



Rothamsted International

Sharing Research Excellence ...

... for the benefit of rural economies in developing countries world-wide

ROTHAMSTED INTERNATIONAL'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY

DONOR NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2003

RI's Anniversary Year

2003 marks the 10th Anniversary of the inception of Rothamsted International Charity and its Fellowship Scheme. The charity was launched in 1993 as part of Rothamsted's 150th Anniversary and to reaffirm the Institute's commitment to the development of global sustainable agriculture.

Friday 4th July 2003 will be a special day in RI history, given over to presentations and lectures from guest speakers.

Please make a note in your diary!



*Cheers! From
Dr Yan Zhang,
RI Fellow from
Shanghai.
Jan 2002 to
Dec 2002*

Rothamsted International is very grateful to all donors for their support during the last ten years. We wish you all a Very Happy New Year!

Where Your Money Goes

By Sylvie Grand, RI Liaison & Fundraising

Thanks to all the donations received in the past ten years, over 80 Fellows have benefited from the RI Fellowship Scheme and joined forces with Rothamsted Research staff to further research in a wide range of topics for the benefit of developing agriculture.

In the past five years for example, nine Fellows have worked on Integrated Pest and Weed Management, eight on Plant and Soil Nutrients, seven on Plant Breeding and Transformation, six on Production Systems and Analysis, and eight on Pest and Disease Diagnostics and Characterisation.

The Fellows represented 25 developing or transitional countries and have enriched us not only with the wealth and diversity of their cultural background, but also with their skills and qualities. In turn they have all benefited from privileged access to leading scientists, facilities and techniques not otherwise available to them.

Rothamsted International is now looking forward to its next ten years when, we hope, more overseas Fellows will be able to benefit from what many of them describe as a "prestigious" Fellowship and an "immense opportunity".

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Introducing the New RI Fellows

RI Fellowships were awarded to the following successful candidates, at the Panel meeting in July 2002

- **Dr EKESI, Sunday**, from Nigeria has recently been working at ICIPE in Kenya. He is expected in February 2003, to work in Plant and Invertebrate Ecology (PIE) division with Dr Judith Pell. He is supported by the Ernest Cook Trust grant for Farmland Ecology.
- **Professor JIANG, Rongfeng**, from the Chinese Agricultural University, is due to arrive in March to work with Prof. Steve McGrath & Fangjie Zhao in the Agriculture and Environment (AEN) division.
- **Dr LI, Zheng-Xi**, is also from the China Agricultural University. He arrived in October to work with Drs Lin Field & Jing-Jiang Zhou in the Biological Chemistry (BCH) division.
- **Professor LIU, Sheng-Yi**, from the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Science, also arrived in October and works in the Plant Pathogen Interactions (PPI) division with Drs Bruce Fitt & Simon Foster.
- **Dr RESENDE, Marcos Deon**, from EMBRAPA in Brazil, is expected in April 2003, to work in the AEN division with Dr Robin Thompson.
- **Dr SINGH, Bikram**, from the Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology in India, arrived in October, to work in the BCH division with Dr Bhupinder Khambay. He is supported by a grant from the World Resource Foundation.
- **Dr TAHSEEN, Qudsia**, from Aligarh Muslim University in India was the only female appointment, and the first new Fellow to arrive last October. She is working with Prof. Brian Kerry in the PPI division.

THE RI FELLOWSHIP SCHEME CONTINUES TO ATTRACT HIGH QUALITY APPLICATIONS FROM OVERSEAS SCIENTISTS AROUND THE WORLD.

THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ROUND OF APPLICATIONS IS 30TH MAY 2003.

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News of Previous RI Fellows:

Awards for Drs Harish Gaur & Sharad Mohan from India

We have received information via Prof. Brian Kerry about two former RI Fellows, Drs Gaur and Mohan, who have recently received awards and gone on to great things after their RI Fellowships. Both these Fellows were nematologists from India, they came from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in New Delhi.

The Nematology Society of India holds a contest once every two years. In November 2002 the following awards were made:

Prof. H M Shah Memorial Award (for the best published research work conducted in India in the previous 5 years) – awarded to Dr Harish Gaur.

Prof. D J Raski Merit Award (for the best research paper presentation by a scientist under 35yrs) – awarded to Dr Sharad Mohan.

Dr Harish Gaur was a Rothamsted International Fellow for 8 months from Sept 1994 to April 1995. His project was entitled “Biochemical taxonomy and pathogenicity of *Meloidogyne* species on rice” and his project leader was Dr Rolo Perry. Since his return to India he has been promoted and is now the Head of the Nematology Section at IARI. In a recent email he commented that the new job is very challenging, and he has been very busy trying to implement changes.

Dr Sharad Mohan was an RI Fellow for 12 months from Oct 1999. He also came from IARI in New Delhi. His project was “Variation in cuticle of *Heterodera cajani* and its relationship to the attachment of *Pasteuria penetrans*” and his supervisor was Dr Keith Davis. In addition, Dr Mohan was also recently awarded a ‘Young Scientist’ prize presented by the Agricultural Minister of India during the Spring of 2002.

Their achievements are a matter of great pride to all those associated with the Rothamsted International Fellowship Scheme.

Testimonial from a Previous RI Fellow:

Dr Sarath Peiris was an RI Fellow for 9 months, from Oct 2001 to June 2002. He came to Rothamsted from the Coconut Research Institute in Sri Lanka, where he is a senior Bio-Mathematician. His project concerned 'Aggregation of Indicators for Multi-disciplinary Sytems'. On his return to Sri Lanka he sent this note of appreciation: -

Dear RI Team

I am sending this note to express my deepest thanks to you for all the support given to me during my 9 month Fellowship at Rothamsted. I really enjoyed my visit both academically and socially.

The visit was very useful to me personally, and to my Institute and to my country. The experience gained from working with Janet Riley was of benefit to acquire new knowledge of the area of my work and enhance my knowledge in various ways. I got the fullest support from the staff in the BioMaths department.

I take this opportunity to thank the donor members of the RIF scheme in providing this opportunity. Please be kind enough to convey my best wishes to them.

Thank you once again,

Dr Sarath Peiris

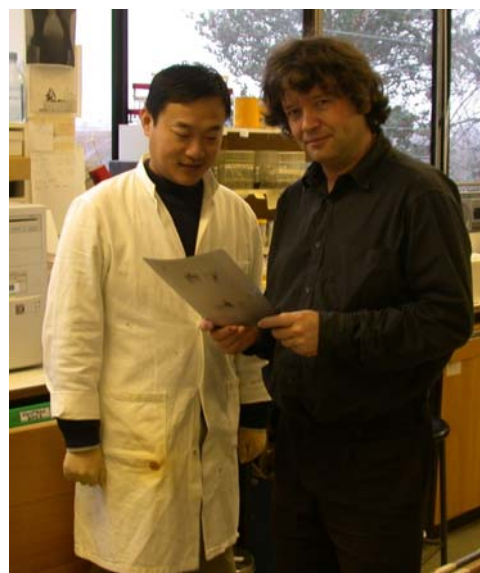
Molecular Biology is Fun!

By Dr Wei Zhou

"I cordially appreciate Rothamsted International for providing me with a unique opportunity to study.

My background in China is Plant Nutrition Science, which is not involved in molecular research. In Rothamsted, I focussed on molecular physiology, linking physiological processes to molecular mechanisms. I enjoyed studying in Rothamsted very much. In the 12-month study, I gained a good molecular physiological background of metal hyperaccumulation.

When I return to China, I intend to develop molecular physiological research based on plant nutrition problems arisen from Chinese agriculture. I believe that molecular physiology as a new blood, can be injected into the body of old Plant Nutrition Science, then this old subject can be pushed forward greatly, and the mechanisms of these plant nutrition problems can be expected to be revealed at fundamental level.



Report from a Current RI Fellow:

Dr Wei Zhou started his RI Fellowship year in January 2002. He came here from the Soil and Fertiliser Institute, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences in Beijing, and worked in the AEN division with Dr Malcolm Hawkesford, Dr Fangjie Zhao and Prof. Steve McGrath.

Dr Zhou's project was entitled "A physiological and molecular investigation into the mechanisms of cadmium hyperaccumulation in *Thlaspi caerulescens*". His work centred on the use of plants to reduce metal pollution in soils. The following is an appreciation of the RI Fellowship Scheme in his own words, written before his recent departure.

I am grateful to Dr Malcolm Hawkesford for his supervision during this training course. I think I will benefit immensely from his wealth of knowledge on molecular physiology in the future, I look forward to continuing collaboration with him.

I would like to thank the RI team, my colleagues in the lab and friends who were all so wonderful in making my stay here so productive."

RI Social Events:

It's Not All Hard Work!

When International Scientists have the opportunity to work in the world famous laboratories at Rothamsted, they are naturally very dedicated to their research projects. However, the RI team is also aware of the need for a good work-life balance. Therefore, during the course of the year a series of social events is organised to help Fellows to meet socially with other scientists and their families. A local group called ISSA (International Scientists and Staff Association) supports us in this. Here is a selection of last year's events: -



Rothamsted International's annual celebration of the Chinese New Year, assisted by the Chinese Community.

Friday 8th February 2002,
marked the Year of the Horse.
The Year of the Goat begins 1st February 2003



ISSA 'Time-Travel' trip to London
Saturday 7th September 2002

A large group of Rothamsted employees enjoyed an exciting and informative day out in London. We travelled by train, tube, and river ferry to Greenwich. We visited the National Maritime Museum and the Royal Observatory.

Photo taken astride the Zero Meridian line!



ISSA Christmas Lunch
in the Great Drawing Room, at Rothamsted Manor

Thursday 12th December 2002

A splendid occasion in a delightful setting!

*Six RI Fellows, left to right:
Qudsia Tahseen, Bikram Singh, Shengyi Liu,
Wei Zhou, Zhengxi Li, Yan Zhang*



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Thank you for taking the time to read this Newsletter.
If you would like to make a donation to Rothamsted International charity, please contact us: -

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