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## President's Report



### ISTH2016, Cairns November 20-25 2016 & AuSHS Annual Meeting

ISTH2016 will be a new initiative for AuSHS, as we will co-hosting a

conference with the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS), Australian Institute of Horticulture (AIH) and AuSHS.

Tuesday 22nd November will be a focus on AuSHS as we will sponsor the morning plenary session, hold our annual meeting in the afternoon and have a social event for AuSHS members on Tuesday evening. Our speaker at the plenary session will be **Nicky Mann**.

**Nicky Mann** and her family migrated to Australia from Zimbabwe in November, 2002, after being forcibly evicted from their family farm of more than 20 years. They re-established

themselves on the NSW Central Coast growing hydroponic roses, and more recently blueberries and raspberries. Their business is multi-award winning.

The Master of Ceremonies for the conference dinner on the night of Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November will be **Don Burke**. The dinner will feature awards presented to members of AIH, AuSHS and ISHS.

We have attracted some excellent speakers and key researchers from tropical regions. The list of presenters and titles including keynote speakers can be viewed on the website: [ISTH2016.org](http://ISTH2016.org)

### **AuSHS Annual General Meeting: 22nd November 2016**

The annual meeting and election of the new executive will be held at 5pm on Tuesday 22nd<sup>h</sup> November in the Cairns Convention Centre. All members are invited to the meeting. Following discussions at this year's executive meetings and responses to messages sent out to our members, the new executive will not represent

one state as has been traditional till now.

The new executive and positions will be open to any member in any state. So if you are interested in working on the new executive, this is the time to be thinking about it. We will accept nominations at the meeting and voting will take place for each position.

Positions on the executive that will be filled are:

1. President
2. Vice-President
3. Treasurer
4. Secretary
5. Membership and Newsletter
6. Web Services
7. Hort Innovation representative
8. Representatives from each State

## An overview of horticultural Science in New South Wales

*By NSW AuSHS representative, Dr Sophie Parks (Research Scientist, NSW DPI)*

The horticultural industry in NSW contributes \$1 billion in farm-gate value, annually, and in NSW, horticultural science is an active area of research.

As undergraduates, students in NSW have the opportunity to undertake a Bachelor of Horticultural Science at either **Charles Sturt University** or **Sydney University**. As postgraduates, students can also focus on horticulture in their research through a range of disciplines such as agriculture, food science and robotics. The **Australian Centre for Field Robotics**, based at Sydney University, has for example PhD candidates working with robots to detect and target weeds, and surveying technology to map images and thermal readings of tree crops including avocados, mangoes and macadamias.



*PhD student, Xuan Tran (University of Newcastle) dissecting gac (*Momordica cochinchinensis*) from her production trial at Ourimbah campus. Photo by Sophie Parks, NSW DPI.*



*A trial of reflective weed mat for blueberry production in Woolgoolga (NSW DPI in partnership with Horticulture Innovation Australia and the Australian Blueberry Growers Association). Photo by Sophie Parks, NSW DPI.*

In another example at the **University of Newcastle**, several PhD candidates are researching the medicinal plant genus *Momordica* (bitter melon and gac), covering cultivation, postharvest and processing.

Many professionals working in several public and private organisations are dedicated to supporting the horticultural industry through scientific research and development projects.

The **NSW Department of Primary Industries** (NSW DPI) has scientists ranked in the top 1% of world research institutions in Plant and Agricultural science and a long history in horticultural research and development, regionally and internationally. The Horticulture group has approximately 50 staff across 6 locations. Themes include germplasm improvement, farming systems, plant protection, supply chain and market access, and development and delivery. The locations provide a focus for specific research areas: wine, grapes and oils (Wagga Wagga), citrus (Dareton), the emerging nut industry (Yanco), protected cropping systems, postharvest and food safety (Ourimbah), tropical horticulture including berries, bananas, tea tree and macadamia (Wollongbar), and pome and stone fruit (Orange). The Horticulture group's capacity is enhanced by its access to other areas of expertise within NSW DPI including biometrics, plant biosecurity, soil and organics research, and water research. Website:

[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/horticulture)

The **Botanic Gardens** has approximately 19 research staff working across science and conservation and their activities include germplasm conservation and horticulture which focuses on species with economic potential, cultivation requirements, reproductive strategies and seed biology. Their projects include the ongoing conservation of the Wollemi pine, improving the propagation of the eastern Australian Geebung (*Persoonia*), and seed banking techniques for rainforest species.

Website: [www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/Science-Conservation](http://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/Science-Conservation)

**Applied Horticultural Research** (AHR) is based in Sydney with offices in Cowra and Melbourne and Dr Gordon Rogers as its

principal. Gordon set up the consultancy in 1996 and since then, AHR has led more than 80 major research projects with a value of over \$25 million. AHR has been supporting horticultural industries around Australia, and internationally through research, communication and training. Their research spans topics from soil health and crop nutrition to postharvest, consumer research and product development.

Website: [www.ahr.com.au](http://www.ahr.com.au)

A number of other consultants are also active within the NSW horticultural industries and provide support to research and development projects.

The scientific evidence and industry development provided by these and other organisations ensure that horticulture thrives in NSW and that the industry aims for greater efficiencies in production, better quality produce, and access to new markets.



*A trial of compost application to bananas in Coffs Harbour for the project "Waste less, recycle more" (NSW DPI and NSW Environmental Protection Agency). Photo by Matt Weinert, NSW DPI.*

## New AuSHS website!

Have you seen our new AuSHS members website prepared by Emily Rigby?

[www.aushs.org.au](http://www.aushs.org.au)

With best regards,  
Jodie Campbell  
*AuSHS Newsletter Editor*