



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PLANT BREEDERS

## NAPB NEWSLETTER

*November 2011*

### **Editors' notes**

A not so lonely planet, we reached a rather daunting milestone at the end of October: the world population hit the 7 BILLION mark sometime around October 31, 2011.... [U.N. Population Fund](#)

You will notice that there is a different logo/slogan across the top of the newsletter. This is another one of Jules Janick's that were mentioned in the September Newsletter.

### **Teaser.....**

There will be an upcoming announcement in our January Newsletter and challenge to our membership. But here is what I can tell you for now:

... there is something in the works, **the announcement** (a charitable donation, perhaps) to help defray graduate student travel expenses to our Annual Meetings, and **the challenge** (to match this donation, perhaps)....

Look for it in the January NAPB Newsletter.

### **Great news!**

Ann Marie Thro, the National Program Leader for Plant Breeding at the National Institute for Food and Agriculture (a.k.a., NIFA), is returning from Afghanistan in about 6 months. We've missed you....

### **Just in time for the newsletter....**

We have migrated over to our new list server, [napb@acs-net.crops.org](mailto:napb@acs-net.crops.org). The November newsletter has been sent out on the new server as the inaugural post. More information on the list server and the membership database is below.

## **NAPB and Plant Breeding in the news:**

### **Breeders Without Borders – [Seed World Oct. 2011](#)**

“The idea is similar to ‘Doctors without Borders’—where plant breeders would volunteer to work overseas on specific projects where they could train local plant scientists and share their insights and knowledge with the developing world,” says Anthony Leddin, an Australian plant breeder who is the brainchild behind Plant Breeders Without Borders. “There’s also the potential for undergraduate plant breeding students to take part in these projects—where they can be mentored by a senior plant breeder on-site. To make the projects sustainable, the plant breeders would also train people on the ground so that their work could be carried on after they leave the project to return home.”

### **Rice Breeding Brings Billions to SE Asia – [IRRI Sept. 29, 2011](#)**

“Southeast Asian rice farmers are harvesting an extra US\$1.46 billion worth of rice a year as a result of rice breeding - the science that brings new rice varieties to farmers - by the [International Rice Research Institute](#) (IRRI), according to a new [Australian report](#).”

### **Coffman receives mentoring award from national group – [Cornell Chronicle Online Oct. 18, 2011](#)**

“Ronnie Coffman, Ph.D. '71, director of International Programs in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and international professor of plant breeding and genetics, was honored with the 2011 Mentoring Award from the Women in Agronomy, Crops, Soil and Environmental Sciences (WACSES) Oct. 18.”

“I expect that my most notable mentor, Norman Borlaug, would agree that Mark Twain provided the best advice for mentoring when he said, 'Always do the right thing; a few people will appreciate it, and the rest will be astonished.'” - Ronnie Coffman, Oct. 18, 2011

- [Elizabeth Lee](#), NAPB Secretary
- [Patrick Byrne](#), Communication Sub-Committee Chair

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## **New list server and membership database**

All members’ emails have been migrated to the list server ([napb@acs-net.crops.org](mailto:napb@acs-net.crops.org)), and we are about halfway through getting the membership list moved over to the ACSESS database. But, your help with this is needed. We would like to make sure that we have the correct contact information for you. So please take a few minutes of your time and follow the steps below....

ACSESS just needs a name, address and email to create a contact record. ACSESS has created a field in their database called NAPB and to become a member all you need

to do is click YES. To do this, log into their system by going to either the [crops.org](http://crops.org) or [agronomy.org](http://agronomy.org) web page. In the upper right-hand corner you will see “My Accounts”, click on this and a drop down menu appears. Click on “My Accounts” on the drop down menu and your contact info appears. If you do not have a contact record, you will need to create one first. If you already have a contact record in the database, you can then proceed and click on “Contact Preferences” on the right-hand side of the web page. At the bottom of this page you will be asked if you want to be a member of NAPB. All you need to do is click “YES”. Please note that by creating a contact record, you will not be getting any additional ACSESS emails. If you have any questions about this, please drop [ian Popkewitz](mailto:ian.popkewitz@ars-grin.gov) an email.

Please be assured that the same requirements for sending out emails via the NAPB list sever will be kept: to inform our membership of NAPB and PBCC events & items only.

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## **NAPB on the web**

Keep an eye on our web site, <http://www.plantbreeding.org/napb> . We are constantly adding to and updating the site. Full sets of minutes from the monthly NAPB/PBCC (Plant Breeding Coordinating Committee) joint teleconferences and links to position papers can be found there. The web site is getting about 1000 hits and 134 unique visitors each day.

Oh, and we have a [Facebook](#) page, too. So please “like” us!

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## **Meeting announcements**

Save the date, the **2012 NAPB annual meeting** will be held **August 5-8<sup>th</sup>** (Mon-Wed). Dow AgroSciences is the meeting coordinator/host, and while they have not finalized the hotel/conference arrangements at this time, they will be held at the hotel conference centre on the north side of **Indianapolis, IN**. Watch the web site for more detail.

## **Other meetings of potential interest**

American Seed Trade Association ([ASTA](#)) affiliated meetings:

- Corn & Sorghum and Soybean Seed Research Conference – Dec. 6-9, 2011, Chicago
- 51<sup>st</sup> Vegetable & Flower Seed Conference – Jan. 21-24, 2012, Tampa
- 129<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention – June 20-23, 2012, Washington D.C.

American Society of Agronomy-Crop Science Society of America –Soil Science Society of America (ASA-CSSA-SSSA) affiliated meetings:

- [ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings](#) – Oct. 21-24, 2012, Cincinnati, OH
- [ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings](#) – Nov. 3-6, 2013, Tampa, FL
- [ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings](#) – Nov. 2-5, 2014, Long Beach, CA
- [ASA-CSSA-SSSA International Annual Meetings](#) – Nov. 15-18, 2015, Minneapolis, MN
- [6th International Crop Science Congress](#) – Aug. 6-10, 2012, Bento Goncalves-Rio Grande do Sul State, Brazil

American Society of Horticultural Science (ASHS) affiliated meetings:

- [2012 Annual Conference](#) – July 31 - Aug. 3 2012, Miami, Florida
- [2013 Annual Conference](#) – July 22-25 2013, Palm Desert, California

[Plant and Animal Genome XX Conference](#) – Jan. 14-18, 2012, San Diego, CA

Maize associated meetings:

- NCCC-167 Corn Breeding and Quantitative Genetics – March 14-15, 2012, Portland, OR
- [48<sup>th</sup> Annual Illinois Corn Breeders' School](#) – March 5-6, 2012, Champaign-Urbana, IL
- [54<sup>th</sup> Annual Maize Genetics Meetings](#) – March 15-18, 2012, Portland, OR

Canadian meetings:

- [CSTA](#) Semi-Annual Meeting – Nov. 15-17, 2011, Toronto, ON
- CSTA 89th Annual Meeting – July 15-18, 2012, Charlottetown, PE
- CSTA Semi-Annual Meeting – Nov. 12-14, 2012, Ottawa
- CSTA 90th Annual Meeting – July 14-17, 2013, Quebec City
- [CSGA](#) 108th Annual General Meeting – July 2012, Calgary
- [CSA/Plant Canada](#) 2012 – t.b.a.

[International Seed Federation](#) (ISF) meetings:

- [2011 ISF calendar of events](#)
- ISF: World Seed Congress – May 28-30, 2012, Rio de Janeiro, BR

[Eucarpia](#) meetings:

- [19<sup>th</sup> Eucarpia General Conference](#) – May 21-24, 2012 Budapest \*\*Note that the overall conference theme is “Plant Breeding for Future Generations”
- [XVth EUCARPIA Meeting on Biometrics in Plant Breeding](#) – September 5-7, 2012 Hohenheim, Germany
- [Xth EUCARPIA Meeting on Genetics and Breeding of Cucurbitaceae](#) – Oct. 15-18, 2012, Antalya, Turkey

Other meetings:

- 2011 Field Crops Rust Symposium - December 14-16, 2011, San Antonio, Texas, <http://www.apsnet.org/meetings/topicalmeetings/fcrs2011/Pages/default.aspx>

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## Attention graduate students

### **Monsanto Beachell-Borlaug International Scholars Program Accepting Applications Nov. 1, 2011 – Feb. 1, 2012**

Monsanto's Beachell-Borlaug International Scholars Program (MBBISP) will begin accepting applications on November 1, 2011 through February 1, 2012 for its fourth round of funding. The program is a competitive grant for students pursuing their Ph.D. in rice or wheat plant breeding. The goal of the program is to develop highly educated breeders in these staple crops, while providing an international opportunity to experience the work and mission of the public sector. The program requires students enrolled in a developing country university to complete part of their research in a

developed country - Australia, Canada, the United States, or Western Europe. Alternatively, for students obtaining their degrees in a developed country, they must conduct at least one season of field work in a developing country. The program was established to honor the accomplishments of Dr. Henry Beachell and Dr. Norman Borlaug, who pioneered plant breeding and research in rice and wheat, respectively. Though Monsanto funds the \$10 million grant, Texas AgriLife Research administers the program

Students interested in applying to the program can find more details at [www.monsanto.com/mbbischolars](http://www.monsanto.com/mbbischolars) or contact Dr. Ed Runge at [e-runge@tamu.edu](mailto:e-runge@tamu.edu).

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## Open letter to plant breeding instructors

Nov. 15, 2011

Dear Plant Breeding Instructors,

A group of plant breeders in the U.S. is starting the process of adding a distance education program for plant breeding to be shared by multiple universities. Faculty at various universities are already teaching plant breeding courses on-line, and there is a method for sharing courses among universities using the Ag\*Idea program. Ag\*Idea is building a university without walls to expand courses and students beyond local limits. Faculty who offer courses through Ag\*Idea would make them more broadly available, and permit students to receive credit from their home institution. It would also promote those courses more broadly, providing one-stop shopping for plant breeding students and increasing demand for the courses.

Some advantages of the Ag\*Idea concept are:

- Students can take courses otherwise unavailable in their area
- Universities can offer courses taught by faculty with new areas of expertise
- Faculty already teaching courses on-line can add students from Ag\*Idea
- Faculty get credit for teaching courses at their university
- Students get credit for taking courses at their university
- Money generated by the Ag\*Idea courses is shared among participants

Interested faculty should contact one of the steering committee members:

- Steve Baenziger ([pstephen.baenziger@gmail.com](mailto:pstephen.baenziger@gmail.com))
- Tom Hoegemeyer ([thoegemeyer2@unl.edu](mailto:thoegemeyer2@unl.edu))
- Deana Namuth-Covert ([dcovert2@unl.edu](mailto:dcovert2@unl.edu))
- Jamie Sherman ([jsherman@montana.edu](mailto:jsherman@montana.edu))
- Todd Wehner, chair ([tcwehner@ncsu.edu](mailto:tcwehner@ncsu.edu))

Dr. Todd C. Wehner

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## **Breeders without borders**

Do you have a desire to try something new, a desire to make an impact on agriculture in a developing country, or perhaps take a non-traditional holiday? Have you ever thought about what it would be like to develop a breeding program for an underdeveloped plant species, or run a breeding program in a developing country? Then **Breeders Without Borders** may be just what you are looking for.

Anthony Leddin, a plant breeder in Australia, was inspired after reading the book "[The Coming Famine](#)", by Julian Cribb. In trying to figure out what he could do to make a difference, Anthony came up with the concept of **Breeders Without Borders**. The idea is similar to [Doctors Without Borders](#) where plant breeders, undergraduate and graduate students volunteer and are then matched with overseas projects ([Crops for the Future](#)) that are looking for plant breeders. These projects would be in underdeveloped species where no breeding work is being done to avoid conflicts of interest. The concept is that the volunteer plant breeder along with the undergraduate and graduate students would spend a short period of time in the country working with local farmers/agronomists to acquaint them with common plant breeding methodology. The projects will become community based breeding where the farmers will eventually run the program and can be supported by the volunteer plant breeder back in their home country. This will begin the new generation of plant breeders in the developed and the developing world as young people will see how interesting plant breeding can be. Young plant breeders will gain experience from more senior plant breeders and their knowledge will not be lost. These young people will come back to their countries being more practical and resilient breeders, a trait that is needed with the many cutbacks seen in plant breeding projects around the world.

As of this newsletter, Anthony has four universities in Australia interested in undergraduate mentoring by a senior plant breeder at a project, and those universities are willing to fund the students' travel expenses. FAO is interested in the undergraduate mentoring aspect as well. While FAO cannot commit any funding to the program, they can possibly help with a web site and in identifying projects where plant breeders are needed. [Australian Business Volunteers](#), an NGO, has agreed to pay for plant breeders from Australia to travel to overseas projects. What Anthony is looking for now are "champions" from around the world that can promote **Breeders Without Borders** and also a major sponsor that could get the ball rolling with funding support.

If you, or perhaps someone you know, are interested in serving as "champions" for Breeders Without Borders, please drop Anthony an [email](#). If your organization is

interested in becoming a supporter or sponsor of Breeders Without Borders, please drop Anthony an [email](#). If you would like to volunteer, please drop Anthony an [email](#).

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## Plant breeding resources on the web

### [Training Series Webinars by the Plant Breeding and Genomics Community of Practice.](#)

Author: Heather L. Merk, The Ohio State University

“Learn how to use software, perform analyses, and apply techniques relevant to plant breeding and genomics by signing up and attending these webinars or watching the recordings. Join the plant breeding and genomics community of practice for a webinar series to learn how to use tools, software, and techniques.”

**Plant Breeding News (PBN-L)** is an electronic newsletter of applied plant breeding sponsored by [GIPB](#), [FAO/AGP](#) and [Cornell University's Department of Plant Breeding and Genetics](#). To subscribe to the newsletter send an e-mail message to: [mailserv@mailserv.fao.org](mailto:mailserv@mailserv.fao.org). Leave the subject line blank and write SUBSCRIBE PBN-L (Important: use ALL CAPS). To unsubscribe: Send an e-mail message as above with the message UNSUBSCRIBE PBN-L. If you have items to include in PBN-L, please contact the editor, [Clair H. Hershey](#).

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## Plant breeding short-courses - save the dates

The University of California is holding its course on ***Breeding with Molecular Markers*** in Davis on Feb 14th and 15th, 2012. This year they are adding a module on genomic selection, the latest integration of genomics to breeding. The course covers the basics of DNA markers, quantitative trait loci, and the transition of the application of markers to the application of genomics to plant breeding with a highlight on breeding for disease resistance and a hands-on workshop on software to apply markers in breeding programs. For more information, contact Jeanette Martins at [jmartins@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jmartins@ucdavis.edu) or the UC Davis [Seed Biotechnology Centre](#).

[Rex Bernardo](#) along with Lucia Gutiérrez (University of the Republic, Uruguay) will be running a short-course on ***Marker-Assisted Plant Breeding*** to be held on 5-8 June 2012 at the University of Minnesota. Many of you are probably familiar with Rex's book, '[Breeding for Quantitative Traits in Plants, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition](#)'. Rex would appreciate it if you could kindly forward the save-the-date announcement to your students or colleagues who might be interested in participating. Further information regarding registration and logistics will be provided in a second announcement in January 2012 (will be in the NAPB newsletter). In the meantime, please contact Rex by email ([bernardo@umn.edu](mailto:bernardo@umn.edu)) or phone (1-612-625-6282) if you have questions.

Colorado State University and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will offer a field-oriented short course on ***Plant Breeding for Drought Tolerance***, June 11-22, 2012 in Fort Collins, Colorado. Watch for more details at <http://droughtadaptation.org/>.

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## **Distance education opportunity**

### **Quantitative Genetics in Plant Breeding - Distance Education version CS, HS 745-section 601 DE; 1 credit; lecture only**

Prerequisites: Plant Breeding Methods, Experiment Design

North Carolina State University will be offering CS,HS 745, Quantitative Genetics in Plant Breeding in a distance education version this spring. The instructor is Joe Burton ([ltta@ncsu.edu](mailto:ltta@ncsu.edu)).

This is an advanced Plant Breeding course for graduate students who have completed a course in plant breeding, as well as a statistics course that covers variance components. The emphasis is on traditional methods of developing improved cultivars of cross-pollinated, self-pollinated, and asexually-propagated crops, and the genetic principles on which breeding methods are based. The purpose of this course is to provide the student a general background in all areas of plant breeding. The goal is to develop students who are knowledgeable in all of the areas of plant breeding, and to have sufficient understanding to work as an assistant breeder at a seed company, or to continue with advanced courses in plant breeding.

CS,HS 745 covers theory and principles of plant quantitative genetics, including experimental approaches of relationships between type and source of genetic variability, concepts of inbreeding, estimation of genetic variance and selection theory. It compliments other advanced courses, including CS,HS 719 (germplasm and biogeography), 720 (molecular genetics), 746 (advanced breeding), 748 (pest resistance, now PP590), 860 (breeding lab 1), and 861 (breeding lab 2).

For more information on CS,HS 745 Quantitative Genetics in Plant Breeding, see: <http://distance.ncsu.edu/courses/spring-courses/HS.php>

For more information on distance education at NC State University, see: <http://distance.ncsu.edu/>

For more information on Joe Burton, see: [http://www.cropsci.ncsu.edu/personnel/burton\\_joe/](http://www.cropsci.ncsu.edu/personnel/burton_joe/)

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## **Sub-Committees**

The Science, Technology, and Informatics sub-committee has a new committee secretary: Shahryar Kianian from North Dakota State University.

Janet Lewis has resigned as chair of the Grand Challenges sub-committee.

Heads up sub-committee officers: the executive will be beating the bushes so to speak to get greater involvement from you in our monthly phone conferences and getting more action out of the sub-committees.

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## **NAPB/PBCC liaison reminder**

Please forward all relevant meeting information to [Liz Lee](#) so that we can incorporate it into the newsletter. I'm not hearing much from you liaisons out there....

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## **Lobbying efforts**

October was a busy month in the lobbying department, with NAPB participating in two important efforts:

- (1) NAPB provided input to the USDA/ARS Germplasm Improvement NP301 goals for the next 5 years (Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>). The abbreviated list of topics is below; the full list can be viewed on our [web site](#).
    1. Germplasm: Conserve, organize, evaluate and develop germplasm.
    2. Plant breeding capacities: Conserve and enhance US capacities for field-based breeding of all plant species important to the US in agri-regionally relevant manners.
    3. Innovations: Identify, research and exploit new approaches and new targets for plant breeding that enhance our economy, environment, health, sustainability and food security.
    4. Science & Technologies: Research, use and create new technologies that augment the range and speed of field-based breeding of plants of importance.
    5. Education: Foster state-based efforts and investments to retain and strengthen plant breeding education in agri-regionally relevant manners.
    6. Outreach: Communicate and exemplify why society [1] needs plants, [2] needs plant breeding, plant breeders, and plant breeding programs.
  
  - (2) NAPB was a signatory on the letter to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction (a.k.a., the "super committee") in support of research funding for food and agriculture. The letter was sent to the "super committee" with approximately 1,200 signatories — individuals, organizations, companies, educational and research institutions, and other supporters of research. The full letter is on our [web site](#).
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## **Updates from monthly NAPB/PBCC executive committee teleconferences**

Teleconferences are generally held on the third Tuesday of each month. If there is an issue or concern that you would like the NAPB/PBCC to discuss at their monthly meetings, please contact either [Rita Mumm](#) or [Mike Havey](#).

The minutes from both the joint NAPB and PBCC teleconferences are [posted on the web page](#). The following is a synopsis of the NAPB/PBCC joint teleconferences from October and November. The full sets of minutes from the monthly meetings are posted on the [web site](#).

### **From the October meeting:**

- We are working on identifying NAPB and PBCC liaisons to USDA NIFA in Ann Marie Thro's absence.
- Several activities have or are occurring with regards to ACSESS serving as our front office support:
  - Shelley Jansky is working with ACSESS on getting the financial side set up.
  - Elizabeth Lee is working with ACSESS on getting the membership database transferred over and set up.
  - Seth Murray and Mike Havey are working with ACSESS on the annual meeting web page.
  - David Stelly is working with the lawyers provided by ACSESS and using the on getting NAPB incorporated, 501c3 status, federal id number, and by-laws put together.
- The annual meeting committee has come up with a tentative schedule, but is still working on the venue and the invited speakers.

### **From the November meeting:**

- Progress is slow, but on-going on the new list server and membership database. The intent is that it will be seamless and members will most likely receive a notification from the new list server once the process is complete. The new list server address is [napb@acs-net.crops.org](mailto:napb@acs-net.crops.org).
  - The ACSESS attorney is working on: (1) articles of incorporation and 501c3 status, (2) by-laws and (3) filing for a federal ID on our behalf.
  - Work on finalizing speakers and topics for our annual meeting is nearing completion and Dow AgroSciences, our 2012 meeting host is finalizing the venue.
  - The executive at the urging of the graduate student members of NAPB have formed the Graduate Student Working Group. More on this topic in future newsletters.
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