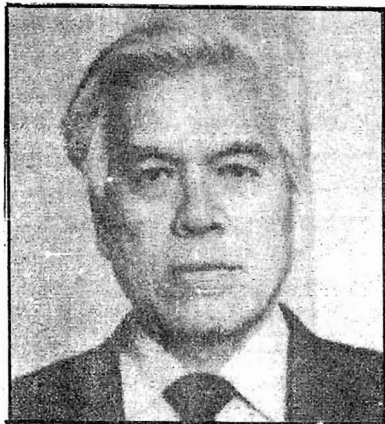


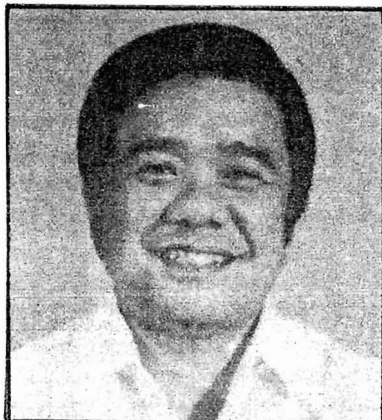


October 1984



Dr. Shooichi Matsunaka

President 1982-1983
Thanks for excellent service to IWSS and for continuing to serve after Dr. Vega's illness.



Dr. Marcos R. Vega

Thanks for service as President-Elect. All IWSS members wish you a full recovery.



Dr. Keith Moody

President 1984-1985.
Good luck and thanks for agreeing to step in for Dr. Vega.

IWSS Presidency

In December of 1983 Dr. Marcos Vega suffered a serious heart attack. He was to assume the duties of IWSS President only two weeks later. Fortunately, Dr. Vega is recovering and is slowly returning to his post as Deputy Director General of the International Rice Research Institute.

Wisely, but unfortunately for IWSS, Dr. Vega notified the Society that he must resign from the presidency of IWSS. Dr. Matsunaka, who continued to serve as president led a search for a qualified replacement for Dr. Vega. After several meetings, exchanges of letters and cables, there was enthusiastic agreement in the Executive Committee that Dr. Keith Moody was an ideal person to serve out Dr. Vega's term. Dr. Moody is now the President of IWSS.

Dr. Moody, as most members know, is a weed scientist at IRRI in the Philippines. He was a weed scientist at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Ibadan, Nigeria from 1969 until his transfer to IRRI in 1975.

He obtained the B. Agr. Sc. (Agronomy) from the University of Queensland, MS (Soil Science) from the University of Hawaii, and PhD (Agronomy) from the University of Wisconsin.

He has wide experience in weed research in the tropics and has written or co-authored over 50 articles on various aspects of weed science. He is a co-author of "West African Weeds", an author of "Major Weeds of the Philippines", and author of "Major Weeds of Rice in South and Southeast Asia".

Dr. Moody has contributed a great deal to the promotion of weed science in the Philippines through his involvement in the Weed Science Society of the Philippines. Likewise, he has been either an adviser or member of the guidance committees of graduate students in the University of the Philippines at Los Banos.

Dr. Moody was a member of the Planning Committee of the 9th Conference of the Asian Pacific Weed Science Society and a key organizer of the IRRI/IWSS conference on Weed Control in Rice held in 1982. Moody's address is IRRI, P.O. Box 933, Manila, Philippines.

International Weed Science Society

Secretariat • Oregon State University • Corvallis, Oregon 97331/USA

1984

Weed Management News from FAO Progress at last!

Scientists in the Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome are to be commended for following with action emerging concern over the role of weeds in developing countries. Following is a partial accounting of recent or planned activities. Some of the events were reported earlier in this newsletter but are repeated to tell the full story.

Planning

A. Expert Consultation

The FAO hosted the FAO-IWSS Expert Consultation on Improving Weed Management in Developing Countries. This meeting was held in Rome in September of 1982. The effort highlighted in print the urgent need for programs aimed at reducing the negative impact of weeds on agricultural production. Also contained in the published proceedings is a long series of recommendations prepared by the participants.

The proceedings are being widely distributed to maximize the impact. Copies from the second printing will soon be available from authorized FAO sales agents or directly from: Distribution and Sales Section, FAO, Via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy.

B. FAO Sets up a Panel of Experts on Weed Management

The Food and Agriculture Organization is to be commended for establishing a Panel of Experts on Weed Management. This Panel will advise the FAO Director General and member governments of FAO with regard to development and application of improved weed management in agriculture, fishing and forestry and to review principles and standardize procedures and techniques. The Panel will also serve as an advisory body for the implementation of FAO field programmes.

The establishment of this panel is a significant development in world agricultural policy and production programs. It is a recognition of the role that weeds and their control play in food production. The International Weed Science Society urges all its members to give the Panel all the support, advice and encouragement that is necessary to help it meet the public's expectations.

LIST OF PANEL MEMBERS

Dr. I. Okezie Akobundu, Chairman
Weed Scientist
Intl. Institute of Tropical Agr.
P.M.B. 5320
Ibadan, NIGERIA (at IPPC until August 1985)

Dr. R. W. Michieka
Dept. of Crop Science
University of Nairobi
Kabete Campus PO Box 30197
Nairobi, KENYA

Dr. Aldo Alves
EMBRAPA
Av. Francisco Glicerio 957
13.100 Campinas SP
BRAZIL

Dr. I. G. Rojas
Departamento de Fitotecnia
Universidad Catolica
Casilla 114-D
Santiago, CHILE

Dr. V. M. Bhan
Dept. of Agronomy
Haryana Agric. University
Hissar (Haryana)
INDIA

Prof. A. R. Saghir
American Univ. of Beirut
Faculty of Agr. & Food Sciences
Beirut
LEBANON

Prof. J.D. Fryer
Weed Research Organization
Begbroke Hill, Yarnton
Oxford OX5 1PF
UNITED KINGDOM

Dr. J. T. Swarbrick
Dept. of Plant Protection
Queensland Agr. College
Lawes, Gatton, Queensland 4343
AUSTRALIA

Dr. W. Koch
Universitat Hohenheim (380)
Postfach 700562 D.7000
Stuttgart 70
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Prof. Li Yang-Han
Head, Weed Research Lab.
Dept. of Botany
Nanjing Agricultural College
Nanjing, CHINA

Dr. Beatriz L. Mercado
Weed Science Division
University of the Philippines
Bioscience Bldg. Los Banos
College, Laguna 3720 PHILIPPINES

Dr. R. L. Zimdahl
Weed Research Lab
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
USA

Continued

Rarely do FAO panel members all meet at one time. Rather, selected members and additional non-member individuals who have relevant experience or expertise are brought together to concentrate on certain problems and make recommendations for FAO. This was the case on April 2-7, 1984 in Nairobi, Kenya when six panelists, two members of the FAO Plant Protection Service and twenty-five advisers and observers met. Meetings were held to develop:

- 1) An FAO Action Programme for weed management development at a country level.
- 2) An Action Programme for improving weed management in Kenya.
- 3) A series of Panel Recommendations for FAO.

Training

A. Kenya

In response to an identified need for weed training, an intensive 2-week training course was presented at Nairobi, Kenya, during August - September 1983. Twenty-six participants, representing a wide array of commodity, research and civil authority programs attended the course, with instruction provided by a core group of Kenyan nationals and expatriates.

Participants attended all events faithfully including classroom discussions, field exercises, and night seminars. The course served a further communications role by bringing together research, civil and private sectors. A series of resolutions to further weed science in Kenya was formulated and presented to administrators.

The course was jointly organized and sponsored by the FAO Plant Protection Service, the United Nations Development Program through the FAO/UNDP Action Programme for Improved Plant Protection, and the U.S. Agency for International Development through the International Plant Protection Center.

B. Zambia

An intensive 2-week train-the-trainers course was designed to provide selected individuals the basic knowledge, experience, confidence and materials to conduct follow-up training programs in the regions where they are assigned.

A combination of classroom lectures, hands-on field exercises and tours was presented to a group of 22 participants brought to the Mount Makulu Research Station, Chilanga, during December 12-23, 1983.

A 5-person group of instructors combined many years of weed management research and training experience in Africa and other developing areas. The course was conducted in a manner that allowed all of the core instructors to be present at all events thereby encouraging an interchange of experiences and ideas on each topic.

C. Tanzania

A 2-week weed management course for 25 agronomists is planned for November - December of 1984. The site will be the University of Dar es Salaam, College of Agriculture at Morogoro.

D. Costa Rica

In November - December, 1984, FAO will sponsor a weed management course for 25 agronomists from the Central American Region and the Caribbean. CATIE (Centro Agronomico Tropical de Investigacion y Ensenanza) at Turrialba will host the 3-week course.

E. Special Workshop

In December of 1983 FAO sponsored a 4-day workshop on "Ecology and Control of Perennial Weeds". Some of the most active weed researchers in Latin America and some Spanish speaking weed scientists from the United States met in Santiago, Chile to present and discuss the latest findings on ecology and control of some serious perennial weeds. Proceedings have been published in Spanish, but the supply has been distributed. FAO has plans to publish additional copies in Spanish, English and Portuguese. Weeds receiving attention were Sorghum halepense, Cynodon dactylon, Cyperus spp., Convolvulus arvensis, Diploaxis tenuifolia, Senecio madagascariensis, Senecio grisebachii, Panicum maximum, Paspalum maritimum, Brachiaria purpurascens, Sida rhombifolia, Senecio brasiliensis, Pennisetum clandestinum, Rumex crispus, Murdannia nudiflora, Pteridium aquilinum, Allium vineale, Ulex europaeus, Rubus spp. and Xanthosoma spp. The workshop was organized by panel member I. G. Rojas.

Editorial

The following editorial was written by John Swarbrick. It first appeared in Vol. 3, Number 2, 1984 of Australian Weeds, the official journal of the Council of Australian Weed Science Societies. John Swarbrick is the General Editor of the journal and a member of the newly formed FAO Panel of Experts on Weed Management. The irony of this closure in the face of emerging awareness of the importance of improved weed management is a bitter pill to swallow. Readers wishing to comment on this action may write to: The Director, Weed Research Organization, Begbroke Hill, Yarnton, Oxford OX5 1PF, U.K. Comments may be helpful in future resource allocations.

The closure of the Weed Research Organisation

It now appears most likely that the Weed Research Organisation at Oxford will be closed over the next few years and that its staff, research programmes and library will be significantly reduced and scattered. This will be a most damaging blow to weed science and weed scientists throughout the world, since it will remove the major resource to which we have access for information, advice and overseas training and experience. Major losses to world agricultural development will result from the dispersal of its integrated and widely experienced staff whilst the best weed science library in the world will perhaps cease to accumulate new material and become a historical relic and the ongoing and future research programmes will be significantly reduced.

The Weed Research Organisation (WRO) started as an off-shoot from the Agricultural Research Council's (ARC) Unit of Experimental Agronomy which was established in 1950 within the Department of Agriculture at the University of Oxford. The rapid development of herbicides in the 1950s and recognition of the pivotal role of the Unit in research, information and liaison on weeds and their control led to acceptance by the end of the decade that a larger and more permanent centre for weed research was needed. In 1960 the Weed Research Organisation was set up at Begbroke Hill near Oxford. Its function has been the development of weed control both in Britain and overseas, and over the last 23 years it has become the leading (and practically the only) major research and reference centre for weed science in the world. It now has 130 ha of land which supports a wide range of field experiments, a major complex of laboratories, a controlled environment facility, glasshouses and associated workshops, and a comprehensive and balanced programme of research which is carried out by a staff of 135, about a third of whom are graduates.

WRO aims to improve the efficiency of weed control methods, to understand principles, to develop new techniques, and to provide the bases for integrated control systems combining appropriate chemical, cultural and biological methods. It provides a scientific background for continued improvement of weed management and for the avoidance of problems which may arise from repeated use of herbicides or other weed control methods. The research is carried out by groups of scientists and support staff who respectively cover weed development and botany, weed biology, herbicides in all their aspects, the interactions between herbicides and soil microorganisms, vegetation management, environmental studies, and weed control in annual and perennial crops, pastures and tropical crops. The activities of these groups naturally overlap.

The library contains the most comprehensive accumulation of weed science literature in the world and includes books, journals, conference reports and other publications in many languages. About a third of the 450 journals subscribed to are not readily accessible elsewhere. Much of the material has been translated into English and all has been catalogued and indexed and is available to enquirers throughout the world.

The closure of the WRO is being brought about as an economy measure and a restructuring of agricultural research in England and Wales. The Agriculture and Food Research Council (AFRC, successor to the ARC) is faced with a major reduction in funding and has moreover acceded to pressures on the Council to give more priority to research into food and to new scientific initiatives than to some aspects of agriculture, including plant protection. To meet this deficit and fulfil this policy the decision has been made to close the two smallest AFRC stations - the WRO and the Letcombe Laboratory - rather than to spread the cuts across all research stations. The AFRC plans a diminished weed research programme at Long Ashton Research Station near Bristol. Lip service is paid to the retention of a strong weed research programme at Long Ashton, but little land is available there that is suitable for this research, the climate and location are not typical of the major arable areas of the UK, and a 60% reduction in funding for the weed research programme has been proposed associated with the closure of the WRO site. It is anticipated that only about 40 staff will transfer from Begbroke Hill to Long Ashton. No decision has yet been made about the future of Begbroke.

Even though there is little likelihood of the decision by the AFRC being reversed, there is much to be gained or lost in the negotiations now taking place which will shape the future of weed research in Britain. We in Australia also have something to retain or to lose in these negotiations since the future shape of weed science research is being determined.

1984

Professor John Fryer Retires

John Fryer has retired from his position as director of the Weed Research Organization in England. Professor Fryer's contribution to IWSS is immeasurable. He was a key figure in discussions leading to the formation of IWSS and a member of the steering committee which guided us through the first year to the formation of an official organization. Since the "founding year" of 1976, John Fryer has served on the IWSS Executive Committee representing the European Weed Research Society. His long experience and sound judgement was invaluable in numberless large meetings and small gatherings. John Fryer is a master at guiding groups of people to wise decisions and productive action. Above all, he is a kind and considerate person.



John Fryer's contribution to weed science goes far beyond IWSS. As director of WRO he has been extremely supportive of the European Weed Research Council and now Society. Hardly any regional or national weed science organization has been untouched by his organizational skills and scientific knowledge.

John Fryer has retired, but he has not stopped working. I am sure all IWSS members join the Executive Committee in wishing John the best possible retirement. We also openly hope for his continued involvement in weed science and support of IWSS.

European Weed Research Society - The Third Symposium on Weeds and Weed Control in the Mediterranean Area, held in Oeiras, Portugal in April 1984, attracted 240 participants and 81 papers under the leadership of the new EWRS President Prof. I. Moreira. The opportunity was taken to present Honorary Lifetime Memberships of EWRS to Dr. Wybo van der Zweep, and Miss Joan Thurston. Proceedings are available from EWRS - Proceedings Symposia, Postbus 14, NL-6700 AA Wageningen, The Netherlands for Swiss francs 60.

Workshop on the Biology and Control of Striga

This workshop was arranged by ICSU (International Council of Scientific Unions) in Dakar, Senegal from 14-17 November 1983. A group of 28 specialists from 11 countries appraised the current state of knowledge on Striga and prepared a set of recommendations for intensified research on the problem. Full proceedings are now available on application to ICSU, 51 Bd de Montmorency, 75016 Paris, France.

Third International Symposium on Parasitic Weeds

Arranged jointly by IPSPRG (International Parasitic Seed Plant Research Group) and ICARDA (International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas) this meeting attracted about 50 participants from 20 countries. Thirty five papers were presented on all major parasitic groups, and the acute problems from Orobanche species were observed on local farms and research stations. Proceedings are available from ICARDA or from Chris Parker at Weed Research Organization, Yarnton, Oxford OX5 1PF, U.K., price \$20.00.

Brazil

The joint conference of the Brazilian Weed Science Society and the Latin-American Weed Science Society convened in Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil on 23-27 July 1984 in the spacious facilities at Minacentro. It was well attended by weed scientists and agrochemical industry representatives from member countries, with a preponderance from Brazil. The presented papers offered an appropriate variety of field plot and laboratory research, including research on new herbicides in concurrent sessions on food crops, fibre crops, oil crops, competition and growth of plants, stimulants (coffee and cocoa), herbicides in the soil, equipment, forages and pastures, horticultural crops, and botany, physiology, and ecology. **There were three special features:** a symposium on national herbicide tests, moderated by Dr. Alberto Duque de Oliveira, with Dr. Enaldo Mesquita de Carvalho as lecturer, plus panelists; a symposium on the importance in crop production of weed hosts of nematodes, moderated by Dr. Robinson Antonio Pitelli, with Dr. Leo E. Bendixen as lecturer, plus panelists; and a lecture on specific aspects of weed research by Dr. Ilidio Moreira of Universidad Tecnica de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal, and President of the European Weed Research Society. Special appreciation should be extended to the executive and organizing committees, chaired by J. Baptista da Silva for the successful conference and to the Brazilian Weed Science Society, presided over by Dr. Reinald Forster, for hosting the Latin-American Weed Science Society two times in succession. Dr. Aldo Alves is President of the Latin-American Weed Science Society.

By Leo Bendixen

Publications

Symposia proceedings still available:

- * Weed Control in Rice by IRRI and IWSS. Contact International Rice Research Institute, PO Box 933, Manila, Philippines. Cost for people in developing nations is US \$6.00 plus US\$14.50 postage if sent by airmail or US \$1.75 by surface.
- * No-Tillage Crop Production in the Tropics by West African Weed Science Society and IWSS. The first 500 copies were distributed, but a second printing is now available from IWSS Secretariat or IPPC. Cost US \$25, but free to people working in developing countries.
- * Communication of Weed Science Technologies in Developing Countries by IWSS and Weed Science Society of America. Contact the Secretariat, no cost to members.

Guidelines for the Safe and Effective Use of Pesticides by GIFAP (International Group of National Associations of Manufacturers of Agrochemical Products). Single copies of this attractive and important booklet, written for use in developing countries, are available in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese from the IWSS Secretariat. For multiple copies contact GIFAP, Avenue Hamoir 12, 1180 Brussels, Belgium.

Weed Ecology by Steven R. Radosevich and Jodie S. Holt, 1984, 304 pp. The authors focus on weed and crop responses to environmental changes rather than tools used to manipulate vegetation. They detail the demographic, physiological and morphological responses that occur as weeds interact with their environment and other plants. Specific topics include the human impact on weed evolution, germination requirements and herbicide resistance. US \$39.95 from John Wiley and Sons.

Biological Methods of Weed Control by S.S. Rosenthal, D.M. Maddox and K. Brunetti, 1984, 88 pp. Basic principles of biological control using the plant's reported natural enemies are presented and illustrated by detailed discussion of a few examples. Monograph published for the California Weed Conference. Available from Thomson Publications, PO Box 9335, Fresno, CA, 93791, USA, US \$10.

Aspects of Applied Biology Series by Association of Applied Biologists, British Crop Protection Council:

- Aspects of Applied Biology 1, 1982
- * Broad-leaved weeds and their control in cereals
Proceedings of the Weeds Group meeting at the University of Warwick; March 1982. Price £10.00 (US \$19.00)
- Aspects of Applied Biology 2, 1983
- * Pests, diseases, weeds and weed beet in sugar beet
Proceedings of the Weeds Group meeting at the University of Cambridge; January 1983. Price £10.00 (US \$19.00)
- Aspects of Applied Biology 3, 1983
- * Crop sensitivity to herbicides
Proceedings of the Weeds Group meeting at the University of Warwick; April 1983. Price £10.00 (US \$19.00)
- Aspects of Applied Biology 4, 1983
- * Influence of environmental factors on herbicide performance and crop and weed biology
Proceedings of the Weeds Group meeting in association with the European Weed Research Society and the Society of Chemical Industry at St. Catherine's College, Oxford; December 1983. Price £11.00 (US \$20.90)
- Aspects of Applied Biology 5, 1984
- * Weed control and vegetation management in forests and amenity areas
Proceedings of the Weeds Group meeting in association with the Institute of Foresters of Great Britain and the Recreation Ecology Research Group at the University of Nottingham; January 1984. Price £10.00 (US \$19.00)
- Aspects of Applied Biology 6, 1984
- * Agronomy, Physiology, Plant Breeding and Crop Protection of Oilseed Rape
Price £10.00 (US \$19.00). Copies of all AAB publications are available from: The AAB Office, National Vegetable Research Station, Wellesbourne, Warwick, CV35 9EF, England.

Major Weeds of the Philippines by K. Moody, C.E. Munroe, R.T. Lubigan and E.C. Paller Jr., 1984, 320 pp. for the Weed Science Society of the Philippines. Colored plates are used to illustrate 268 weeds from 34 families. Available from: Weed Science Society of the Philippines, University of the Philippines at Los Banos, College, Laguna, Philippines.

1989

Herbicide Handbook, Weed Science Society of America, 1983, 5th edition. This 515 page book contains information on 138 herbicides, desiccants and plant growth regulators. Available from WSSA, 309 W. Clark Street, Champaign, IL, 61820. US \$10.00, advance payment is required.

The Agrochemicals Handbook. This new handbook differs from most others available by being in loose leaf format designed for easy and continuous up-dating. All classes of pesticide and growth regulator are covered for chemistry, toxicology, use and precautions. Initial price is £90.00 or \$171.00. For further details about up-dating etc. contact The Royal Society of Chemistry, The University, Nottingham, NG7 2RD, U.K.

Recent Advances in Weed Research. Edited by W.W. Fletcher. 1983. 280 pp. Developments are reviewed on Weed demography, Biological control, Structure-activity relations, New herbicides, Application, Perennial weed control, Control of submerged aquatic weeds, Weed management, Weed control in nursery and amenity plantings and Mode of action. Available from Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux, (Central Sales) Farnham House, Farnham Royal, Slough SL2 3BN, U.K., price £25.00.

The Biology and Control of Weeds in Sugarcane by Sheng Y Peng, 1984, Elsevier, 336 pp. A comprehensive treatise on all aspects of the topic including chapters on the cultivation of cane, the weeds and their biology, losses, herbicides, crop tolerance, evaluation methods, application equipment and particular attention to problematic perennials. Based on Taiwan work but referring also to results elsewhere. Price \$78.75 in N. America, Dfl 185.00 elsewhere.

Weeds of North Yemen (Yemen Arab Republic) by S.A. Chaudhary and R. Revri, 1983, 411 pp. About 180 species are illustrated by simple line drawings and brief notes provided on identification, propagation and distribution. Published by GTZ, (German Agency for Technical Cooperation) P.O. Box 5180, Dag-Hammarskjold-Weg 1, D-6236 Eschborn/Ts.1, Federal Republic of Germany.

A Manual of Weeds of Central and Eastern Saudi Arabia by S.A. Chaudhary and M.A. Zawawi, 1983, 326 pp. Complementing the above volume and adding further to sources of reference on weeds of the Arabian Peninsula. A similar number of species described but with a combination of colour plates and detailed drawings of spikelets etc. Published by Ministry of Agriculture & Water, P.O. Box 17285, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Influence of Weather on the Efficiency and Safety of Pesticide Application - The Drift of Herbicides edited by J.G. Elliott and B.J. Wilson 1983, 135 pp. A comprehensive review of the occurrence of herbicide drift damage in U.K., the physics and meteorological factors involved, and recommendations for research towards reducing the problem (One of the last major activities of Jimmy Elliott of WRO who died suddenly in August 1983) British Crop Protection Council Publication, 144-150 London Road, Croydon CRO 2TD, U.K.

Journal of Plant Protection in the Tropics. A new journal has been launched by the Malaysian Plant Protection Society (MAPPS). It will appear 3 times per year and publish original research papers, brief communications and reviews on all types of tropical pest problems. All enquiries to the Executive Editor, MAPPS, P.O. Box 12351, Kuala Lumpur 01-02, Malaysia.

Weeds of Jordan by B. Abu-Irmaileh, 1982, 434 pp. 222 species are illustrated by drawings and described in English and Arabic. University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan.

Agricultural Chemicals Book II Herbicides, 1983-84 by W.T. Thomson, 260 pp. Herbicides used and developed outside the United States are also included. Available from Thomson Publications, P.O. Box 9335, Fresno, CA 93791, USA. US \$13.50 plus a handling charge of US \$1.00 per volume in the United States and US \$2.00 per volume outside the United States.

"If we think about it, we realize that weeds represent a highly successful and biologically important component of their environments, which include arable land, forests, rangeland, and aquatic habitats. This success of weeds is especially remarkable in view of all the effort directed toward their destruction. This very success warrants greater attention. Can we continue to deal with weeds effectively without accounting for their success? By understanding the nature of weeds, perhaps we can learn how to reduce their effect on our crops. By analyzing the way crops, weeds, and environment interact, perhaps it will be possible to grow more food in our fields and trees in our forests. We also might save ourselves some effort along the way."

Weed Ecology by
Radosevich & Holt
(see citation earlier this newsletter)

MEETINGS 1985

- January 7-9 Pesticide symposium on "Application and Biology" by the British Crop Protection Council, University of Reading, Berkshire, United Kingdom. Sessions are classified as follows: Innovation in application methods, crop protection management, the physics and biology of application, adjuvants and formulations. Contact: Roger Pierce, The Chiltern Agency, Chiltern View Farmhouse, Kingston Stort, Chinnor, Oxon OX9 4NL, England
- February 5-8 Weed Science Society of America, Seattle, Washington, USA. Contact: J.D. Riggleman, DuPont Agricultural Chemicals Dept., Barley Mill Plaza, Wilmington, DE, 19898, USA.
- April 10-12 Weeds, Pests and Diseases of Grassland and Herbage Legumes. A symposium sponsored by the British Crop Protection Council and the British Grassland Society. University of Nottingham. Contact: Dr. J.S. Brockman, Seale-Hayne College, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 6NQ, United Kingdom
- May 7 37th International Symposium on Crop Protection (International Symposium over Fytofarmacie en Fytiatrie, Symposium International de Phytopharmacie et de Phytiatrie, Internationales Symposium uber Pflanzenschutz) will take place at the Faculty of Agricultural Science, State University, Coupure links 653, B-9000, Gent, Belgium
- November 4-8 4th biennial conference of the West African Weed Science Society to be held at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Contact: Albert O. Ayeni, Dept. of Agronomy, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
- November 24-30 10th conference of the Asian-Pacific Weed Science Society Chiang Mai Thailand. Contact: Miss Maneesa Teerawatsakul, Secretary Organizing Committee, c/o Botany and Weed Science Division, Dept. of Agric. Bangkhen, Bangkok 10900, Thailand
- December 2-6 Weed Science Society of Nigeria. Contact: Steve N. Utulu, NIFOR, Benin City, Bendel State, Nigeria

A MATTER OF CONCERN

Dr. I.O. Akobundu, Chairman,
FAO Panel of Experts on Weed Management

The Peasant Farmer: An Endangered Species in a Changing World

Agriculture is one of man's oldest industries and the peasant farmer has been part of this industry from its inception. When the peasant farmers of Europe and North America were threatened by the industrial revolution, they quickly used the modern weed control tools that weed scientists made available to them and increased their productivity. In doing so, these farmers improved their well-being and their success has kept generation after generation of farmers on the farms. Peasant farmers in developing countries are hurting from uneven development of their countries' infrastructures.

Mr. Joe Ali-Perez is a peasant farmer in one of the developing countries. He is 54 years old. A majority of the peasant farmers in his country and throughout the developing countries are in this age bracket. Joe's father married six wives and had twenty children; a sizeable work force since none of the children, including Joe, had the opportunity to attend school. Time has changed since Joe's boyhood. Joe was farming long before he was married. He has a wife and four children. He cannot marry a second wife because of economic reasons and because his religion forbids him from doing so. Joe has seen the population of his village double since his boyhood. The traditional bush fallow period of 8 to 10 years has changed to 4 years; crop yield is no longer as good as in the "good old days" and Joe blames it on changing times. Joe realizes that family expenses are on the increase but the return from farming keeps going down.

Joe Ali-Perez and the other peasant farmers throughout the developing countries who do the handweeding now have their backs to the wall as the alternative is starvation. They do not have the education to secure employment in the cities. They invest all they have in their children's education in the hope that these children will never return to till and weed as these courageous but often neglected farmers do. These farmers may already have improved crops and in many cases they know about other improved crop production technologies but still face the drudgery of hand-weeding. Unless we find a way to transfer improved weed control technologies to these aging farmers, the yield of their crops will continue to be low, and fewer young people will have the incentive to take up farming. Shouldn't we try to improve on how these peasant farmers have been removing weeds? Isn't there something we can do to minimize drudgery and end all that bending and stooping that they have done over the years to keep up the fight against weeds? Shouldn't we be doing something to make weed removal less laborious for Joe Ali-Perez, his wife and his colleagues all over the tropics in order to lure the city boys back to the rural areas and prevent Joe and those like him from becoming extinct?

Dr. Akobundu will comment further on this topic in the next newsletter.