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Press Release

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30th IULTCS Congress at Beijing, China

The 30th IULTCS Congress was one of the friendliest and best organised IULTCS Congresses in recent times. The China Leather Industry Association (CLIA) arranged and carried out the Congress on behalf of the IULTCS. Some 300 leather technologists and scientists attended, of which some 80 were from overseas. There were 43 oral presentations and over 80 visual presentations covering many aspects of leather technology. The presentations were in the categories of fundamental research, clean technology, environmental protection and recycling, innovative technologies, as well as the normal leather industry topics of quality standards, new leather chemicals and design of leather goods. There was something for everyone, from research scientists at universities to the technologists from the leather tanneries, with interesting presentations on new research into the structure of leather, new practical environmental techniques, through to the design of shoes.

The Congress was opened by IULTCS President, Elton Hurlow, who unfurled the Congress flag and declared the Congress open. During his opening speech Elton Hurlow took the opportunity to present Professor Tony Covington with the highest IULTCS award, the IULTCS Merit Award, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to leather science. The Merit Award plaque was presented to Tony by his friend and colleague Professor Bi Shi from Sichuan University and Elton Hurlow, IULTCS President. (Photos are on the CLIA website)

There were speeches of welcome from the Honorary Chairman of the CLIA, Xu Yong, and the Chairman of the China Light Industry Federation, Bu Zhengfa.

The President of CLIA, Madame Zhang Shuhua, gave an interesting overview of the situation of the leather industry in China and the continuing need for technological and scientific developments. Based on the success to date, she strongly recommended the continued development of tannery clusters as the way to proceed forward in the next years.

The opening was followed by 2 special invited lectures:

- the Heidemann lecture on collagen research was presented by Dr Eleanor Brown of USDA.
- the Zhang Quan Memorial Lecture, given by Prof. Zhang Yang, which was dedicated to his father, Professor Zhang Quan, the founder of leather science and technology in China and to the development of modern tanning education in China. There were several interesting old photos of leather meetings from the 1940 - 1960.

During closing ceremony the VESLIC Award for the best young presenter at the Congress was awarded by Dr Alois Puentener (VESLIC President) and Professor Zhang (Shaanxi University) to Ren Longfang who completed her Ph. D. in June 2009 under the supervision of Professor Wang Xuechuan of Shaanxi University. Her presentation was on the use of a novel collagen peptide to remove formaldehyde from leather. (Photos of the presentation of the award are available on the CLIA website.)

The Congress finished with the handing over of the Congress flag to the host Society for the next Congress, namely the AQEIC in Spain. The 31st IULTCS Congress will be held on 28th - 30th September 2011 in Valencia, Spain.

On the next day after the completion of the Congress, a good number of people attending took the chance to visit the Xinji tannery cluster, which is some 300 km south-east of Beijing. In Xinji a shoe factory, a cattle hide tannery and the waste water treatment plant were visited. This gave an interesting, practical conclusion to a very successful Congress.

All who attended the Congress appreciated the friendly, good organisation and smooth running of all events. Everything worked as was planned and the presentations were a good mixture of fundamental and practical technologies so that all attending could take something away from the Congress.

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