



VI INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM  
**ON POMEGRANATE**  
and Minor Mediterranean Fruits  
BARI , ITALY 22-25 SEPTEMBER 2025

## POMSYM 2025 – Program

### DAY 1

**09:00 – 11:30**

Arrival and Registration, Poster setup

**11:30 – 12:00**

Opening Session

Conveners: Giuseppe Ferrara and Stefano La Malfa,  
Mayor of Bari – Vito Leccese  
Dean of the University of Bari – Stefano Bronzini  
Head of the DiSSPA – Maria De Angelis  
Ordine dei Dottori Agronomi e dei Dottori Forestali  
EIT Foods – Barbara De Ruggeri  
ISHS Representative - Olaniyi A. Fawole

**12:00 – 12:30**

Keynote #1 – Ali Sarkhosh (University of Florida, USA)

*Global status of pomegranate production: Challenges and opportunities.*

**12:30 – 13:00 - Discussion #1**

**13:00 – 14:30 - Lunch**

**14:30 – 15:00**

Keynote #2 – Luis Cisneros-Zevallos (Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas)

*Husk Scald in pomegranates is a stress-induced senescence event: triggered by water loss, exacerbated by low RH, and attenuated by low oxygen*

**15:00 – 15:30 - Discussion #2**





## SCIENTIFIC SESSION

### *Germplasm evaluation (Chair: Julian Bartual)*

**15:30 – 15:45**

#### *Quality, flavor, and ripening indices of 'Neta' fruit: a new early-season pomegranate variety*

- Ron Porat (Volcani Institute, Rishon LeZion, Israel), Orly Elimelech (Volcani Institute, Rishon LeZion, Israel), Irit Bar-Yaakov (Volcani Institute, Ramat Yishay, Israel), Kamel Hatib (Volcani Institute, Ramat Yishay, Israel), Doron Holland (Volcani Institute, Ramat Yishay, Israel), Tamar Azoulay-Shemer (Volcani Institute, Ramat Yishay, Israel)

**15:45 – 16:00**

#### *Machine Learning-based classification of pomegranate cultivars using their multidimensional quality traits*

- Olaniyi Fawole (University of Johannesburg, APK Campus, South Africa), Yardjouma Silue (University of Johannesburg, APK Campus, South Africa), Tobi Fadiji (University of Greenwich, Chatham, United Kingdom)

**16:00 – 16:15**

#### *First Descriptions of 20 Prickly Pear Genotypes Selected from the Eastern Mediterranean Region of Türkiye*

- Cenap Yilmaz (Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Turkey), Cengiz Türkay (Alata Horticultural Research Institute, Mersin Erdemli, Turkey), Hasim Kelebek (Adana Alparslan Turkes Science and, Technology University, Turkey), Serkan Selli (University of Cukurova, Adana, Turkey)

**16:15 – 16:45 - Coffee Break**

**16:45 – 17:00**

#### *Morphological and sensorial characterization of pomegranate (*Punica granatum* L) from two European collections*

- Ferdinando Cossio (Plant breeder and consultant, San Zeno di Montagna VR, Italy), Julian Bartual (Estación Experimental Agraria, Alicante, Spain), M Jose Navarro-Canovas (Estación Experimental Agraria, Alicante, Spain)



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**17:00 – 17:15**

*In Vitro Biotechnology for Propagation and Conservation of Minor Mediterranean Fruit Species: Current Status and Future Perspectives*

- Waed Tarraf, Raffaella Petruccelli, Carla Benelli (CNR-IBE, Sesto Fiorentino, Florence, Italy)

**17:15 – 17:30**

*Fruit and juice quality of twenty pomegranate accessions from the USDA National Clonal Germplasm Repository*

- John Chater (CREC, University of Florida, USA), Giuseppe Lana (Horticultural Sciences Department, University of Florida, USA), Claire Heinitz (National Clonal Germplasm Repository, USA)

## SPONSOR PRESENTATIONS

**17:30 – 18:00**

LOME, OLERE, FRUIT CONTROL

**18:00 – 19:00** - Welcome Cocktail

## DAY 2

**09:00 – 09:30**

Keynote #3 – Olaniyi A. Fawole (University of Johannesburg, APK Campus, South Africa)

*Pomegranate Research for Capacity Building: Insights from a Value Chain-Based Approach in South Africa*

**09:30 – 10:00** - Discussion #3





## SCIENTIFIC SESSION

### *Postharvest and product quality (Chair: Olaniyi Fawole)*

**10:00 – 10:15**

#### *Pomegranate skin development and fruit cracking incidence – omics and sensing approaches*

- Idit Ginzberg, Yulia Kaplan, Ekaterina Manasherova, Adi Faigenboim, Michael Morozov, Yoav Yoktan, Naama Alon, Hagai Cohen, Avi Sadka, Victor Alchanati (Agricultural Research Organization, Volcani Institute, Rishon LeZion, Israel)

**10:15 – 10:30**

#### *Chemical and biological evaluation of two commercial pomegranate juices after different industrial processing*

- Simone Carradori (Università degli Studi "G. d'Annunzio", Chieti, Italy)

**10:30 – 10:45**

#### *Effects of Melatonin, Carnation Oil and SO<sub>2</sub> on Postharvest Storage of Pomegranate under Modified Atmosphere Conditions*

- Ibrahim Kahramanoglu, Osman Konut, Serhat Usanmaz (Department of Horticulture, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Technologies, European University of Lefke, Northern Cyprus, Türkiye)

**10:45 – 11:00**

#### *Comparative analysis of morphological, textural and cuticular traits in three pomegranate cultivars: implications for susceptibility to fruit cracking*

- Mario Di Guardo, Paolo La Spada, Manuela Milia, Edoardo Liotta, Giulia Modica, Alberto Continella, Alessandra Gentile, Stefano La Malfa (Università di Catania, Italy)

**11:00 – 11:15**

#### *Effects of environmental conditions and ripeness at harvest on quality and internal skin browning of cold-stored 'Mollar de Elche' pomegranate*

- Maria B. Perez-Gago, Lluís Palou, Verónica Taberner, Julia Morales, Ana Quiñones (Instituto Valenciano de Investigaciones Agr, IVIA, Spain)



- José Enrique Lluch, María José Navarro-Canovas, Julián Bartual (Estación Experimental Agraria de Elche, Alicante Elche, Spain)

**11:15 – 11:30**

*Pomegranate fermentation with *Hanseniaspora valbyensis*: valorization and enhancement of nutritional and sensory quality*

- Rosangela Limongelli, Carlo Porfido, Carmen Aurora Apa, Giuseppe Celano, Concetta Eliana Gattullo, Roberto Terzano, Maria De Angelis, Fabio Minervini (Dipartimento Di Scienze Del Suolo, Della Pianta E Degli Alimenti, Bari, Italy)

**11:30 – 12:00 - Coffee Break**

**12:00 – 12:15**

*Antifungal edible coatings to reduce postharvest decay and preserve quality of 'Mollar de Elche' pomegranates*

- Lluís Palou, Verònica Taberner, María B. Pérez-Gago (Centre de Tecnologia Postcollita, Montcada, València, Spain)
- Maria Victoria Alvarez (Grupo Investigación en Ingeniería en Alimentos, Facultad de Ingeniería, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, Argentina)

**12:15 – 12:30**

**Cytospora punicae* causes post-harvest decay in pomegranate fruit during long-term storage*

- Elrita Venter, Cheryl, L. LennoxJulia, Meitz-Hopkins (Stellenbosch University, Department of Plant Pathology, South Africa)

**12:30 – 12:45**

*Modified atmosphere packaging combined with hot water dips and fungicides to reduce decay and alleviate postharvest disorders of pomegranate*

- Salvatore D'Aquino, Maria Giovanna Molinu, Amedeo Palma (CO ISPA-CNR, Sassari, Italy)
- Stefano La Malfa, Alberto Continella, Alessandra Gentile (Università di Catania, Italy)



**12:45 – 13:00**

***Performance of pomegranate cultivars at different elevations in the southwestern United States***

- Ursula K. Schuch (School of Plant Sciences, University of Arizona, Tucson, USA), Glenn Wright (Yuma Agric. Center, University of Arizona, Yuma, USA)

**13:00 – 14:30 - Lunch & Poster Vision**

**SCIENTIFIC SESSION**

***Postharvest and product quality (Chair: Salvatore D'Aquino)***

**14:30 – 14:45**

***Non-destructive Methods for the Prediction of the Number and Weight of Pomegranate Arils***

- Ersin Caglar, Ibrahim Kahramanoglu (European University of Lefke, Northern Cyprus, Turkey)

**14:45 – 15:00**

***Baby Kiwi or Kiwiño (Actinidia arguta): Consumer Impressions and Shelf Life***

- Cristina Besada, Marina Castillo, Carlos Albert, Jose Malagón (Valencian Inst. for Agricultural Resear, Valencia, Spain)

**15:00 – 15:15**

***Susceptibility of pomegranate cultivars to the pathogen Coniella granati***

- Donato Gerin, Angelo Agnusdei, Vito Montilon, Francesco Faretra, Stefania Pollastro (Università degli Studi di Bari - Dipartimento di Scienze del Suolo, della Pianta e degli Alimenti, Bari, Italy)
- Angela Bolzonello, Rita Musetti, Silvio Tundo (Università degli Studi di Padova, Legnaro, Italy)

**15:15 – 15:30**

***Eco-Friendly Control of Postharvest Gray Mold in Pomegranates Using Satureja montana Essential Oil***

- Masoud Ahmadzadeh, Armita Ms. Firoozi (Dept. of Plant Protection, Faculty of Agriculture, College of Agriculture Natural Resources, University of Tehran, Iran)



- Azad Omrani Sabbaghi, Alberto Sardo (XEDA Fruits Science Research Centre, Saint Andiol, France)
- Fahimeh Salehi (R&D Dep. of Middle East Fruit Science Company, Tehran, Iran)

**15:30 – 15:45**

***Characterization and postharvest behavior of mulberry (*Morus nigra* L.) during ripening***

- Ayoub Fathi Najafabadi, Danial Fatchurrahman, Noelia Castillejo, Maria Luisa Amodio, Giancarlo Colelli (Dipartimento di Scienze Agrarie, Alimenti, Risorse Naturali e Ingegneria DAFNE, Università di Foggia, Foggia, Italy)

**SPONSOR PRESENTATION**

**15:45 – 16:00**

**UNITEC**

**SCIENTIFIC SESSION**

**Genetics (Chair: Ilaria Marcotuli)**

**16:00 – 16:15**

***Improving pomegranate resistance to *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides*; Identification of sources of resistance, dissection of mode of inheritance, and development of genomic resources***

- Zhanao Deng, Alexander Schaller, Gary Vallad (Gulf Coast Research and Education Center, University of Florida IFAS, USA)
- John Chater (Citrus Research and Education Center, University of Florida IFAS, USA)
- Zhenyu Jia (Department of Botany and Plant Sciences, University of California, Riverside, USA)

**16:15 – 16:30**

***A new horizon for pomegranates: red coloration and in-mouth properties of Mollar merged in a new hybrid***

- Julián Bartual, María José Navarro (Elche Agricultural Experiment Station, Spain)
- Miriam Castellano (IVIA, Moncada, Spain) Cristina Besada



**16:30 - 16:45**

*Developing 'Peppy Le Pom' as a model for pomegranate genetic and genomic research: Characterization of its short juvenility, genome, and flowering time genes*

- Zhanao Deng, Alexander Schaller (University of Florida, IFAS, USA)
- John Chater (Citrus Research and Education Center, University of Florida IFAS, USA)
- Zhenyu Jia (Department of Botany and Plant Sciences, University of California, Riverside, USA)

**16:45 – 17:00**

*Genetic structure and GWAS in an international pomegranate collection including Sardinian germplasm*

- Domenico Rau, Mario Santona, Chiara M. Posadinu, Davide Fois, Andrea Porceddu (Dipartimento di AGRARIA, Università degli Studi di Sassari, Italy)
- Ferdinando Cossio (Plant breeder and consultant, San Zeno di Montagna, Italy)
- Luciano De Pau, Dr. Daniela Satta, Germano Schirru (Agricultural Research Agency of Sardinia, Sassari, Italy)
- Gianni Tacconi (CREA, Research centre Genomics and Bioinformatics, Fiorenzuola d'Arda PC, Italy)

**17:00 – 17:15**

*Exploiting genetic variation in fig trees to identify molecular markers linked to abiotic stress responses*

- Tommaso Giordani, Marco Castellacci, Andrea Cavallini, Lucia Natali, Gabriele Usai, Alberto Vangelisti, Flavia Mascagni, Samuel Simoni (University of Pisa, Dept. Agricultural food and environment, Pisa, Italy)
- Margarita Lopez-Corrales, Maria Guadalupe Domínguez (CICYTEX, Guadajira, Badajoz, Spain)
- Ghada Baraket, Sahar Haffar (Université de Tunis El Manar, Tunis, Tunisia)
- Ayzin Kuden, Songul Comlekcioglu (Çukurova Üniversitesi Rektörlüğü, Balcalı, Turkey)
- José Inaki Hormaza (CSIC, Malaga, Spain)

**17:15 – 17:45 - Coffee Break**



## SCIENTIFIC SESSION

### Field management (Chair: Stefano La Malfa)

**17:45 – 18:00**

*Canopy position and fruit quality attributes affect aril browning disorder in pomegranate (*Punica granatum* L.)*

- Julian Bartual, M.J. Navarro-Canovas, J. Enrique Lluch (Estación Experimental Agraria, Alicante, Spain)

**18:00 – 18:15**

*Climatic and canopy factors influencing transpiration of pomegranate orchards under semi-arid conditions*

- Muthianzhele Ravuluma (R44 Hoogstede Road, Stellenbosch, South Africa)
- Raesibe Kgaphola (Bloemfontein, South Africa)
- Phumudzo Tharaga, Sue Walker (Pretoria, South Africa)
- Theresa Volschenk (Stellenbosch, South Africa)

**18:15 – 19:15** - ISHS Business Meeting

**18:30 - 21:00** - Walking Tour of Bari

## DAY 3

**08:30 – 12:30**

Technical Visit – Fruttirossi Farm

**12:30 – 13:30** - Lunch

**13:30 – 14:00**

Keynote #4 – Prof. Maria Luisa Amodio (University of Foggia, Italy)

*Optimizing Postharvest Handling for Enhanced Quality and Utilization of Goji Berries (*Lycium barbarum* L.)*

**14:00 – 14:15** - Discussion #4



## SCIENTIFIC SESSION

### Miscellaneous (Chair: Ali Sarkhosh)

**14:15 – 14:30**

#### *Bio-agronomical evaluation of a new hermaphroditic carob cultivar in the Balearic Islands*

- Francesco Maldera, Alessandra Gallotta, Francesco Nicolì, Salvatore Camposeo (Università degli Studi di Bari, Bari, Italy)
- Jeroni Paul, Llorenç Tortella, Jaume Miquel, Maria del Carme Garau (CEusebi Estada, Palma, Spain)

**14:30 – 14:45**

#### *Comparison of chilling requirements among pomegranate cultivars*

- Giuseppe Ferrara, Agostino Chiriaco, Simona Pitardi, Alessandro Pesole, Andrea Mazzeo, Marino Palasciano (University of Bari 'Aldo Moro', Bari, Italy)

**14:45 – 15:00**

#### *Malum Punicum recte seritur – Pomegranate in Pliny the Elder's Historia Naturalis and Columella's Rerum rusticarum*

- Maciej Helbig (Independent researcher, PhD in Classics, Katowice, Poland)

**15:00 – 15:15**

#### *Gellan gum-based hydrogel loaded with pomegranate peel extract for cartilage tissue regeneration*

- Francesco Busto, Elvira De Giglio (Department of Chemistry, University of Bari, 70126, Bari, Italy)
- Alessandro C. Scalia, Sofia Toniolo, Andrea Cochis (CAAD, Department of Health Sciences, University of Piemonte Orientale, Italy)
- Piergiorgio Gentile (C. for Biomaterials and Tissue engineering, Universitat Politècnica de València, Spain)
- Stefania Cometa (Jaber Innovation s.r.l., Rome, Italy)



**15:15 – 15:30**

*Recovery, Characterization and Valorization of Apulian Minor Fruit Species and Varieties*

- Pasquale Venerito, Francesco Loperfido, Andrea Turco, Donato Perrelli, Giuseppe Maggi, Pierfederico La Notte (CRSFA, Locorotondo (BA), Italy)
- Cinzia Montemurro, Giuseppe Ferrara, Valentina Fanelli, Francesco Caponio (University of Bari 'Aldo Moro', Bari, Italy)

**15:30 – 15:45**

*Comparison of Punica granatum L. leaf area index determined using in situ and remote sensing techniques*

- Raesibe Ms. Kgaphola (Wenatchee, USA)
- Theresa Volschenk, Muthianzhele Ravuluma (ARC Infruitec Helshoogte Road, Stellenbosch, South Africa)
- Phumudzo Tharaga (Pretoria, South Africa)
- Sebinasi Dzikiti (Stellenbosch University Private Bag X1, South Africa)

**15:45 – 16:00**

*The effect of weather on the quality, productivity, and growth of pomegranates in the Mediterranean climate of the Western Cape in South Africa*

- Phumudzo Charle Tharaga (University of the Free State, South Africa), Muthianzhele Ravuluma (Western Cape Stellenbosch, South Africa), Raesibe Kgaphola (Pretoria, South Africa)

**16:00 – 16:30 - Coffee Break**



## SCIENTIFIC SESSION

Miscellaneous (Chair: Giuseppe Ferrara)

**16:30 – 16:45**

*Fruit extracts from immature pomegranates, a valuable byproduct and resource: an overview of our past, ongoing, and future studies on this unexpected source of biologically significant compounds*

- Laura Siracusa, Luana Pulvirenti, Carmelo Drago (CNR, Catania, Italy)
- Lucia Parafati, Giulia Modica, Alberto Continella, Cristina Restuccia (Università di Catania, Italy)

**16:45 – 17:00**

*Elche and Bari Pomegranate Collections: Conserving Local Varieties and International Germplasm for Future Challenges*

- Julian Bartual (Estación Experimental Agraria, Alicante, Spain)
- Ana Lozano, Elena Zuriaga (IVIA, Valencia Moncada, Spain)

Agata Gadaleta, Ilaria Marcotuli, Giuseppe Ferrara (University of Bari 'Aldo Moro', Bari, Italy)

**17:00 – 17:15**

*Some promising fig cultivars in Puglia region for brebas production*

- Giuseppe Ferrara, Andra Mazzeo (University of Bari 'Aldo Moro', Bari, Italy)

**17:15 – 17:30**

*Detection and control of Alternaria black spot of tomatoes in the Western Cape of South Africa*

- Julia Meitz-Hopkins, Chanel Daniel-Swartland, Cheryl L. Lennox (Department of Plant Pathology, Stellenbosch, South Africa)
- Felicity Vries (Tessara Pty Ltd, Cape Town, South Africa)

**17:30 – 18:00 – ISHS Young Minds Award**

**20:30 - Gala Dinner**