2009 IPNI Scholar Award Recipients Announced

The 2009 winners of the Scholar Award sponsored by the International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) have been selected. The awards of US$2,000 (two thousand dollars) are available to graduate students in sciences relevant to plant nutrition and management of crop nutrients. The winners from India are **Govindaraj Mahalingam** and **Ramesh Thangavel**.

"There were many highly qualified applicants this year from a wide array of universities and fields of study," said Dr. Terry L. Roberts, IPNI President. "The academic institutions these young people represent and their advisers and professors can be proud of their accomplishments. The selection committee adheres to rigorous criterion evaluating important aspects of each applicant's academic achievements." In total, 14 (fourteen) graduate students were named to receive the IPNI Scholar Award in 2009, with the most widespread geographic distribution ever for the awards.

Govindaraj Mahalingam

Mr. Govindaraj Mahalingam began his Ph.D. program in 2007 in Plant Breeding and Genetics at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, India. His dissertation title is "Genetics of Grain Iron and Zinc Content in Pearl Millet" and the study is focused on assessing and valuating the genetic efficiency of pearl millet genotypes for the accumulation of iron and zinc content in grain. Enhancement of mineral nutrition in grain is essential to eradicate human mineral malnutrition, especially in resource-poor populations of developing nations. For the future, development of genotypes having higher nutrient use efficiency, especially for iron and zinc, is important to enable production on many soils. This research can significantly increase the mineral content of grain and enable other agronomic advantages in crop plants.

Ramesh Thangavel

Mr. Ramesh Thangavel began his Ph.D. program in 2008 in Soil Science and Agricultural Chemistry at the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in New Delhi. His dissertation title is "Stocks and Quality of Soil Organic Matter under Different Land Use Systems in East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya." Objectives of his project include quantifying and qualifying soil organic matter stocks in different land use systems under slash and burn cultivation, and studying carbon stability mechanisms in Northeast India. For the future, this could lead to great reduction in soil erosion and much improved land use patterns.

Funding for the Scholar Award program is provided through support of IPNI member companies, primary producers of nitrogen, phosphate, potash, and other fertilizers. Graduate students attending a degree-granting institution located in any country with an IPNI program region are eligible. Students in the disciplines of soil and plant sciences including agronomy, horticulture, ecology, soil fertility, soil chemistry, crop physiology, and other areas related to plant nutrition are encouraged to apply.

Application deadline is June 30 each year. Further information and online application instructions and forms for the scholar award program can be found at the website: >www.ipni.net/scholar<. BC INDIA

Introduction to this Special Issue

Welcome…

You are reading the third issue of *BETTER CROPS-INDIA*, first introduced in 2007 and published by the International Plant Nutrition Institute. Following a similar style as our popular quarterly publication, Better Crops with Plant Food, this special publication is the result of considerable effort for the India Programme staff and many cooperators.

We at IPNI wish to congratulate and thank the many cooperators, researchers, government officials, farmers, industry representatives, and others who are working in a positive mode for progress in India.

Dr. Terry L. Roberts, President, IPNI