

# AGRONOMY SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND (INC.)

## Agronomy in the News

*The newsletter of the Agronomy Society of New Zealand*

The sustainable production of crops is and will always remain a topical issue. Farmers want approaches that reduce risks in a changing climate but still deliver flexibility and profitability at the farm gate, while consumers want food products that are affordable, safe and have been produced using sustainable and ethical approaches.

A challenge for agronomists is to provide new knowledge and farming approaches that help strike a healthy balance between these aspects.

We encourage members of the Agronomy Society and those with an interest in agronomy to attend our annual conference in November. You'll hear firsthand about some of the research underway to help our industries respond to the rising challenge of farming within new limits.



## **2012 Agronomy Conference and Seed Symposium**

Our annual conference will be held co-jointly with the "Seeds - Realising their Potential" Symposium at Lincoln University, Canterbury from November 20-22.

The conference theme is delivering profitable, sustainable and resilient farming systems. We've received a variety of topical papers, and the conference program and registration details will be available on our website in the next few months.

We are also planning two half day field trips to showcase traditional and emerging industries on the Canterbury Plains.

The event promises to be another success, so mark your calendars now!

## **Recognising the contribution of Assoc. Prof. George Hill**



Associate Professor George Hill recently stepped down from his role on the Agronomy Council after a 37-year association with the Society. George was first elected onto the Council in 1975, just four years after the Society was founded. During this time he has held various roles, including President, Secretary, Council member, Assistant Editor and Editor of the Proceedings. In 1996 George was elected as a Fellow of the Society.

During his nearly 40-years at Lincoln University George has had 35 Masters and PhD students and 12 Honours students. His students are employed all around the world as research scientists, academics and, in

at least one case, as a Vice-Chancellor. George has published 30 book chapters or books and well over 190 refereed scientific publications.

George held a wide range of roles at Lincoln University including Head of the Plant Science Department, Chair of Academic Assembly and Chair of the Board of Degree Studies in Science. He also worked as a Visiting Scientist at Wageningen, Visiting Professor at the University of Heidelberg, Visiting Scientist at Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Tecnología Agraria y Alimentaria, Madrid and at Auburn University, USA.

We wish to thank Associate Professor Hill for his contributions to the Agronomy Society of New Zealand and to the agronomy field in general.

## ***Kiwi cross-slot inventor nominated for Global Food Prize***

Agricultural engineer Dr John Baker was recently nominated for the US\$250,000 World Food Prize for the cross-slot seed drill he pioneered and now supplies from his Feilding factory.

The drill creates two side-by-side pockets as it passes through the soil, placing seed in one and fertiliser in the other. By reducing soil disturbance less moisture is lost, soil carbon is retained and microbes can prosper.

We congratulate John on this milestone achievement!



Full story: <http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/farming/7003677/NZ-inventor-up-for-Nobel-food-prize>

## ***Upcoming conferences and events***



### ***6<sup>th</sup> International Crop Science Congress***

The 6<sup>th</sup> ICSC will be held at Bento Gonçalves, Brazil. Congress dates are August 6-12, 2012. Further details of the event are available at <http://www.6icsc.org/>. A draft programme is available and the full programme will be finalised in July.



### ***16<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Australian Society of Agronomy***

The 16th Conference of the ASA will be at the University of New England, NSW. Conference dates are October 14-18, 2012. Registration for the event is now open and early bird registrations close on July 13. Full details of the conference are available at <http://www.agronomy.org.au/events/2012/>.



### ***5<sup>th</sup> Joint Soil Science Australia and New Zealand Soil Science Society Conference***

The 5th Joint SSA and NZSSS Conference will be held in Hobart, Tasmania. Conference dates are December 2-7, 2012. The conference theme is "Soil Solutions for Diverse Landscapes". Further details of the event are available at <http://www.soilscience2012.com/>.