Invitation to Host the Harlan III International Symposium   
on Domestication, Evolution, and Uses of Biological Diversity

Symposium Concept

We need to understand the past if we are to manage the demands put on our planet to feed the projected human population of 9.7 billion by the year 2050, especially in the light of global warming and the consequent climate change. We need understand the events of the past if we are to successfully tackle and manage the future. The transition from nomadic hunter-gatherer lifestyle to a sedentary farming and pastoral one had revolutionary consequences in the history of humankind. Our knowledge of the processes that affect agricultural biodiversity, in both plants and animals, has increased con­siderably in the recent years since an international symposium was held in Aleppo, Syria in May 1997, *The Origins of Agriculture and the Domestication of Crop Plants in the Near East*”, dedicated to Jack R. Harlan (1917-98), evolutionary biologist and plant explorer. The Second Harlan Symposium, *Biodiversity in Agriculture: Domestication, Evolution, & Sustainability,* took place at the University of California, Davis in September 2008. The symposium was very successful and the proceedings were published by Cambridge University Press in 2012. Interest has been expressed that a Harlan III symposium should be organized. To that end we have formed an International Advisory Committee to evaluate proposals for the Harlan III symposium. As hosts of Harlan II symposium we have initiated this activity. University of California, Davis does not ‘own’ this symposium, but we are very pleased about the prospects of a third symposium. The International Committee will select the venue based on proposals it receives. The legacy of Jack Harlan may guide the topical focus of the symposium. That, of course, gives great latitude because of Professor Harlan’s tremendous breadth of interests and scholarly activity.

Our knowledge of the processes that affect agricultural biodiversity, in both plants and animals, has increased considerably in the recent years since the above two Symposia (Harlan I in Aleppo, and Harlan II in Davis). And hence it is appropriate to organize Harlan III including, but not exclusive, of the following themes:

Examples include:

* The origin of domestication and crop and farm animal evolution are now being investigated with powerful genomic tools.
* Domestication constitutes a model for the study of evolutionary processes and the molecular and genetic tools provide a scientific basis for coping with climate change.
* The discovery and characterization of micro-remains and other excavated objects allow archeobotanists to explore the origins of agriculture and the role played by farm animals in a broader range of environments.
* The role of farmers in maintaining agricultural biodiversity through continued cultivation of landraces.
* Conserving and utilizing agricultural biodiversity is seen as an itegral part of the sustainable management of agricultural and natural and associated ecosystems.
* Utilizing genetic resources of both plant and farm animals to combat and mitigate the effects of global warming and climate through the use of molecular and advanced techniques.

The Harlan III symposium promises to advance knowledge and greater understanding of evolutionary processes and the strategies and means to advance the utilization of genetic resources wisely for the future.

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Desirable venues for Harlan III:  
 Strong interest in plant/animal evolution and domestication;

Interesting venue from natural history and archaeology;

Good conference facilities and support;

Ability to process registration and fee payments electronically;

Can operate on small organization fee;

Can generate good financial support locally and through international organizations;

Strong leadership of a Local Organizing Committee:

Program development

Physical arrangements

Time of year should be convenient with local agriculture and touristic opportunities;

Could organize for 2017 or 2018;

Topic/theme of Symposium should be relevant to J.R. Harlan’s legacy;

Accessible by public transportation

Reasonable cost accommodation for participants near to auditorium.

Hosts for a Harlan symposium.  
The International Committee is seeking proposals to host Harlan III and requests that interested groups consider the above factors in preparing a prospectus for the symposium, giving special attention to the potential financial requirements and sources of funding. For consideration for a symposium to be held in 2017, the prospectus should be received at UC Davis by April 15, 2016.

Interest in hosting a Harlan symposium has been expressed for the following sites, but formal proposals have not been received.

* Mexico with cooperation with UNAM and CIMMYT, 2017
* Montpellier, France, before or after EUCAPIA meeting anytime May to November 2017 OR in conjunction with the opening of new PGR/Conservation Center at ARCAD, Montpellier in 2018.
* South Africa, in conjunction with the Crop Wild Relatives meeting in 2017
* Mauritius at University of Mauritius, Reduit, 2017
* Turket at Cukurova University, Adana, Turkey 2017

Symposium Secretariat

Proposals and requests for additional information should be sent to:

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