

INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR HORTICULTURAL SCIENCE

SECTION: ROOT AND TUBER CROPS: Newsletter May 2002

Dear Fellow members.

I thought that this would be an appropriate time to advise you of developments.

At the International Congress in Brussels in 1998 I agreed to take over the Chair of the Section "Root and Tuber Crops" because over the previous 4 years the Chairman had not initiated a single symposium, or submitted a single report to the Executive Council of the Society. Essentially the Section was moribund. In my view it is a very important section, particularly as it deals with a large number of major crops in less developed countries, as well potatoes in both developed and developing countries.

My intention at that time was to get the Section up and running, and then to bow out, but progress has been slower than planned, so I have agreed to stand again as Chair, as I would like to leave the next Chair with a dynamic Section.

It takes time to get things running from scratch as my experiences shows.

A planned symposium in South Africa had to be cancelled as it clashed with an African Potato Conference in Uganda, and efforts to link the Section with the International Society for Tropical Root Crops (ISTRIC) did not come to fruition, as they preferred (as is their right) to remain independent.

In November, however, a very successful symposium on Sweetpotato was held in Peru, and the Section is a co-sponsor of:

Symposium 3 - Potatoes - Healthy Food for Humanity: International Developments in Breeding, Production, Protection and Utilization at the International Horticultural Congress in Toronto in August.

Future symposia are planned as follows:

- New Zealand (Probably at Palmerston North) 2003 or 2004 A root and Tuber symposium (broad based). To be organised by NZ Society for Horticultural Science and Massey University.
- Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur) 2005 2nd Sweetpotato symposium—will also include a section on cassava. To be organised by MARDI
- Peru (possibly at Cuzco) 2005? A potato symposium – Probably Potatoes for subsistence and development. To be organised by CIP.

My intention is to establish 3 Working Groups in the future, namely:

- W.G. Sweetpotato—I have asked Dr Craig Yencho (USA) to Chair this working group, once it has been ratified by the Executive Council of ISHS
- W.G. Potatoes. I hope to establish this at the Section's meeting in Toronto in August.
- W.G. Cassava. This will have to wait until the meeting in Malaysia.

Finally:

- a. Please do not forget to cast your vote for Chair or Vice-Chair
- b. Attend the Section's Business Meeting in Toronto

Kind Regards

Mike Nichols, Chair ISHS Section "Root and Tuber Crops"