



## **8TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PLANT PATHOLOGY**

***Solving problems in the real world***

**Christchurch Convention Centre  
New Zealand**

**Sunday 2 - Friday 7 February 2003**

*Incorporating 14th Biennial Australasian Plant Pathology Society Conference*

The eighth International Congress of Plant Pathology (ICPP2003) was held in Christchurch New Zealand from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2003. This Congress incorporated the 14<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society.

From the numerous letters and Emails that have been received since the event from around the world, we can confidently conclude that the Congress was a huge success. The event attracted almost 1300 delegates from over 70 countries from around the world, plus 600 accompanying persons. There were 150 invited speakers at keynote and concurrent sessions and 1200 offered poster papers, some of which were presented at 29 poster discussion sessions during the afternoons of 4 & 6 February. There were 22 evening sessions including a public forum on global food security, with invited speakers from the Philippines, Malaysia, China, India and the United Kingdom.

The congress began with a traditional Maori challenge and delegates being welcomed by Dr Peter Scott the Chairman of ISPP and by Dr Ian Harvey the Chairman of ICPP2003. The official opening was made by the Hon. Pete Hodgson, Minister for Research, Science and Technology in the New Zealand government. The Congress then proceeded to offer a busy and exciting range of presentations, which covered all disciplines within the field of plant pathology. Stimulating discussions occurred in all sessions. This congress was well supported by sponsors (please see our official website for details <http://events.lincoln.ac.nz/icpp2003/>).

### **Workshops**

Associated with the Congress were 13 satellite workshops. The opening event of the congress was the first workshop held at Sydney University on Fusarium, 27 Jan. to 30 Jan 2003. The second workshop was on Plant Virus Epidemiology at the University of Canterbury on 31 January. Over the weekend of the 1 & 2 February there were three workshops at Canterbury University, with a further six at Lincoln University and three of those were of two day duration. After the Congress there were two workshops in Christchurch on Saturday 8 February, and a four day Seed Health workshop, 10 to 13 February at Lincoln University..

### **Bursary Scheme**

The ICPP2003 Bursary Assistance Scheme was administered by Dr Pim Sanderson. ICPP2003 is grateful for donated funds from several sources overseas and from within New Zealand. The funds were to assist post-graduates and plant pathologist from developing countries and emerging nations to attend the congress. Seventy-nine applicants received a total of NZ\$150,000 in bursary fund assistance. Overseas contributors to the fund were The International Society for Plant Pathology, The Canadian Plant Pathology Society and The British Plant Pathology Society. Funds from New Zealand

were from the new Zealand Plant Protection Society, The Canterbury Community Trust, and the Brian Mason Science & Technical Trust.

### **Scientific Programme**

The theme of the congress was "Solving problems in the real world" The five keynote sessions were from 0900 to 1030 each day with each contained three speakers.

The topics were from Monday to Friday:

- Plant pathology in the Asia/Pacific region;
- Towards integrated control of soil-borne diseases;
- Host/pathogen interactions and molecular plant pathology;
- Towards integrated control of air-borne diseases;
- Knowledge transfer for plant pathology.

During the week, there were 32 concurrent sessions, mostly with four speakers in each session. In addition there was the Presidential address by Professor Lester Burgess on "Biosecurity, trade and plant pathology", and the McAlpine address by Professor Mike Wingfield "Exotic plantation forests in the Southern Hemisphere: Increasingly threatened by disease".

The two afternoon poster-viewing sessions were vibrant, well attended and informative. The subsequent formal oral presentations of selected posters gave delegates the opportunity to discuss the research in some more detail. In total, there were more than 1200 poster presentations over the two display sessions during the week.

### **Newsletter and Social Programme**

A daily newsletter was produced to background delegates on the keynote themes for the day. It also provided information on various attractions around Christchurch, photographs of delegates and any general notices.

Lunchtime entertainment was mainly provided by local school bands. These included an Irish band, a jazz band and two musical quartets. The internationally recognised Sweet Adelines woman's choral group also entertained. This entertainment was much appreciated by delegates, who remained on the convention site with packaged lunches that were provided every day.

Many comments were received during and after the Congress on the helpfulness and openness of the staff running the event. A uniform of bright green tee or polo shirts made these people instantly recognisable, with little confusion as to who needed to be asked for advice or directions.

Delegates were treated to a range of social events during the conference. The welcome reception on the Sunday night provided an opportunity for over 800 delegates to meet, talk and taste some exciting food. On the Wednesday night food and local wine tasting was enjoyed at six wineries around Christchurch. The Congress dinner on the Friday night provided a range of New Zealand foods, non-stop entertainment and a great dance band.

### **Concluding Session:**

The final session was on "Challenges for Plant Pathology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", with stimulating addresses from Prof. Mike Jeger, Prof. Ian Crute (both from the United Kingdom), and Marilou Infante from the Philippines. Then a number of prizes were presented. On behalf of the Swedish Academy of Sciences, the Jacob Eriksson Prize for 2003 was presented to Dr Jaacov Katan. This was in recognition of Dr. Katan's original and innovative research in the fields of soil solarization and soil-borne pathogens, his outstanding and broad international co-operation, and his dedication to the education of younger plant pathologists.

Prizes awarded by the Australasian Plant Pathology Society were: The Alan Kerr Postgraduate Prize to Jillian Smith-White; Fellowships of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society to Dr Roger Jones and

Dr Graham Stirling; and Honorary Membership of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society to Dr Ron Close and Dr Helen Ogle. Finally, the ISPP congress flag was handed on to delegates from Turin in Italy who are to arrange the ninth congress in 2008.

**Ron Close, Mark Braithwaite, Ian Harvey and other ICPP2003 members.**