

### News

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#### **Waitangi Field-days Full House**

The outstanding programme organised for the Nelson-Marlborough field-days proved a real draw-card. Organiser Murray Dill had to announce a full house with over 50 people registered. It is hoped that there will be another occasion. Well done to all those who worked to plan this event.

#### **Growers Manual Sales Top 100**

The Manual launched at the national conference last year has already sold over 100 copies. There is still some stock on hand. Orders can be sent to Glenys Pluck, Dunns Crossing Road, RD 5, Christchurch.

#### **Research Continues**

The Research Committee has been busy setting up new cultivar trials and preparing a new application for funding to extend the blight control research.

The committee has also been delighted to liaise with Robyn Adams and Jane McKenzie who will be undertaking some walnut research as part of a Royal Society Fellowship.

#### **Royal Society Fellowship Aids Research**

Can you help?

Robyn Adams and Jane McKenzie have been awarded a Royal Society Teacher Fellowship in Science for 2004. This will enable them to undertake research on a variety of aspects relevant to walnut growers, with the support of NZWIG and Lincoln University. They will be working with orchardists in the Canterbury area.

Jane writes:

“Our three major areas of focus are:

- (a) The blight research programme
- (b) Assessment of the growth performance of walnut trees with a view to determining benchmarking standards for walnut growers
- (c) To find out more about product development for walnuts.

This project will hopefully have benefits for all walnut growers in the future.

What we need is the support of growers at all stages of orchard development so that we can come and

take measurements of trees in your orchard and record other relevant data, including management.

If you are willing to allow us to do this please contact either Robyn – 03 3582621, or Jane – 03 3294290.

Naturally all findings will be made freely available to you.”

#### **Email Discussion Group for Members**

We announced in the last newsletter a new email discussion group open to all NZWIG members. A few members have joined, but it will need more to make the discussion worthwhile. The idea is that once you have joined it, you automatically receive all emails sent to the list. This enables members to share information, questions and issues with others, and join in a group email discussion.

To join the list, simply fill in the form on our website ([www.walnuts.org.nz](http://www.walnuts.org.nz)), or send an email to:

<majordomo@walnuts.org.nz> and make the main body of the message:

subscribe nzwig-discuss  
end

#### **Information pack**

The first update of the Information Pack has been completed and the new version will be in use from now on. Our strategy is to update as required – when something has changed – at least once annually. The pack is ideal for new growers or those considering walnuts. It can be ordered from the website.

#### **Committees Using Email Technology**

Both the NZWIG committee and the Research Committee now have dedicated email channels to communicate. This makes email discussion and sharing documents easy.

The Committee also now is able to send notices and event reminders to the most NZWIG members.

#### **NZWIG Annual General Meeting**

AGM will be held on Saturday, May 8 at 12:45 at the Rolleston Community Centre. Any remits should be sent to the Secretary before April 1st

# Member Profile

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## Malcolm and Jenny Lawrence

At the age of 35 Malcolm and Jenny Lawrence decided to shift out of town and grow trees.

In Jenny's Volkswagon Beetle, the neighbours were positively sure they had some green, tree hugging, beatniks arriving (Malcolm's full black beard further contributed to the theory) and wouldn't last long – especially as the first walnut growers in the district had failed badly (raising walnuts and grazing bulls, together, proved the downfall).

It didn't take too many years before Malcolm's black beard started turning grey. With two children appearing on the scene and over 500 walnut trees planted – a halt was put on further development at the Tricketts Road property and time was spent with the babies. Three years later a house was built and the family shifted to West Melton.

In the early years both Jenny and Malcolm became active in the Canterbury Branch of the NZ Tree Crops Association and the research group which identified selected walnut cultivars for a possible future commercial walnut industry in NZ. The grower group, Southern Nut Growers Association, was also formed in the early years and contributed funding for further research and development.

Now, eighteen years later, Jenny and Malcolm are still waiting for the return of effort put into the developing walnut industry. The processing and marketing operation 'A Cracker of a Nut' has been a huge challenge and has just recently become a full year business for Jenny. Malcolm still works in Christchurch a couple of days a week – the other seven days are spent working on the property.

Outside of walnuts the couple has a shared interest in art, food, boats and travel. Malcolm and Jenny met in 1982 at a boat party and would like to spend more time 'messaging about in boats' in the future. Their skills before walnuts centred around teaching and accounting. If they were starting again, a walnut business would be just fine, but Malcolm would like to be more involved in food science and Jenny in event management.

Malcolm and Jenny see the development of NZWIG as a peak industry group for walnuts as an extremely positive step as it brings together all of the research areas and walnut community organisation into one body. "Congratulations to the inaugural committee in getting the group started and providing a wide range of information through the website, newsletter, walnut manual and information pack."

## Events

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### Orchard Floor And Harvesting Equipment And Blight Update

A working display including post harvest handling – washing & drying to maximise return.

Plus an update on the blight research so far this year with Clive Marsh, Tim Jenkins – Lincoln University BHU, and James Hills (Australian representative)

**Sunday 28 March @ 1.30pm**

Property of Ian Sheerin,  
Hamptons Road, Prebbleton  
Rapid number 038 0387

This will be followed by dinner at 'The Bridge' Restaurant, Prebbleton for those who wish to partake. Pay as you go – bookings will be confirmed on the day.

### Irrigation Seminar and AGM

**Saturday 8 May**

Rolleston Community Centre  
126 Rolleston Drive, Rolleston  
Canterbury

- 9.30am Morning Tea; Dinner confirmation
- 10.00am Groundwater Reserves – how secure are they?  
Speaker : Environment Canterbury  
Presentation followed by questions
- 11.00am Irrigation Design – does it factor in all possibilities?  
Paul Donaldson : Water Watch  
Presentation followed by questions
- 12.00 noon LUNCH BYO – tea and coffee provided
- 12.45 pm NZWIG AGM
- 1.30pm Current irrigation situation – how best to utilise available tools and information  
Tony Davoren – Hydro-Services  
Presentation followed by questions
- 2.30pm Afternoon tea
- 3.15pm Field Visit to inspect a recently installed well, headworks and irrigation lines  
Property of John and Christine Mathews  
Westmead, 607 Hoskyns Road,  
West Melton
- 6.00pm Dinner at Trens Wine Estate  
Trens Road, Prebbleton  
(Reservations Essential)

Please contact Glenys Pluck 03 3479 109 to make your booking, before 1 May 2004

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