

Robert Norton Joins Staff of IPNI as Program Director for Australia/New Zealand

Dr. Robert M. Norton is joining the IPNI staff as Director for Australia and New Zealand, effective October 1, 2009. He is based at Horsham, Victoria, Australia and will establish a program of agronomic research and education for IPNI in the region.

“This announcement marks a significant milestone in our progress at the Institute and we are very pleased that Rob Norton has accepted this opportunity to extend our efforts in this key region,” said IPNI President Dr. Terry L. Roberts. “With his well established and respected record of achievement in agronomic research, teaching, and administration, Dr. Norton can make this transition in stride. We have great expectations and this new role will fit his talents.”

For the past 28 years, Dr. Norton has worked in a wide range of responsibilities in the Melbourne School of Land and Environment at the University of Melbourne. His recent research has looked at incorporating elevated carbon dioxide (CO₂) responses into estimates of climate change impacts on the Australian grains industry using information from the Australian Grains Free Air Carbon Dioxide Enrichment (FACE) project he established and led. He also has considerable experience in soil and fertilizer use, oil-seed agronomy, crop water use, alternative grain crops, and farming systems.

Dr. Norton has authored more than 60 refereed articles, as well as another 100 conference papers and project reports. He has recently supervised six Ph.D. students, most based at Horsham in western Victoria where he established an agronomy research group in collaboration with the Victoria Department of Primary Industries. He is also the Australia coordinator of a FACE project in Beijing, China, in collaboration with the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS).

A native of Australia, Dr. Norton earned his B.Agr.Sc. in 1975 and Dip. Ed. in 1976, both at Melbourne University. He was awarded the Ph.D. degree in 1993 at La Trobe University. His main areas of expertise include: soil and plant nutrition, especially nitrogen management for grain crops; field crop agronomy, particularly canola; farming systems development, with emphasis on new crops; and crop responses to high CO₂ environments.

Dr. Norton has considerable international experience, with professional visits to Canada, China, Denmark, Spain, Italy, and the USA. He has also hosted scientists from numerous countries. 



Dr. Robert M. Norton, Director for Australia and New Zealand

BRAZIL

Valter Casarin Joins Staff of IPNI as Deputy Director, Brazil Program

Dr. Valter Casarin joined the IPNI staff as Deputy Director, Brazil Program, effective August 15, 2009. He will be based in the IPNI office in Piracicaba, São Paulo, Brazil, and will work in coordination with Dr. Luís Ignácio Prochnow, Director of the Brazil Program.

“Dr. Casarin is an outstanding scientist and has a strong record of academic achievement plus other valuable experience,” said IPNI President Dr. Terry Roberts. “Brazil is a key program for IPNI and we are very pleased to have the excellent talents of Dr. Casarin cooperating in the successful efforts ongoing in this critically important agricultural region.”

Dr. Casarin was born in Brazil, where he received most of his education before earning his Ph.D. in soil science at the Superior Agronomical School of Montpellier (Ecole Nationale Supérieure Agronomique de Montpellier), France, in 1999. His thesis emphasized chemical actions performed by ectomycorrhizal fungi on the rhizosphere and consequences on the bioavailability of P. Before that, he studied at the University of Agrarian and Veterinary Science of Jaboticabal, UNESP, in São Paulo and became Agronomist Engineer in 1987. In 1994, he achieved an exceptional accomplishment by earning an undergraduate

degree as Forest Engineer and his M.S. degree in Agronomy at Superior Agriculture School, University of São Paulo. His masters dissertation was on liming materials applied to a dark red latossol supporting an orange orchard.

Dr. Casarin has worked as an agricultural and forestry consultant, including the coordination of several research and fertilizer development projects. Earlier in his career, he had responsibilities in lecturing and research at universities in the state of São Paulo.

During his professional career, Dr. Casarin has been involved in several working groups and has collaborated in a large number of seminars and conferences related to various crops and nutrient concerns. He has published several papers in peer-reviewed journals and has chapters in three books. He also has an extensive record of participation and presentations at various congress, symposia, and scientific meetings. 



Dr. Valter Casarin, Deputy Director for the Brazil Program