

2009 IPNI Science Award Goes to Dr. J.K. Ladha of India

The International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) has named Dr. J.K. Ladha as the winner of the 2009 IPNI Science Award. Dr. Ladha is a senior soil scientist, Coordinator of the Rice-Wheat Consortium in Asia, and representative of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in India. He receives a special plaque plus a monetary award of US\$5,000 (five thousand dollars).

“Dr. Ladha is a truly outstanding scientist and most deserving of this recognition due to the scope and breadth of his research, training, and extension activities,” said Dr. Terry L. Roberts, President of IPNI. “He has made immense contributions to international agriculture through his activities in several Asian countries, on problems across national and regional boundaries.”

Born in Gwalior, India, Dr. Ladha earned his Ph.D. in Botany from Banaras Hindu University in 1976. Earlier, he earned his B.Sc. in Biological Sciences in 1971 and his M.Sc. in Botany in 1975 at Jiwaji University in India. He has devoted nearly 30 years of his career to working in the area of integrated resource management with strong emphasis on soil fertility and nutrient management for achieving increased crop yields. Dr. Ladha has been an associate in the Agricultural Experiment Station at the University of California-Davis since 2002. He was a “Frosty” Hill Fellow at Cornell University (July 2007 to June 2008) and an adjunct professor of Soil Science at the University of the Philippines (1990 to 2004).

Dr. Ladha’s work, in collaboration with many national partners, takes a holistic, systems approach covering various components of agronomic, soil, and water management. He emphasizes farmer-participatory approaches for developing innovative resource-use-efficient alternatives of tillage/crop establishment and fertilizer management strategies. Through his work, several resource-conserving technologies, notably laser-leveling, minimum tillage, direct-seeded rice, and need-

based management of nutrients have been adopted on a large scale, helping resource-poor farmers. Recently, Dr. Ladha was one of the key innovators and continues as a leader of the Cereal Systems Initiative for South Asia (CSISA) project that seeks to improve food security for millions of people.

Implementation of research findings has been a major part of Dr. Ladha’s effort throughout his career. He has published extensively in leading peer-reviewed journals and edited several books. He has authored or co-authored 183 research articles in international research journals, 60 articles in proceedings and other books, and has edited or co-edited 11 books.

For his many achievements, Dr. Ladha has been honored with numerous awards, including election as Fellow of the American Society of Agronomy, Fellow of the Soil Science Society of America, and Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

The IPNI Science Award is intended to recognize outstanding achievements in research, extension, or education, with a focus on efficient and effective management of plant nutrients and their positive interaction in fully integrated crop production that enhances yield potential and crop quality. Private or public sector agronomists, soil scientists, and crop scientists from all countries are eligible for nomination. The previous recipients of the IPNI Science Award were Dr. John Ryan of ICARDA in 2008 and Dr. M.S. Aulakh of India in 2007. **DC**



International Zinc Association Joins IPNI

The International Zinc Association (IZA) has joined the International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) as an Associate Member.

“Our members welcome the International Zinc Association and anticipate positive benefits as our programs develop,” stated IPNI President Dr. Terry L. Roberts. IPNI was launched January 1, 2007. Its mission is to develop and promote scientific information about the responsible management of plant nutrition for the benefit of the human family.

Founded in 1990, IZA is a non-profit organization based in Brussels, Belgium, and representing the global zinc industry by promoting zinc’s essentiality in present and potential product applications, human health, and crop nutrition, and by highlighting zinc’s contribution to sustainable development.

Membership in IPNI is composed primarily of companies that are basic producers of one or more of the major plant nutrients (nitrogen, phosphate, potash, and sulfur) for agricultural purposes. The organization seeks to provide a coordinated scientific foundation for fertilizer nutrient use and to scientifically address associated environmental issues.

“Zinc is essential for the health of humans and crops. However, zinc deficiency affects nearly one-third of the world’s population and leads to deaths of over 800,000 people annually, including 450,000 children,” said Stephen R. Wilkinson, Executive Director of IZA. “Increasing the use of zinc in fertilizers will help address this global problem by improving the nutritional status of crops while at the same time improving crop health and productivity.” **DC**