

# Interview: Hector Carlos Autino

This month we present part two of our interview with the president of AOCS' Latin American Section

**Eduardo Dubinsky**

**Q.** As President of LA-AOCS, how do you assess the new policy of AOCS toward its Sections? What would be necessary to consolidate an organization on the fats and oils specialty at a Latin American level?

**A.** We are going through a period of change; we cannot ignore the importance of AOCS, which is without doubt the most powerful and important organization at a global level in our field, and this is crucial and must be taken into account. This is why our management is trying to adapt to this new way of working, and AOCS shall also have to adapt to this change. I have no doubt that in time the new way of operating with Latin America will gradually improve and become better.

Latin America has a huge potential, and this is the reason why we both must walk on a path of consolidation that, together with the contributions that each organization can make, will be crowned with success.

On the other hand, the commitment of our adherents and members, their contributions and our drive, shall be decisive for allowing us to grow gradually but without pause. I am sure that we shall achieve this.

**Q.** What should be done to consolidate the collaboration among the existing organizations in Latin America—ASAGA, CORCHIGA (La Corporación Chilena de Aceites y Grasas), and SBOG (Sociedade Brasileira de Óleos e Gorduras)? And among these organizations and AOCS?

**A.** As I mentioned before, everything depends on adaptability. The three organizations have maximized their actions, they



*The first part of this interview with Hector Carlos Autino, president of AOCS' Latin American section, appeared in the April 2009 issue of inform.*

have consolidated throughout time, they are strong and deserve our consideration. These organizations are pillars; their history will act as a bridge for shaping new regional associations. Regarding AOCS, within this process of change the relationship will consolidate in time, and I have no doubt that it will become a fruitful one. The presence of Carlos Molina, from CORCHIGA, on the AOCS Governing Board is a tipping point for the consolidation and strengthening of our relationship and joint work.

**Q.** What actions will LA-AOCS carry out to compensate the lack of associations in the northern area of the region related to fats and oils?

**A.** As soon as I was elected president I appointed regional delegates in the different epicenters within the region. I wish to point out Colombia's action, where we are about to join forces with some local organizations to constitute a local technical-scientific association in that country. Roberto Berbesi, as the Section's vice president, is working very hard on this issue, in which

Mexico and Central America, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, Peru, and other countries within the Andean Pact are represented. This shall also contribute to maximize our actions in the entire region. We feel optimistic and our goals are clear, but above all they are logical and capable of achievement.

**Q.** What is the central subject of the next Latin American congress to take place in November 2009, in the city of Rosario, Argentina?

**A.** The motto of the congress is “Knowledge integration to create value.” The main subjects of this new congress, an exciting event that receives our maximum attention, shall be the introduction of new technologies that promote operational effectiveness and efficiency in the oils and fats industry and new discussions about safety, sustainability, health, and environmental protection.

**Q.** Considering that novelty is more attractive than what’s already known, how does ASAGA plan to make this congress different from the one that took place, not long ago, in Argentina in 2005?

**A.** ASAGA has an important organization and structure, which are strongly influenced by continuous improvement, so we believe that since the 2005 Congress was so successful, the 2009 Congress will undoubtedly exceed that success, or at least equal it. Rosario has been selected as the venue city due to the importance of the oil industry complex located in the area, and because it may be considered as the largest production region at the global level. The Metropolitan Centro de Eventos & Convenciones is located in a strategic area of the city, and is a part of the attractions that the 13th Latin American Congress on Edible Fats and Oils will offer. The Congress already has its logo and has defined a large part of the tentative program. This clearly shows the way in which ASAGA works, now increased by the collaboration of LA-AOCS members, which will undoubtedly improve our actions, optimizing management in search of excellence.

**Q.** There is a conception or a preconception that the Congresses in Argentina do not include issues of interest to the countries in the northern region of Latin America. How does ASAGA plan to attract attendees coming from the northern countries in the region?

**A.** Tropical and nonconventional oils that attract the interest of colleagues from the northern region will be subjects in the 13th Latin American Congress on Edible Fats and Oils. We have created a subcommittee to develop this issue, which is directed by Roberto Berbesi, from Colombia; and integrated also by Carlos Ramírez, from Mexico; and Jesús Dueñas, from El Salvador, who will be responsible for the lecture program about tropical oils. Our representative in Peru, Luis McFarlane, is also working on issues concerning fish oils, and this clearly shows our desire to offer regional issues of interest to the entire continent.

We are also working, together with AOCS, in the organization of events in the northern region of South America during 2009, to achieve a north-south balance and to prove that we are interested in Latin America as a whole and not only in part of the continent.

**Q.** What is the future of the oils and fats industry, at a Latin American level, in the context of the uncertainty caused by the world’s financial crisis?

**A.** As I mentioned while analyzing the Argentine perspective, all of the countries that are part of Mercosur (the Andean Community and the Common Market of the South)—Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Uruguay—produce 120 MMT of soybean and process almost 80% of such production. These values greatly exceed production in the United States, which holds the position as the largest world soybean producer, with almost 85 MMT. This clearly points out the potential of this region of the continent to become the world’s grain provider. This is very important because it will surely become the safeguard required to tackle the crisis in this area of the continent. On the other hand, the development of palm in the northern region, its growth and strategic positioning in comparison to soybean, and its possibility for replacing the latter in cooking oils and vegetable margarines, as well as its use in the production of biofuels, offer a very attractive perspective for this other sector of our Latin American region and provide us with a certain calm in times of crisis.

We hope our predictions will come true in practice, and that the United States, as a world leader, can overcome successfully such a profound and distressing crisis.

**Q.** What is your final message to Latin American and worldwide colleagues regarding the 13th Latin American Congress?

**A.** As the president of the Latin American Section of AOCS, I have several messages for our colleagues, but the most important one is that I hope they will follow me in supporting the Section’s growth, and that they could realize that the only way to achieve this growth is, simply, by working for the Section, providing information, suggesting issues and lecturers, being creative and supportive of the Section and its Governing Board; all of this will help us grow, and make us feel important and considered by the rest of the world.

In a short period of time we have established our logo and motto. We have enhanced our space on the AOCS website; there you can find the persons to contact in each region. We need more adherents in order to grow, and each of you should attract more and new colleagues. We have obtained a limited quantity of scholarships for students and teachers in every country of our continent to grant them the opportunity of attending and participating in the 13th Latin American Congress on Edible Fats and Oils without paying the registration fee. We intend to build relationships with all the sections and divisions at AOCS to enhance our knowledge, and we are trying to make possible for our members to receive ASAGA’s *A&G* magazine, by only paying for mailing costs. And we are out for more!

Finally I wish to specially thank all the adherents and members of the Section for their support of this administration. We expect our management to be as successful as each and every one of us aspire, and we hope to make this a reality by fulfilling the goals set forward when we started out with this administration.

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