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REGIONAL NEWS

Northern Territory Branch

Mr Rex Pitkethley has been appointed to the senior plant pathologist position with the Animal Industry and Agriculture Branch of the Department of the Northern Territory in Darwin. He replaces Ms Susan Aldrick who left the Branch in April.

Mr Barry Conde, formerly engaged in post-graduate research at the University of Queensland, has been appointed plant pathologist with the Department of the Northern Territory.

Queensland Branch

Dr. J.E.C. Aberdeen retired from his position as Senior Plant Pathologist with the Queensland Department of Primary Industries on 30th July, 1976. During his career in plant pathology Dr. Aberdeen spent periods firstly with the then Queensland Department of Agriculture and Stock from 1936 to 1949 working on vegetable diseases, particularly tomatoes. From 1949 to 1970 he was Senior Lecturer in the Botany Department of the University of Queensland where he gave courses on plant pathology to agriculture and science students. In 1970 he took up a position as Head of the Department of Plant Industries at Queensland Agricultural College. He returned to work in plant pathology, again on vegetable diseases, with the Department of Primary Industries in 1972. In addition to his expertise on vegetable diseases Dr. Aberdeen developed a keen interest in the effective use of fungicides and stimulated considerable work in this area. He has also made a study of the higher fungi, an interest he intends to maintain during his retirement.

Mr. Ian Muirhead was recently granted leave by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries to undertake post graduate studies towards a PhD degree at the University of Sydney. Ian has worked on post harvest diseases of tropical fruit since his appointment as a plant pathologist in 1969. He intends to examine the latent infection phenomena, evident in some of these diseases, under the guidance of Professor B.H. Deverall.

New Zealand Branch

Dr. Roy E. Gaunt has recently been appointed to the post of Lecturer in Plant Pathology in the Department of Agricultural Microbiology, Lincoln College, Canterbury, New Zealand.

Dr. Gaunt graduated from University College of North Wales, Bangor, in Agricultural Botany, and then obtained his PhD. at Southampton University, where he studied the host-parasite relationship of loose smut of wheat with Dr. J.C. Manners and Dr. A. Myers. In 1972 he was appointed Lecturer in the Department of Botany, Rhodes University, South Africa.

His research interests are in the physiological and biochemical interactions between host plants and both symbiotic and parasitic micro-organisms. Present research is on the metabolism of loose smut infected wheat plants, the role of toxins in bacterial and *Verticillium* wilt of lucerne, and the potential of vesicular-arbuscular mycorrhizal associations to enhance plant growth and disease resistance.

Victorian Branch

Mr. R.H. Brown of the Plant Research Institute, Burnley, has been awarded an Anzac Fellowship to work in New Zealand for 4 months in 1977. He will be at D.S.I.R. Plant Diseases Division, Auckland with visits to Wellington and Christchurch. Rob will be studying cyst-forming nematodes on potatoes, clover, and cereals.

Also in the field of Nematology, Dr. Winoto Suatmadji has recently joined the Victorian Department of Agriculture. Winoto obtained his Ph.D. at The State Agricultural University, Wageningen, and in 1970 joined the staff of the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. In 1974 he moved to Serdang, as Head of the Department of Plant Protection and of the Section of Nematology, at the University of Agriculture, Malaysia. In September, 1976, Winoto joined the staff of the P.R.I., Burnley, and his current research program is largely concerned with nematodes pathogenic to fruit crops, and nematode taxonomy.

Dr. D.G. Parbery, of the School of Agriculture, University of Melbourne, is at present overseas. After visiting various research centres in Europe, he spent three months at the University of Aberdeen. Doug is at present at the University of Cambridge and will work there for a further six months.

La Trobe University and the P.R.I., Burnley, have for some years been co-operating in the teaching of plant pathology. This year, two undergraduates undertook research projects at the P.R.I. Ken Waldron studied the efficiencies of various methods of indexing field lettuce for lettuce mosaic virus, and Graeme Guy studied levels of bacterial blights in imported french bean seed. The projects lasted for about three months and were well conducted.

The pathogen-tested potato scheme has been attracting overseas attention again. In October, Dr. R.L. Sawyer, the Director General of the International Potato Centre, briefly visited Victoria. Mr. D.E. Harrison, of the P.R.I., Burnley, has recently visited New Zealand and South Korea in his capacity as leader of the Victorian Project. As a result of the Korean visit, two seed potato production specialists, one from Sri Lanka and one from South Korea, will visit Victoria, Tasmania and New South Wales.

While on holiday in the U.K. Dr. R.G. Garrett made brief visits to research institutes at Harpenden, Wellesbourne and Invergowrie, and attended a symposium on "Mycoplasmas" at Glasgow. On his way home he also briefly visited the University of California, Davis.