

Current activities of Rothamsted International



Its Origin

Rothamsted International (RI) was established as a charity in 1993, to celebrate Rothamsted's 150th Anniversary and to reaffirm the Institute's commitment to the development of global sustainable agriculture, as indicated by the Lawes Agricultural Trust. Over the last few years RI has operated solely as a prestigious Fellowship Scheme, to bring established scientists from Developing Countries to train at Rothamsted for a period of 6 - 12 months. The aim is that on their return home, the training will provide Fellows with some of the skills needed for the development of sustainable agriculture in their home country. Since its inception more than 80 Fellows have visited Rothamsted and the quality of the work done by them has been outstanding. Fellows have established several excellent projects and continued collaborations on return to their home country. IACR scientists have also benefited greatly from the new perspectives that RI Fellows have contributed to our own research programmes.

New Look

During the past year changes have taken place in RI aimed at both strengthening the Fellowship Scheme and providing further support for the work being done by IACR scientists overseas. This has been achieved through restructuring of RI activities to form a Unit under the Lawes Trust. The RI Unit has two separate entities working closely together:

RI Fellowship Scheme (RIFS)

The Fellowship Scheme brings scientists from developing countries to the UK for agricultural research training and experience (based at Rothamsted) that will improve the sustainability of agriculture in their home country. Sustained entirely by voluntary donations RIFS has **charitable** status.

RI Consulting Ltd (RICL)

This acts as a service provider to IACR, to facilitate project development, promotion and co-ordination on a **commercial** basis. Its purpose is to build the charitable Fellowship Scheme. Any money earned through RICL will feed into RIFS by covenant.

Aims of Rothamsted International as a Combined Unit:

- Work together with developing and emerging nations, to advance technologies and expertise needed to address issues of agricultural production, environmental impact and related problems.
- Promote and share research excellence in crop and environmental science.
- Foster international co-operation in crop and environmental research through establishment of effective dialogue, and institutional mechanisms.
- Provide appropriate training opportunities and other capacity building measures.



CURRENT RI FELLOWS: FEB 2002

Dr Arvind Gulati is from the Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology in India on a 12-month Fellowship. He will be working with John Lucas and Clive Bock on 'Assessment of pathogen variability and identification of genes involved in resistance in tea'.

Dr Fatima Jafun is from Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, in Nigeria, on a 12-month Fellowship. She is working with Stephen Moss on 'Investigations into herbicide resistant weeds affecting the major cereals grown in the scrub savannah region of Nigeria'.

Mrs Hui Liang is from the Institute of Genetics, State Key Laboratory of Plant Cell & Chromosome Engineering, in China, on a 12-month Fellowship. She is working with Peter Shewry & Huw Jones on 'Expression of novel HMW subunit genes in transgenic wheat'.

Dr Sarath Peiris is from the Coconut Research Institute in Sri Lanka, on a 9 month Fellowship. He will be working with Janet Riley on 'Aggregation of indicators for multi-disciplinary systems'.

Dr Nongnong Shi is from Hangzhou University in Zhejiang, China, on a 12 month Fellowship. She is working with Dr Huw Jones on 'Genetic Transformation and Improvement of Chinese commercial wheat varieties'.

Dr Yan Zhang is from the National Laboratory of Plant Molecular Genetics, in Shanghai, China. He is here for 12 months working with Dr Alison Huttly at IACR-Long Ashton, Bristol. His project is 'Ac/Ds based gene tagging in *Triticum monococcum*'.

Dr Wei Zhou is from the Soil and Fertilizer Institute, in Beijing, China. He will be working for 12 months with Fangjie Zhao on 'A Physiological and molecular investigation into the mechanisms of cadmium hyperaccumulation in *Thlaspi caerulescens*'

RI FELLOWS: AUG 2000-OCT 2001

Dr Ivan Cordova was from Centro de Investigacion Cientifica de Yucatan, Mexico. He worked with Phil Jones for 12 months, on 'Do Phytoplasmas pose a threat to the exchange of Coconut germplasm?'

Dr Marimuthu Gunasekaran from the Council of Agricultural Research, Kerala, India, worked with Elaine Ward, Geoff Bateman, & John Jenkyn on 'Molecular techniques for studying the coconut leaf rot disease complex'.

Dr Zhengyi Hu came from the Institute of Soil Science, CAAS Beijing, China. He worked with Fangji Zhao and Steve McGrath on 'Quantifying inputs of anthropogenic sulphur to Chinese soils using the stable isotope techniques'.

Dr Larissa Novitskaya came from the St Petersburg State University in Russia. She worked for 12 months with Christine Foyer on 'Respiration as a target for improving agricultural yield'.

Dr Danuta Sosnowska was from the Institute of Plant Protection, Poznan, Poland. She was awarded a 6-month fellowship, and worked with Brian Kerry & Jo Bourne on 'An evaluation of a biomanagement strategy for the control of root-knot nematodes on protected vegetable crops'.

Dr Wanzhong Tan came from Southwest Agricultural University, Chongqing City, China. He worked with Bruce Fitt, Sue Welham, and D Lovell (LARS) on 'Modelling effects of temperature and wetness duration on infection of winter wheat leaves by ascospores and conidia'.

Dr Baldwin Torto was from ICIPE, Nairobi, Kenya. After 6 months at Rothamsted he returned to Kenya in August 2000 to continue his Fellowship. Dr Torto worked with John Pickett & Lester Wadhams on 'Chemical ecology of the Sorghum Midge: isolation & identification of semiochemicals mediating mate and host location'.

Dr Wei Wei was from the Institute of Botany, Beijing in China, working with Guy Poppy and Ian Denholm on 'Biosafety assessment of transgenic plants, with special reference to China'.

Dr Xiaowen Yang from the Institute of Zoology, Lab of Molec. Biol. & Biotech. in China - was here on a 12-month Fellowship. He worked with Martin Williamson on 'Characterisation of target site resistance to pyrethroids in the cotton aphid and monitoring assay development'.
