

Continuous box system optimises drying

Agratechnik has developed a system for drying seed after a washing treatment and priming. It is ideal for drying large amounts of seed with minimum coating or film coating and for seed pills. The system consists of a steel construction in which the boxes are placed. Behind the construction is an air distribution system with a blow out vent. These vents connect to the ventilation pallet of the boxes. For static drying, the vents are provided with a sliding door which has a servomotor to open automatically when the box is placed. For fluid drying each vent is provided with a centrifugal ventilator. When the box is placed a relative humidity (RH) sensor is also automatically attached above the box. This way the RH of every box is measured and controlled until the desired value is reached. The desired RH corresponds with the value of the balance moisture content of the seed. When the desired RH of the outgoing air is reached, the air flow will reduce proportionally so that the RH stays at the desired value. A signalling light will turn on when the seeds are dry. With the continuous box dryer every box is dried individually. Using this method the boxes can be placed in and removed from the dryer independently. The drying can therefore start the moment the box is filled. The desired drying can be programmed for each individual box. The drying will stop at the moment the desired moisture content is reached.

Fleuroselect announces gold medal winners



The Fleuroselect judges have awarded six varieties with the gold medal 2008. Especially the achievement of Kieft Seeds is remarkable as this company bred three of the six gold medal winners. The Delphinium consolida 'Sydney Light Blue' (1) is the third gold medal winner in the Sydney series. The judges praised its gorgeous new colour. The Lavendula angustifolia 'Ellagance Purple' (2) is also a new colour in a series. It equals the earliness, uniformity and floridity of 'Ellagance Sky', which won a gold medal in 2006. The third medal winner of Kieft Seeds is the 'Bergamo' (3), a Monarda x hybrida. It stunned

the judges by its earliness and its magnificent new colour. Syngenta Seeds received a gold medal for the Begonia semperflorens 'Volumia Rose bicolor' (4) caught the judges' eyes with its excellent garden performance throughout the season and its dramatic splashes of summer colour. Rudbeckia hirta 'Cappuccino' (5) of Clause Tézier received enthusiastic reviews from the judges. Besides being semi/tall and uniform, this variety is strong, vigorous and has good basal branching. The Salvia farinacea 'Fairy Queen' (6) of Ernst Benary has multiple spikes of bicolor blue and white flowers on dark distinctive flower stems.

Cooperation Unilever and Nunhems

Unilever has signed an agreement with Nunhems to co-develop tomato varieties for taste, nutrition and health. The agreement includes the formation of a shared research, development and business platform for innovative tomato varieties as well as the acquisition of Unilever's tomato seed business by Nunhems. "The tomato breeding technologies that we will co-develop with Nunhems will allow us to provide tasty and healthy products for consumers around the world", says Emmo Meijer, senior vice president Unilever Foods R&D. Unilever's mission is to add vitality to life. The company meets everyday needs for nutrition,

hygiene and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life. It is one of the world's leading suppliers of fast moving consumer goods with strong local roots in more than 100 countries across the globe. Its portfolio includes some of the world's best known brands, including 12 one billion euro brands and global leadership in many categories in which the company operates. "With Unilever's R&D and consumer insights, and Nunhems expertise in vegetable seed genetics, this partnership is a win-win for both parties", Dr. Orlando de Ponti, Nunhems' Director of Research & Development commented. "We look forward to the growth that this agreement will offer to our global tomato portfolio."