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Postharvest Commission

Newsletter 3

June 2000



1. Postharvest Commission:

Greetings to all Postharvest Commission colleagues. There has been a substantial increase in the number of people who indicated that they wish to belong to this Commission following the way in which we indicated our ISHS interests in the subscription form filled in earlier this year. There are now 170 people on our mailing list, up from 86 last year. This undoubtedly reflects the importance and interest in this cross-sector of horticultural science. Welcome to all the new 'subscribers'.

2. Postharvest 2000:

A most successful 4th (or was it 5th) International Society of Horticultural Science (ISHS) Symposium was held in Jerusalem, Israel 26-31 March 2000. Convened by Dr Ruth Ben Arie and her formidable Organising Committee, this action packed Symposium was appreciated and enjoyed by over 400 registrants from more than 40 countries. With scientific sessions spreading over 3 days, separated by an excellent choice of 4 professional tours to various parts of this extraordinary diverse country, participants were fortunate to be exposed to a broad range of up to the minute topics that covered the broad range of subjects that comprise postharvest science.

Each day commenced with a plenary session in which a leading expert in the field gave an overview of pertinent and relevant subjects. Professor Don Grierson, University of Nottingham, UK, in his characteristically inimical style, provided an erudite and dispassionate (and sometimes passionate) outline of advances made in this field. He outlined the potential for molecular biology to contribute to understanding maturation and senescence processes leading to postharvest problems in fresh products, as well as potential benefits for improving food quality and reducing losses in both developed and developing countries.

Dr Dov Prusky from the Volcani Research Centre in Israel, provided an elegant and broad ranging discussion of factors influencing susceptibility and the process of pathogenesis for postharvest pathogens in important horticultural crops.

Dr Ian Ferguson, HortResearch, New Zealand, gave a fluent and incisive explanation on programmed cell death that clearly plays a major role in physiological disorders, as well as the senescence process in fruits and vegetables. Much more will be learned about postharvest problems and processes as this research develops.

Dr Adel Kader, University of California, USA gave a timely reminder that quality in consumer eyes constitutes many attributes and that flavour and aroma, as well as crispness and juiciness, will increasingly become key decision making features with buyers of fresh fruit and vegetables. Postharvest scientists must develop a multidisciplinary, consumer-oriented approach to research directed to improving product quality in its broadest sense.

The remaining sessions were concurrent and covered topics of specific interest to postharvest scientists. Inevitably the importance and popularity of the

Symposium (perhaps rivalled by the significance of the venue in this momentous year 2000) meant that there were a large number of oral and poster presentations that could only be presented in multiple or concurrent sessions. For those who were interested in all topics some difficult choices had to be made as to the sessions to attend. However, all the sessions were well attended and the overall quality of both poster and oral presentations was excellent.

Overall there were about 145 oral and 200 poster presentations. Topics dealt with in detail included: non-destructive quality assessment, physiology and biochemistry of ripening and senescence, physiological disorders, preharvest effects on postharvest behaviour, technologies for quality preservation, alternatives to chemical control, food safety and quarantine related issues.

A most successful Conference thanks to the sterling organisation of Dr Ruth Ben Arie and her team of helpers.

3. Postharvest Winetasters

International:

An unofficial Convivium took place during Postharvest 2000 where enthusiasts from 12 countries brought a bottle(s) of Pinot Noir for comparative tasting. With Felix Romojaro as the Maitre de Convivium, Pietro Tonutti and Fabio Mencarelli as official scorers and Errol Hewett as coordinator, the largely untrained taste panel, consisting of 19 respectable postharvest scientists, worked diligently into the night. After much consideration and thorough tasting the winner was a 1996 Ata Rangi Pinot Noir from New Zealand closely followed by a 1996 Cuvee de Jaubin from France. Ian Ferguson (left front) and Errol Hewett (right front) modestly accepted accolades, while Alain Latche (left back), Pietro (right back) and Fabio (centre back) consoled themselves and planned for revenge at a major postharvest tasting that will take place at Postharvest 2004 in Verona.



4. Venue for Postharvest 2004:

At the Business Meeting of the Postharvest Commission held during Postharvest 2000, it was decided that the 5th International Postharvest Conference will be in Verona Italy 2004. Convenor will be Dr Pietro Tonutti, assisted by Dr Fabio Mencarelli and the postharvest section of the Italian Society for Horticultural Science.

5. Postharvest Commission Business Meeting:

More than 50 members attended this meeting. A range of topics were raised and debated. One involved the status of papers from these conferences that were published in *Acta Horticulturae*. Members were advised that the publications committee of the ISHS is determined to re-write instructions to authors for *Acta's* to make the format more modern and to enable insertion of Figures and Tables into the text. In addition instructions to Convenors will be amended to ensure that they have a strong editorial team available to review all submissions for publication in order to improve the standard of the journal.

Another important decision was to disestablish the current Working Groups of Fruit and Vegetables within the Commission and replace them with following:

(i) Controlled Atmosphere Storage. Convenor Dr Koos Oosterhaven, The Netherlands. Every 4 years for many years there has been a CA Conference held in North America; the next one will be in Rotterdam in 2001. Publication of proceedings from

these conferences have always had limited circulation, but by creating this new Working Group then future proceedings will be published as an *Acta* and reach a far wider scientific audience than hitherto.

(ii) **Postharvest Science for Developing Countries.** Convenor Dr Fabio Mencarelli, Italy. There is much interest from postharvest scientists throughout the world to assist colleagues in developing countries to utilise current knowledge and provide encouragement to become more involved in the international postharvest community. A specific Working Group should provide the focus and the opportunity to facilitate these ambitions.

6. International Horticultural Congress 2002:

Planning for a successful IHC 2002 is well underway. At the Business Meeting in Israel, it was confirmed that the major theme for the Postharvest sessions in Toronto will be "Issues and Advances in Postharvest Science and Technology". This Symposium will be held over 4 days and each day will have a different theme. The themes are to be as follows:

(i) Appropriate postharvest needs for developing countries. Convenor Dr Zora Singh, Australia assisted by Dr Fabio Mencarelli and others.

(ii) Phytonutrients: postharvest applications to improve food quality. Convenor Dr Angelos Kanellis, Greece.

(iii) Genomics: implications and applications in postharvest horticulture. Convenor Dr Jean-Claude Pech, France.

(iv) Postharvest Pathology: potential for biological control. Convenor Dr Michael Wisniewski USA.

These individual sessions will each have a noted international expert as an invited speaker, and members will be invited to offer papers for presentation under these broad themes. In addition there will ample time available for viewing posters, and posters will be where a major presentation of other important postharvest results will be shown. All oral and poster presentations accepted will be eligible for publication in a special *Acta Horticulturae* issue.

7. Next ISHS Executive and Council Meeting: The next meeting of this group will be held in Cairo 31 October-2

November 2000. If any members have any issues they want brought to the attention of the Executive of the ISHS Board and Council please let me know. Send me an email with your request.

8. Upcoming Meetings:

(i). Int. Institute of Refrigeration Conference: Improving postharvest technologies of fruits vegetables and ornamentals. Mucia, Spain, 19-21 October 2000. Convenor Prof. F. Artes. (IIRCONF@natura.cebas.csic.es) and www.cebas.csic.es/iirconf

(ii) CA 2001 (8th International Controlled Atmosphere Research Conference) Rotterdam, The Netherlands, 8-13 July 2001. Convenor Dr K. Oosterhausen. Ca2001@ato.wag-ur.nl and www.ato.wageningen-ur.nl/CA2001

(iii) 2nd Int. ISHS Symposium on "Applications of Modelling as an Innovative Technology in the Agri-Food Chain" Palmerston North, New Zealand. Convenor Dr Maarten Hertog, December 2001. M.L.Herton@massey.ac.nz

(iv) Gordon Conference on Postharvest Physiology. New Hampshire, USA. Convenor Dr Michael Reid, UC Davis, USA. August 2002.

9. New Books:

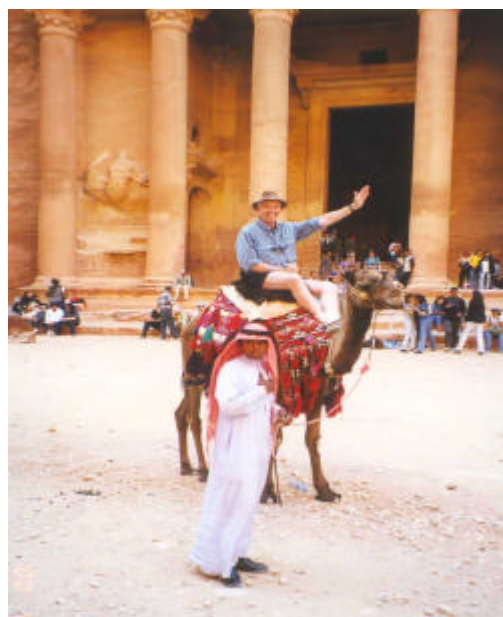
Two new books on postharvest subjects have been published recently. They are:

(i). Guide to Food Transport: Controlled Atmosphere (1999). By Michael Reid and Margrethe Serek. Published by Mercantila Publishers, 18 Upsalagade, DK-2100, Copenhagen, Denmark. (info@mercantila.dk). ISBN 87 890 1096-5. Price DKK 400 (US\$65). This is an excellent summary of the CA requirements for more than 50 fruits, vegetables and flowers. The graphics are easy to follow and understand with clear guidelines for optimum CA conditions, the potential benefits and risks are highlighted and other specific product information is listed along with a photograph of every crop. Ideal as first reference point for all shippers, coolstore operators, marketers agents and those in the perishables business.

(ii). Fruit and Vegetable Quality: an Integrated View (2000). By Robert Shewfelt and Bernard Bruckner. Published by Technomic Publishing Co. Ltd. Lancaster, PA, USA. (<http://www.techpub.com>). ISBN 1-56676-785-7. Price US\$99.95. This book is the outcome of a Conference held in Potsdam 1997 to present 14 different perspectives on the nature of quality of fruits and vegetables. It presents a thesis for adopting a common vocabulary across the interdisciplinary subjects that must be adopted in continuing to improve intrinsic and extrinsic quality attributes of perishable horticultural products. A valuable and thought provoking addition to any postharvest scientists library.

10. Other matters:

I welcome comment, suggestions, criticism, news and information on this Newsletter and any matter concerning postharvest matters from any member. Please feel free to contact me at E.W.Hewett@massey.ac.nz



Our intrepid postharvest colleague bravely tries local transport. Robert Prange took a free ride on a camel during a post Conference tour to the extraordinary town of Petra in Jordan. His ride was free, but he had to pay to dismount.



'Those who complain about the price of education should consider the cost of ignorance'.