
FOREWORD

Selection of plants for improved performance under New Zealand conditions began around the turn of the century. In 1926 the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research was established and in 1928 a joint DSIR — Department of Agriculture, Plant Research Station was set up in Palmerston North. One of the sections of this new station was plant breeding. In 1936 the Plant Research Station came fully under the control of DSIR and it was subdivided into several divisions, one of which was the Agronomy Division — located here at Lincoln. Although some work on wheat breeding had been underway at Lincoln College since the early 1900s, this marked the beginnings of DSIR involvement with plant breeding at Lincoln. In 1950 the wheat breeding activities of the Wheat Research Institute, which had been established in Christchurch in 1928, were transferred to the Agronomy Division which was then renamed Crop Research Division. Since its establishment as Agronomy Division in 1936, a major research objective of this Division at Lincoln has been to breed improved arable crop cultivars for New Zealand.

We would now like to mark fifty years of plant breeding at this site and the recognition of the importance of this field of research with the opening of new facilities for Crop Research Division of DSIR at Lincoln. Although the face of farming in New Zealand is changing considerably, the need for improved cultivars is no less now than it was when forested land was first being brought into agricultural production.

Plant productivity in this country is highly dependent on introduced plants — selected and improved to meet New Zealand conditions — so it is particularly appropriate that we have present at this meeting plant breeders from around the world. We appreciate your attendance and thank you for your contribution to plant breeding in New Zealand.

Also here to mark this occasion are all the previous directors of Crop Research Division — Sir Otto Frankel, Dr Eric Godley, Dr Lionel Corkill and Dr Harvey Smith — men who have made a major contribution to arable plant breeding in this country.

M.W. Dunbier
Director
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