

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE

COMMISSION: EDUCATION, RESEARCH TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY

Newsletter # 2 September 2007.

Introduction

This Commission has had a chequered history since its establishment. Although one of the prime functions of the ISHS is to organise international Symposia at regular intervals so that the results of research by members can be presented and then published as a proceedings in *Acta Horticulturae*, it has been very difficult for past Commission Chairs to organise such events.

Why has it been a problem to do this at a time when the number of ISHS Symposia is increasing? There a number of possible reasons why it has not been possible to arrange such Symposia, but I suggest the main reason is that employers of scientists are prepared to provide funding (either directly or from research grants) for academics/faculty to present the results of their scientific endeavors at international meetings, but are not prepared to provide funds for the same people to give papers based on their innovative teaching and research methodologies. In addition in most universities promotion and consequential salary increases follow success in publishing their research results in prestigious journals, rather than because of the excellence of teaching skills at undergraduate or graduate level.

All this is occurring at a time when the following issues are gaining momentum:

1. crisis in horticultural education in many countries: falling roles at tertiary institutions; amalgamation of departments; loss of identity for horticulture;
2. food is a hot topic with consumer concern about food quality; food novelty; food safety; health and nutrition; functional foods and nutraceuticals **and** convenience foods.
3. increasing importance of horticultural plants in sustaining urban green space and the impact of green space in climate change; utilisation of peri-urban space for food and environmental enhancement.
4. technological advances that will revolutionise agriculture and horticulture including biotechnology, nanotechnology and information technology; all of these will demand new thinking on education and learning for students of all ages with the over-riding philosophy of 'learning for life' on a continuing life long basis and communicating effectively with rural and urban communities
5. increasing membership of ISHS and its increasing value/involvement in industry, education and training institutions and the wider community.
6. recognition of the importance of horticulture as a driver for economic development, poverty reduction and nutritional enhancement in countries of the South (developing countries) as seen by the recent change of focus by the EU, FAO, the CGIAR institutions such as ICARDIA, ICRAF and others including foundations such as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

It seems that those of us interested, involved and committed to education and learning must develop initiatives to educate and train young people so as be able to realise the potential of the above issues. This will be a challenge to us all, and we all need to be involved if we are going to

change anything; after all “if we do not change direction, then we will end up where we were going”. We must face the challenge and do something different if we are going to be a significant and meaningful participant in the future that is encompassed in the issues indicated above

Future activities:

Definite.

- April 27 - May 2, 2008, Westminster, London (United Kingdom): **International Symposium Plants for People and Places**. Info: Mr. Tim Hughes, Royal Horticultural Society, RHS Wisley Garden, Woking, Surrey GU23 6QB, United Kingdom. Phone: (44)01483212335, Fax: (44)01935816684, E-mail: timhughes@rhs.org.uk Web: <http://www.plantsforpeopleandplaces.org/>.
- December 7-11, 2008, Chiang Mai (Thailand): **V International Symposium on Horticultural Research, Training and Extension**. Info: Peter J. Batt, Horticulture, Curtin University of Technology, GPO box U1987, Perth, WA 6845, Australia. Phone: (61)8 9266 7596, Fax: (61)8 9266 3063, E-mail: p.batt@curtin.edu.au or Associate Professor Dr. David Aldous, University of Melbourne, Burnley Campus, Swan Street, Richmond VIC 3121, Australia. Email: kaldous@optusnet.com.au Phone: (61)0392506800, Fax: (61)0392506885 Web: <http://www.muresk.curtin.edu.au/conference/ishset>.

The Organisers of both these meetings encourage participation of all our colleagues with an interest in education and training in horticulture. Please check the web sites for details and/or contact the organizers directly and offer papers and posters of relevance to the specific topics being addressed. Note that the meeting in London is being held in conjunction with the Commission on Landscape and Urban Horticulture, the Royal Horticultural Society, the Institute of Horticulture, and other agencies, while the meeting in Thailand is being held in conjunction a Symposium organised by the Commission on Economics and management. Both meetings should be of excellent quality. We look forward to your involvement and participation.

Proposed.

- **2009. Organise and implement a training workshop** on “Seeds for Africa” in conjunction with an ISHS Symposium on the same topic at Arusha, Tanzania. This to be done in collaboration with Section Vegetables (Dr Silvana Nicola and Dr Daniel Leskovar), Commission Economics and management, as well as the Global Horticultural Initiative (GHI), The World Vegetable Centre, AVRDC, CTA, The International Seed Federation, ICARDA, and IPCRI. This will be the first of a new model for activities of ISHS in general and this Commission in particular, whereby we will become involved in utilizing the skills, knowledge and expertise of our members to provide scientific and information systems to our colleagues in developing countries. Objectives will be to produce a series of practical descriptive manuscripts on seeds that will be published in Scripta Horticulturae and used as a training manual, as well as an Acta Horticulturae from the Symposium.
- If this model is successful then it could be applied to range of topics that have been identified as major goals by international agencies such as FAO, CGIAR. These might include “Postharvest Quality Enhancement and Loss Reduction in the Supply Chain” and could be organised in other African regions, in South Asia and in the Caribbean and other South American countries

- **Organise an E-conference** on “Advances in Distance Education for Horticultural Science” with the proceedings to be published in an Acta. We are seeking a volunteer(s) who is prepared to initiate and convene such an E-symposium. Such a person would become the Chair of the Working Group ET1 Electronic learning within the Commission.
- **IHC2010 in Lisbon.** Organise some significant event (colloquium or Seminar). We would like to have your opinion and suggestions for topics and potential keynote speakers.

We need your advice

In order to provide a framework in which we can operate and contribute in the future, we would be most grateful for your feedback on a number of issues. We would also seek feedback on your particular area of expertise should you be interested in participating in any of the future activities developed for the Commission.

Therefore we would be most grateful if you could spend a few minutes to complete the following questionnaire and return it to us by 30 September 2007.

We would like your opinions on what we should do at IHC2010 in Lisbon; the nature of activities that the Commission can undertake over the next 4 years to provide a useful service for members; and information on individuals experience in training and/or consultancy activities of our members in developing countries over the past 10 years.

Therefore we would be most grateful if you could complete the following questionnaire and return it to ewmrhewett@xtra.co.nz as soon as practicable.

Errol Hewett
Chair

David Aldous
Vice Chair

ISHS Commission of Education, Research Training and Consultancy.

September 2007.

QUESTIONNAIRE for

ISHS Commission Education, Research Training and Consultancy Members

1. IHC2010: WHAT SHOULD WE DO AT THE INTERNATIONAL HORTICULTURAL CONGRESS IN LISBON?

Colloquium (3 high profile keynote speakers, with big picture topics; 2 hours)

- Yes No

If Yes then suggest major topic and possible speakers

Topic Possible speaker

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Seminar (1, 2, 3 or 4 days; one overall theme; several sub-themes possible; limited number of oral presentations with unlimited posters).

- Yes No

If Yes then suggest a major theme(s) and possible sub-themes(s), also possible keynote speaker.

Topic (theme) Possible speaker(s)

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Workshop (2-3 hours; in evening after full days sessions; specific high profile, current topic(s) required; suggested leader).

- Yes No

Topic (theme) Possible convenor/speakers

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Business meeting

We will have a business meeting in Lisbon. A debate on future role and activities of the Commission is required so a good number of participants is sought.

2. POTENTIAL COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

E-Conference (on line; presentation of papers with participant interaction; papers to be published in Acta Horticulturae; one major topic, with possible sub-themes; convenor(s) required – please volunteer if interested)).

Yes

No

Topic

Convenor(s)

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Traditional Symposium (oral and poster presentations; organised at 4 year intervals; has not been possible in the past because of lack of participant and perhaps convenor enthusiasm?; overall theme and sub-themes; we need at least 80 participants to be economically viable).

Yes

No

Topic

Convenor(s)

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Link with other ISHS Symposia (during the course of one year, persuade convenors of a number of selected ISHS Symposia, to organise 0.5 to 1 day of their symposium to be devoted to information transfer/educational/outreach/consultancy outcomes with the view of collected these contributions after 1 year and publishing them as a separate Acta Horticulturae with an educational emphasis)

Yes

No

Any other suggestions

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3. EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CONSULTANCY EXPERIENCE OF MEMBERS.

Please indicate below your interest an experience in undertaking educational, outreach, research or consultancy activities in developing countries, including the nature of the activity, the country(ies) involved, the type of work undertaken; and length of the experience.

I have been involved in education/research/outreach/consultancy on horticulture in developing countries.

Yes

No

List countries and length of time

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Identify the nature of your experience

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What is your specific area(s) of expertise?

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Would you be prepared to be involved in training workshops in developing countries in your specialty area of expertise?

Yes

No

Your name:

Contact details:

Please complete Pages 4-6 and return to Errol Hewett before 30 September 2007 at

ewmrhewett@xtra.co.nz