams @RobertGordonUni @PlantDay2015 #fopd



REAL JARDIN BOTANICO @RJBOTANICO · May 18  
Fascinantes peonías, de indomable lujo Sueños de primavera ¡Feliz #fopd! @Plantday2015





## Saudi Arabia

In Saudi Arabia the King Abdullah University of Science and Technology Center for Desert Agriculture hosted a day of events at the university greenhouse. Community members took part in tours of the facilities, demonstrations, interactive sessions, games for children and much more. Visitors learned about agriculture in the extreme arid and hot climate conditions of the Middle East.



[Saudi Arabia country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Maged M. Saad](#)



## Serbia

In Serbia, the University of Belgrade, opened its doors to the public, offering plant-based events to visitors of all ages, with a keen interest in attracting a greater number of high-school students who are about to choose their future careers. Visitors were able to participate in guided tour of the research facility and themed talks by the research staff. Main events included unprecedented access to all collections (greenhouse plants, in vitro plant tissue culture, BY2 cells, hydroponics systems, fungi) and ongoing projects in the Laboratory for the Plant Molecular Biology.



[Serbia country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Nemanja Stanisavljevic](#)



## Slovakia

In Slovakia the importance of grasses in the nature and health environment was presented to visitors, in traditional costumes and with traditional songs. More than 150 school children in Piešťany attended "Grasses our daily", and were informed about grasses, how important they are for the environment. The Comenius University in Bratislava organized a block of short lectures with subjects ranging from cacti and succulents to how plants can be used for cleaning a polluted environment. The Natural History Museum presented plants tours, as a basic assumption to create a positive relationship of man to plant life.



[Slovakia country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Michaela Havrlentova](#)



## Slovenia

The Slovenian activities attracted over 1000 participants to 41 events at 22 different institutions. Events included a literary and art competition named 'The Charming Colours of Plants' with an exhibition and prizes for the winners. The University of Ljubljana organized workshops, hands-on activities, plant walks, and guided tours



[Slovenia country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Maruša Pompe-Novak](#)



## South Africa

Fascinating Plants was the theme of the 2015 University of Pretoria Open Day. A vibrant atmosphere of excitement, curiosity and expectation filled the air as learners from various schools and ages, accompanied by their parents. The learners were able to examine carnivorous plants such as the Venus Flytrap under the microscope, opening up a whole new world of wonders to them.



[South Africa country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Miranda Deutschländer](#)



## Spain

In Spain 59 activities were organised by 39 institutions including universities, research institutes, and botanic gardens.



In the picture you can see researchers in Galicia holding an open day where the public were taken on an interactive tour of the basic steps of in vitro cultivation. They could touch everything from agar, different species of plants, their roots, to the culture apparatus that can function with an inflator showing visitors the movement of gases using balloons.

[Spain country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [José Pío Beltrán Porter](#)

# #FoPD Around the World



**MA Martins-Loução** @maloucao · May 18  
Fascination Plant Day. Lisboa Botanic Garden. #fopd Portugal. What is a Botanic Garden?



**Smithsonian's NMNH** @NMNH · May 18  
Happy Fascination of Plants Day! 10 Botanical Treasures of the US National Herbarium: [s.si.edu/1HcvqFV](https://s.si.edu/1HcvqFV) #FOPD



**Cathy Offord** @ApsaraCat · May 18  
About to head out on field work in the Blue Mountains #FoPD



**Andrés Zurita x #AC** @randreszurita · May 18  
Ephemeral flowers @ Panul #Coquimbo #Chile #FoPD @PlantDay2015



**Hearthsides Farm** @TashasOwn · May 19  
Beautiful hellebores! Happy Fascination of Plants Day from all of us @tashasow #fopd



**AmyMcPherson** @AEMcP · May 18  
Behind the scenes on a plant walk #botany #fopd



**Michelle D'Antoni** @michdantoni · May 18  
Happy #FOPD15! @PlantDay2015 debuts in Saudi Arabia at #KAUST buff.ly/1Fnpmxi #FOPD #plantscience



**Bastian Minkenberg** @BM\_Research · May 18  
Me showing a cacao tree to an interested woman on #fopd at #PennState





## Sweden

The Linnean Centre in Sweden participated in the joint celebration of Linnaeus' birthday and the FoPD. Numerous interested visitors found their way to our exhibition tent in the Linnaeus garden where Centre members had arranged experimental stations and demonstrations to highlight the importance of plants and plant science.

[Sweden country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Jens Sundström](#)



## United States

The American Society of Plant Biologists organized [four contests](#) for FoPD including a plant naming contest, a T-shirt design competition, a photo competition and a Youtube video contest.

15 events were held in the USA including at Beall Elementary School in Frostburg, MD where over 60 1st grade students were treated to hand-on activities centered on how plants use their senses to explore and respond to their environment. The budding scientists were asked to voice and write their ideas about whether or not plants can tell "up" from "down" and what cues plants might use to make their decision. They then set up experiments to test their hypotheses!

[USA country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinators:** [Katie Engen](#) & [Henry Nguyen](#)



## Switzerland

In Switzerland the University of Geneva opened its doors to schools and the general public, offering a series of events focused on the world of plants. An interactive game helped school children learn about evolution. They were also able to act as scientists for the day, investigating one of the most famous vegetable on our plates: tomatoes. In the evening the public was invited to attend a debate entitled "Green Revolution: errors of the past, challenges of the future" to discuss the real challenges of modern agriculture.

[Switzerland country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Sylvia Martinez](#)



## Ukraine

137 events took place in Ukraine as visitors were invited to open lectures, presentations and tours organized by leading experts and enthusiasts in the field of plant biology as well as plant lovers and inspired artists.

Research institutions, universities, botanical gardens, natural science museums and national parks were open for anybody sharing an exciting educational and informative activity for the whole family about various aspects of plant life. Experiments, demonstrations using modern methods of biological research, nature trips, greenhouse tours, competitions, lectures, workshops, quizzes, biking tours, photo contests, "plant art" exhibitions, fairs and other activities were organized in many Ukrainian cities (Kyiv, Cherkassy, Kharkiv, Lviv, and Odessa) as well as Nature Parks in Ivano-Frankivsk, Kherson, Sumy, Mykolayiv, Cherkassy, Rivne and other regions.

[Ukraine country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinators:** [Yaroslav B. Blume](#) & [Yuliya A. Krasnylenko](#)



## United Kingdom

At the Natural History Museum in the United Kingdom a selection of the museum's 6 million plant specimens were available for public viewing. At Rothamsted Research 60 students from secondary schools were then challenged to design the perfect environmental condition for plant growth as part of a competition. At the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew visitors were able to join five tours of the science laboratories and see the Millennium Seed Bank vault. In Scotland scientists at Robert Gordon University hosted an open day which highlighted the importance of plants in everyday life.

[UK country page](#)

**2015 National Coordinator:** [Mimi Tanimoto](#)



**Could your event, country, or sponsorship be here in 2017?**



**Contact your National Coordinator or the Global coordinators:** [Trine Hvoslef-Eide](#); [Przemysław Wojtaszek](#); [Calum MacKichan](#) and [Karin Metzlaiff](#).

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# Support the Fascination of Plants Day in 2017



Fascination of  
Plants Day  
May 18<sup>th</sup> 2017

The fourth international "Fascination of Plants Day" 2017 will be launched under the umbrella of the European Plant Science Organisation (EPSO). The goal of this activity is to get as many people as possible around the world fascinated by plants and enthused about the importance of plant science for agriculture, in sustainably producing food, as well as for horticulture, forestry, and all of the non-food products such as paper, timber, chemicals, energy, and pharmaceuticals. The role of plants in environmental conservation will also be a key message.



## Plants are fascinating

From one little seed, planted into soil, many green lives can arise - from small herbs up to big trees, or from ornamental flowers to substantial crops which all animals and mankind need to survive on this planet. Plant biologists estimate the total number of plant species roughly to be about 250,000. On the back of this coordinated activity we hope to plant again many virtual and constantly germinating seeds in the collective mind of the European and World Public that plant science is of critical significance to the social and environmental landscape now and into the future.

## Everybody is welcome to join this initiative!

We invite you to organize for the 18th of May 2017, a fascinating activity related to plants attracting and interacting with the public. May 18th will be the Fascination of Plants Day itself and most events will be organised for this day. In addition, where this is not suitable, events will be organised throughout the weeks of 3-31 May 2017. Just contact your national coordinator or the Global Coordinators ([Trine Hvoslef-Eide](#), [Przemysław Wojtaszek](#), [Calum MacKichan](#) and [Karin Metzlauff](#)) to discuss and get guidelines for using the Fascination of Plants Day. The Fascination of Plants Day corporate design can be downloaded for free at the "[PR-toolbox](#)" on the webpage to be used to prepare, hold and report on this day.



We invite many others to join in, ranging from schools to horticulture and anyone who feels to have a suited contribution to this initiative. Many plant science institutions, universities, schools, botanical gardens, and museums, together with farmers and companies, have opened their doors at the Fascination of Plants Day 2012, 2013 & 2015 with a variety of plant-based events for all the family - just look at the "Success Story" links in this document or on the website by clicking on each country. Again, the media are invited to join in, and scientists, farmers, politicians and industrialists will discuss with them and present the latest state-of-the-art research and breakthroughs in the plant science world and explore all of the new potential applications plant science can offer.

The Fascination of Plants Day will be backed up by a range of events in public spaces, theatres, cafes, central city squares and parks designed to get everyone thinking about plants.

