Preface

Grasslands in the form of both forage and turf are the life support of the planet providing sustenance to wildlife, livestock, and thus to humans. They anchor the soil preventing erosion, harnessing the freshwater resources, and creating an environment for outdoor sports, recreation, and entertainment. They also serve to beautify our environment along with their physical and nutritional value. Bioenergy is also obtained from the grasslands and they have recently become of all the more importance for providing biofuel alongside food. In recent years however this useful resource has been afflicted with environmental insults such as increasing drought spells globally and it is important to further manipulate this resilient and versatile resource for human benefit.

Previously, the 6th MBFT Symposium was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina and the 7th MBFT Symposium was held in Salt Lake City, USA. The 8th International Symposium on Molecular Breeding of Forage and Turf was held in Sabanci University, Istanbul, Turkey. From amongst the attendees there were scientists from 15 countries from all fields of plant biology including geneticists, and molecular biologists as well as breeders and agronomists. The meeting encompassed oral presentations from leading scientists on molecular plant breeding, a surmounting number of diverse poster presentations and also tours of the historic Old Istanbul City and a boat tour of the Bosphorus Strait.

This book features papers from oral presentations of the symposium. It extensively covers the various themes discussed along with definitive reports shedding light on recent developments in systems biology, functional genomics, and application of molecular breeding in forage and turf.

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We thank once again the International and Local Organizing Committees for their efforts in making the symposium such a great success.

Lastly we also thank our authors for their relentless effort and work contributing to the publication of the *Molecular Breeding of Forage and Turf.*

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