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● **election results**

At the conclusion of the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Brisbane, the term of President Ralph Obendorf came to an end and Derek Bewley assumed the presidency of the ISSS. The Society recently held an election to replace Derek as the President-Elect of the ISSS. Patricia Berjak was nominated without opposition; she assumed the office of President-Elect in Brisbane and will become President of the ISSS in 2008.

The terms of two other members of the Executive Committee, Gregorio Nicolás and Menahem Edelstein, also ended at the AGM. Due to changes in the Constitution and Statutes of the ISSS, one new member was elected to the Executive Committee to begin a three-year term. Stephen Adkins (Australia) and Haim Nerson (Israel) were nominated, and Steve received the majority of votes. We are pleased that Haim Nerson has agreed to act as the Regional Representative from the Middle East.

The Society thanks all three members for their willingness to serve the ISSS, and we congratulate Pat and Steve on their new roles.

● **officers, executive committee members, & representatives (2005-2008)**

Officers

J. Derek Bewley (Canada), President (dbewley@uoguelph.ca) (2005-2008)
Patricia Berjak (South Africa), President-elect (berjak@ukzn.ac.za) (2005-2008)
Karen L. Koster (USA), Secretary (kkoster@usd.edu) (2004-2008)
Kenneth Thompson (England), Treasurer (ken.thompson@sheffield.ac.uk) (2002-2006)
Steve Adkins (Australia), Elected Committee Member (s.adkins@mailbox.uq.edu.au)
Robin Probert (England), Appointed Committee Member (r.probert@rbgkew.org.uk)
Bill Finch-Savage (England), Appointed Committee Member (bill.finch-savage@warwick.ac.uk)
Peter Halmer (England), Appointed Committee Member (phalmer@germains.com)
Michael Black (England), Appointed Committee Member (michael.black@kcl.ac.uk)

Regional representatives (2005-2008)

Norman Pammenter (South Africa) for Africa (pammente@ukzn.ac.za)

Steve Adkins (Australia) for Australia and New Zealand (s.adkins@mailbox.uq.edu.au)

Renato Delmondez de Castro (Brazil) for Central and South America (renatodc@ucsal.br)

Songquan Song (China) for Eastern Asia (sqsong@xtbg.ac.cn)

Elwira Sliwinska (Poland) for Eastern Europe and Russia (elwira@mail.atr.bydgoszcz.pl)

Haim Nerson (Israel) Middle East (hneron@volcani.agri.gov.il)

Christina Walters (USA) for North America (chrisv@lamar.colostate.edu)

Cliff Bray (UK) for UK and Eire (mqbsscmb@manchester.ac.uk)

Dolores Rodriguez (Spain) for Western Europe and Scandinavia (mdr@usal.es)

A candidate for the region of Central Asia still needs to be appointed. Nominations and names of volunteers should be sent to the Secretary (kkoster@usd.edu).

Organizational Representative (2005-2008)

Alison Powell (UK) for ISTA (a.a.powell@abdn.ac.uk)

Corporate Representative (2005-2008)

Peter Halmer (UK) for Germain's Ltd. (phalmer@germain.com)

● **for details on the regulations that govern the issn, see the member's handbook and the statutes and rules posted on our website (www.SeedSciSoc.org).**

● **message from the president**

I am very pleased and honored to serve as your President for the next three years. The Society continues to grow in membership and activities, and I trust that with your help this will continue.

First, I wish to thank on behalf of all of us those members who have recently retired from the Executive and from positions as Representatives of the Society. Their contributions are much appreciated. Ralph Obendorf has been our President for the past three years. Daniel Côme was one of our founding Trustees, our first President, and also hosted the 4th International Workshop in Angers, France. Hugh Pritchard, Gregorio Nicolás and Menahem Edelstein have served as Officers of the Society since its inception.

Secondly, our thanks to the organizers of the excellent 8th International Workshop on Seeds, which recently concluded in Brisbane: Steve Adkins, Sarah Ashmore, Sally Allan, Ron McClean and Sheldon Navie, and to Allison Bertoni-Remmes and her staff. Proceedings of this meeting will be published by CAB International, so please watch out for their appearance, likely next year. See later in the Newsletter for details on upcoming meetings involving the ISSS.

And last, but not least, our appreciation to Michael Black, who is stepping down as the first Editor of the Society Newsletter. His role is now to be taken over by Chris Wood, RBG Kew (c.wood@rbgkew.org.uk), whom we welcome to this important role. Please send Chris any news/information that you feel is of interest to members of the Society, for inclusion in the Newsletter, which will continue to appear twice a year.

This edition of the Newsletter will deal mainly with matters arising from the AGM in Brisbane, and notification of upcoming meetings. The Executive encourages the organization of meetings, workshops, symposia or special lectures in collaboration with other societies, and the holding of regional meetings of the ISSS. If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact your local representative, as well as myself or Pat Berjak. The Society will provide whatever support it is able to.

I wish you all a happy and successful year, and look forward to your continuing participation in the activities of our Society.

J. Derek Bewley

● meetings and workshops

The Society will be organizing or participating in several meetings and workshops; the final dates and plans for some are still to be decided:

2006. 27th International Horticultural Congress of ISHS. Aug. 13-17. Seoul, Korea.
(www.ihc2006.org/home/eng)

2007. 5th International Workshop on Desiccation Sensitivity and Tolerance in Seeds and Vegetative Tissues. Jan. 14-21. Drakensberg, South Africa. (deswork.biology@ukzn.ac.za)

2007. 28th ISTA Congress. May 3-11. Iguassu Falls, Brazil (www.seedtest.org/en/workshop.html)

2007. 2nd ISSS Workshop on Molecular Aspects of Seed Dormancy and Germination.
Salamanca, Spain. Organizer: Gregorio Nicolas

2007. 2nd Seed Ecology Workshop. early September. Perth, Australia. Organizer: Kingsley Dixon.

2007. Preharvest Sprouting in Cereals. Argentina. Organizer: Roberto Benech-Arnold.

2008. 9th International Workshop on Seeds. University of Warmia and Mazury, Olsztyn, Poland.
Organizer: Ryszard Górecki.

There likely will be more meetings in which we will be involved. Look for details on our website, and in our Newsletter.

● minutes and reports from the meeting in brisbane

ISSS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (Financial year 2004-2005) May 12, 2005 – Sofitel Hotel, Brisbane, Australia

ISSS President Ralph Obendorf called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Those present included:
Officers, Trustees, and Executive Committee Members:

Derek Bewley (President-Elect)

Ken Thompson (Treasurer & Trustee)

Karen Koster (Secretary)

Gregorio Nicolas (Executive Committee Member)

Daniel Côme (Trustee)

Kent Bradford (Trustee)

Regional Representatives:

Patricia Berjak (Southern Africa)
Steve Adkins (Australia and New Zealand)
Paul Cavers (North America)
Jorge Vázquez-Ramos (Mexico and Central America)
Roberto Benech-Arnold (Southern South America)
Renata Bogatek (Central and Eastern Europe)
Songquan Song (China and Japan)

Apologies for Absence:

Michael Black (Trustee)
Hugh Pritchard (Trustee)
Menahem Edelstein (Executive Committee Member)
Renato Delmondez de Castro (Northern South America)
Marc Cohn (Editor, *Seed Science Research*)
John Hampton (Organisational Representative, ISTA, for Alison Powell)

Additional Members of the ISSS:

Approximately 120 Conference delegates.

1. Adoption of the agenda, which had been sent to the membership electronically on April 14, 2005. M/S Vázquez-Ramos/Adkins; passed without dissent.
2. Adoption of minutes from the AGM held at Wageningen, May 25, 2004. These had been made available to the membership via the ISSS newsletter (June 2004) and the ISSS website (www.SeedSciSoc.org) M/S Berjak/Adkins; passed without dissent.
3. Bewley presented a motion made at the AGM in Wageningen in 2004 to establish the ISSS Honorary Life Membership. The motion states, "the Executive Committee of the ISSS be empowered to honor those who have made exceptional contributions to the society by conferring upon them an Honorary Life Membership. This honor may be bestowed on not more than one member per year and may not be awarded to current members of the Executive Committee." M/S Bewley/Bradford; passed without dissent.
4. Obendorf acknowledged the hard work of the current officers, trustees, and representatives, and thanked retiring members whose terms were ending at the conclusion of the 8th International Workshop on Seeds: Daniel Côme (Trustee), Kent Bradford (Trustee), Michael Black (Trustee), Hugh Pritchard (Trustee), Gregorio Nicolas (Executive Committee Member), Menahem Edelstein (Executive Committee Member).
5. Obendorf presented the President's report (Appendix I), including lists of the conferences and students supported by the ISSS.
6. Koster presented the Secretary's report (Appendix II), including announcement of the results of the recent ISSS election, in which Patricia Berjak was elected to the position of President-Elect and Steve Adkins was elected to the Executive Committee. Koster thanked all those who participated in the election, especially those who consented to be nominated for office – Patricia Berjak, Steve Adkins, and Haim Nerson. Koster further presented a proposal to negotiate with the American Society of Plant Biologists to host a member's-only site for ISSS membership services, such as renewals and an online membership directory. The membership in attendance offered no objection to this plan, and commented favourably about the possibility of having credit card payments to the ISSS made more secure.

7. Thompson presented the Treasurer's report (Appendix III). The ISSS is financially sound, as income has exceeded expenditures for the past year. Thompson noted that several ISSS sponsored conferences will take place in 2007, so expenditures in 2006 and 2007 will likely be greater than they have been for 2004 and 2005.
8. Bewley presented the report from the Editor of *Seed Science Research* on behalf of Marc Cohn, who did not attend the Workshop (Appendix IV). Kathryn Steadman questioned the impact factor (4.36) listed in the report, and Henk Hilhorst pointed out that this impact factor had been calculated over a five year period (1999-2004), which is why it is higher than the single year impact factor typically provided by ISI.
9. Bewley presented the proposed revisions to the ISSS Constitution and Statutes, which had been sent to the membership electronically April 6, 2005. Additional copies were distributed to the assembled members. Bewley presented the rationale for the proposed revisions, viz. to streamline operations of the society and to remain in compliance with the rules of the Charities Commission of England and Wales, with whom the ISSS is registered as a charity. These rules stipulate that the Trustees and Executive Committee of the society be the same group of people, and that at least half of these must be resident in England and/or Wales. To achieve this geographical distribution, the revised constitution would allow the elected members of the Executive Committee, who may reside in any country, to appoint additional members from England and Wales to fulfill the requirement of the charity.

A friendly amendment to correct a typographic error was accepted. M/S Bradford/Berjak to accept the revised Constitution and Statutes; the proposed revisions were passed without dissent by the assembled members of the ISSS.

10. Obendorf announced that the 9th International Workshop on Seeds in 2008 would be held at the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Poland. Ryszard Górecki will serve as the local host and organiser of the conference, with the assistance of a scientific committee of ISSS members.
11. The members of the new Executive Committee (2005-2008) were presented to the assembled members (Appendix V).
12. Other announcements: A list of upcoming ISSS sponsored meetings was presented, and members were encouraged to organize regional meetings on seed biology to foster continued enthusiasm for the ISSS and its aims.
13. Obendorf introduced Derek Bewley as the new ISSS President. Bewley thanked Obendorf and the previous members of the Executive Committee for their service, and he thanked the organisers of the Seed Workshop for hosting a successful meeting.

Adjournment at 6:03 p.m

Appendix I. ISSS President's Report (Ralph Obendorf)

ISSS Officers and Executive Committee (April 2005):

Ralph Obendorf (USA), President (rlo1@cornell.edu) (2002-2005)
 J. Derek Bewley (Canada), President-elect (dbewley@uoguelph.ca) (2002-2005)
 Karen L. Koster (USA), Secretary (kkoster@usd.edu) (2004-2008)
 Kenneth Thompson (UK), Treasurer (ken.thompson@sheffield.ac.uk) (Trustee) (2002-2006)
 Hugh Pritchard (UK), (h.pritchard@rbgkew.org.uk) (Trustee)
 Michael Black (UK), (michael.black@kcl.ac.uk) (Trustee)
 Kent Bradford (USA), (bradford@vegmail.ucdavis.edu) (Trustee)
 Daniel Côme (France), (come@ccr.jussieu.fr) (Trustee)
 Gregorio Nicolas (Spain) (gnr@usal.es) (2002-2005)
 Menahem Edelstein (Israel) (medelst@volcani.agri.gov.il) (2002-2005)

President's note: ...with special thanks for your contributions to ISSS.

International Society for Seed Science History:

- ISSS initiated 1999 at the 6th International Workshop on Seed Biology, Mérida, Mexico
- ISSS officially chartered in June 2000
- Daniel Côme, first President of ISSS
- ISSS Annual General Meetings:
 - 1st 16 May 2002 7th International Workshop on Seed Biology, **Salamanca**, Spain
 - 2nd 24 April 2003 Seed Biology 2003, NIAB, **Cambridge**, UK
 - 3rd 25 May 2004 ISSS Workshop on Molecular Aspects of Dormancy and Germination, **Wageningen**, The Netherlands
 - 4th 12 May 2005 8th International Workshop on Seeds, **Brisbane**, Australia

Executive Committee Activities 2004-2005:

- New ISSS official web site established (Karen Koster)
<http://www.SeedSciSoc.org>
- ISSS constitution revised and updated (Derek Bewley, Michael Black, Karen Koster)
 - distributed to membership on 6 April 2005
 - adopted on 12 May 2005 at Annual General Meeting in Brisbane
- Election of Officers and Executive Committee Members (Karen Koster)
- Alfred M. Mayer Plenary Lecture established
 - "in honor of his role in organizing the first international workshop on seeds and his contributions to seed science"
 - This overview lecture on seed biology will be presented by a well-recognized and respected seed researcher chosen by the local organizing committee of the ISSS Workshop in consultation with the ISSS Executive Committee.
 - first presented on 8 May 2005 at the 8th International Workshop on Seeds in Brisbane
 - Dr. Peter Chandler: "Seeds of barley: growth, germination, genes and gibberellins"
- Michael Black Founders Lecture established
 - "in recognition of his efforts in establishing the International Society for Seed Science and founder and first editor of the journal *Seed Science Research*"

- This lecture on an innovative area of research in seed biology will be presented by an establishing researcher whose research is novel and pioneering. The presenter will be chosen by the local organizing committee of the ISSS Workshop in consultation with the ISSS Executive Committee.
 - first presented on 10 May 2005 at the 8th International Workshop on Seeds in Brisbane
 - Dr. Julia Buitink: "Desiccation tolerance in the -omics era: new tools for an old enigma?"
- ISSS Honorary Life Membership approved by membership at 4th Annual General Meeting on 12 May 2005 in Brisbane: "The Executive Committee of the ISSS is empowered to honour those who have made exceptional contributions to the Society by conferring upon them an Honorary Life Membership. This honour may be bestowed on not more than one member per year and may not be awarded to current members of the Executive Committee."
- ISSS provided partial support to eight students to attend the 8th International Workshop on Seeds. Recipients of the eight International Student Awards were: M. Veronica Arana (Argentina), Laura Butler (United Kingdom), Julie Catusse (France), Dean Mackenzie (Canada), Pascaline Moreau-Valancogne (France), Loic Rajjou, (France), Kerstin Müller (Germany), and Rachel Webster (United Kingdom).
- The executive committee is strongly supportive of the holding of seed-related meetings in local regions around the world and in the development of activities that support and encourage seed research.
- ISSS sponsored workshops and conferences since the 7th International Workshop on Seed Biology in Salamanca, Spain, in 2002:
- 8th International Workshop on Seeds, May 8-13, 2005, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
 - Molecular Aspects of Seed Germination and Dormancy, May 23-24, 2004, Wageningen, The Netherlands
 - Third International Symposium on Plant Dormancy, May 25-28, 2004, Wageningen, The Netherlands
 - Seed Ecology 2004, April 29 - May 4, 2004, Rhodes Island, Greece
 - 4th International Workshop on Desiccation Sensitivity and Tolerance in Seeds and Vegetative Plant Tissues, August 24-31, 2003, Blouwaterbaai, South Africa
 - Seed Biology 2003, April 24, 2003, NIAB, Cambridge, UK
 - New Developments in Seed Quality Development, Poland
 - ISSS contributed to the expenses of three students at TREE SEEDS, at the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania (MAICh), Crete, 11-15 September 2002.
- Future ISSS sponsored events:
- 9th International Workshop on Seeds, June 2008, University of Warmia and Mazury, Olsztyn, Poland (Ryszard Górecki, organizer)
 - 5th International Workshop on Desiccation Tolerance and Sensitivity in Seeds and Vegetative Plant Tissues, January 14-21, 2007, Drakensburg, South Africa (Patricia Berjak, organizer)
 - 2nd Seed Ecology Workshop, early September 2007, Perth, Australia (Kingsley Dixon, organizer)
 - 2nd Workshop on Molecular Aspects of Dormancy and Germination, 2007, Salamanca, Spain
 - Preharvest Sprouting in Cereals Symposium, 2007, Argentina
 - ISTA Seed Symposium, May 2007, Iguassu Falls, Brazil
 - ISHS International Horticulture Congress, August 2006, South Korea

Appendix II. ISSS Secretary's Report, including Membership Sub-Committee Report (Karen L. Koster)

Membership Committee Members (2002-2005):

Steve Adkins	Brisbane, Australia (s.adkins@mailbox.uq.edu.au)	Australia and NZ
Patricia Berjak	Durban, South Africa (berjak@und.ac.za)	Africa
Renata Bogatek	Warsaw, Poland (bogatek@ibb.waw.pl)	Central and Eastern Europe
Roberto Benech- Arnold	Buenos Aires, Argentina (benech@ifeva.edu.ar)	South America
Miriam Eira	Brasilia, Brazil (meira@cenargen.embrapa.br)	South America
Paul Cavers	Ontario, Canada (pcavers@uwo.ca)	North America
Jorge Vázquez- Ramos	Mexico City, Mexico (jorman@servidor.unam.mx)	Mexico and Central America
Jia-Rui Fu	Guangzhou, China (Issfjr@zsulink.zsu.edu.cn)	China and Japan
Swati Sen Mandi	Calcutta, India (senmandi@boseinst.ernet.in)	India

Membership report

Membership in the ISSS has risen to a total of 267 active members (as of May 5, 2005) (Fig. 1). During the period 2000-2002, membership increased steadily; a small decline in 2003 has been followed by another two years of growth. The two peaks in numbers of total members correspond to years in which the International Workshops on Seeds take place (2002 & 2005). The discounted registration fees for ISSS members attending these meetings may account for the increases in member subscriptions during these years.

Approximately 50% of the ISSS members are located in Europe and the Middle East, with another 20% in North America and 15% in Australia and New Zealand (Figure 2B). The geographical distribution of members has not changed much since 2002 (Figure 2A), with the exception of significant growth in the numbers of members in Australia and New Zealand. ISSS members reside in thirty-four countries; the greatest numbers of members are found in the USA (48), Australia (39), the UK (30), France (21), and the Netherlands (19).

The majority of ISSS members are affiliated to Universities, including 38 Student members. There are also 26 members affiliated with seed companies, 15 members affiliated to Botanical Gardens, and an undetermined number of members affiliated with government research agencies. The Botanic Gardens Trust of Sydney, Australia is currently our only Corporate member.

Benefits to ISSS members include reduced subscription costs to the journal *Seed Science Research* and savings on seed-related books published by CABI. Also there were reduced registration costs for members attending the 8th International Workshop on Seeds in Brisbane in 2005. ISSS funds are used to support seed-related meetings around the world, including the International Workshop on Seeds.

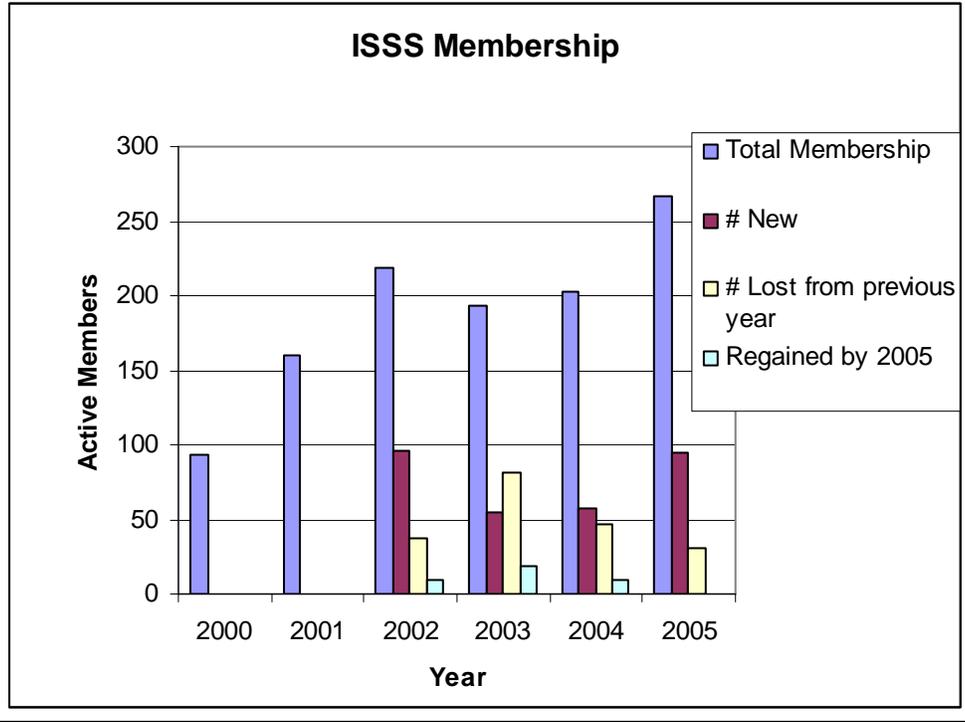


Figure 1. ISSS Membership Subscriptions 2000-2005. The blue bars represent the total number of active subscriptions for each year. Brown bars represent first-time members each year. Yellow bars represent the number of non-renewing members from the previous year. Some of these renewed in subsequent years; those who are current members in 2005 are shown by the light blue bars.

MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

	2002	2005
Africa	7	12
Australia / New Zealand	17	40
Europe and Middle East	96	130
China / Asia	11	17
India	1	2
Mexico & Central America	9	6
North America	48	53
Southern South America	2	3
Northern South America	4	4
TOTAL	195	267

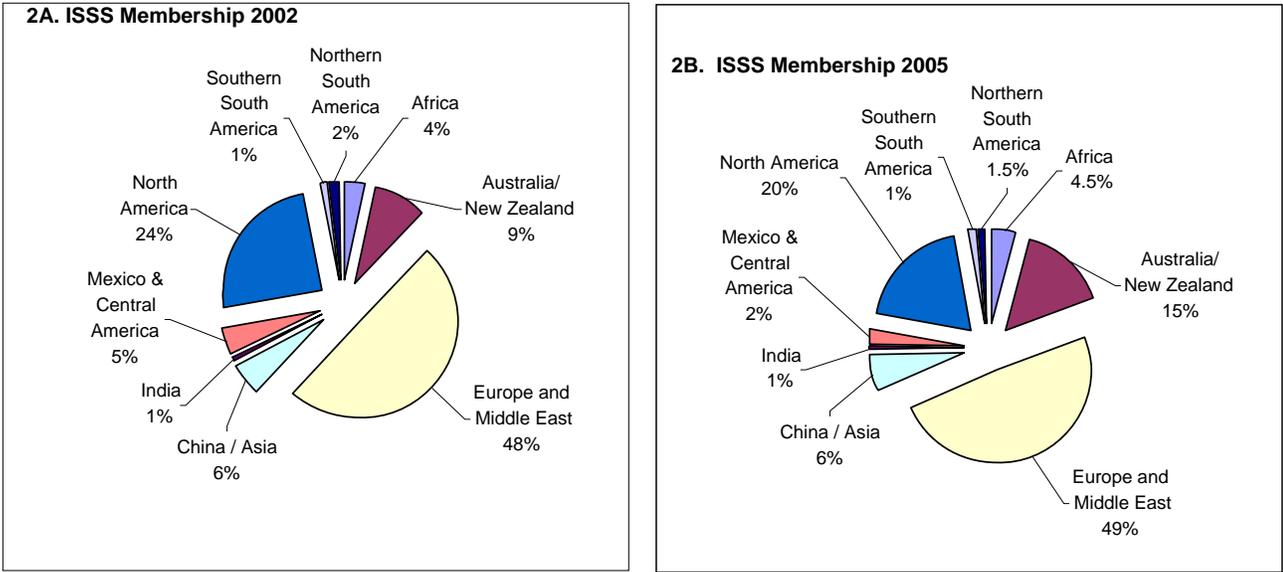


Figure 2. ISSS Membership by Geographical Regions 2002 & 2005. The data shown in the Table are graphed in Figs 2A (2002 memberships) and 2B (2005 memberships).

Election of Officers for 2005-2008: Results

See page 1 of this Newsletter.

Other Items

A new website has been established for the ISSS (www.SeedSciSoc.org), which builds on the successful site originally set up and run by Ralph Obendorf at Cornell University (<http://www.css.cornell.edu/ISSS/issv.htm>). Feedback and suggestions from ISSS members are welcome as the website develops. Please contact ISSS Secretary Karen Koster (kkoster@usd.edu).

Appendix III. Treasurer's Report for 2004-2005 (Ken Thompson)

Income and expenditure for the period 01 April 2004 to 31 March 2005

INCOME	£	EXPENDITURE	£
Subscriptions	5352	Charitable payment 1: Seed Ecology 2004, Rhodes	990.94
Royalties - <i>Seed Biology: Advances and Applications</i>	222.66	Charitable payment 2: 8 th Seed Biology Workshop, Brisbane	1000
Royalties - <i>Biology of Seeds: Recent Research Advances</i>	1201.68	ISSS Banner	45.35
Interest	184.40	Credit card and other bank charges	195.44
Total income	6960.74	Total expenditure	2231.73
Excess income over expenditure	4729.01		
Brought forward from 2003-2004	14394.42		
Balance carried forward 31 March 2005	19123.43		

Compared to 2003-04, income was up and expenditure was down, and the Society is now in a relatively strong financial position. I am aware of few financial commitments for the rest of 2005 or for 2006.

Note that the Society contributed £2000 to the Brisbane meeting, but the first payment was made in the previous financial year.

Appendix IV. Report from the Editor of Seed Science Research (M.A. Cohn)

I am pleased to report continued success for *Seed Science Research*. The total number of submissions has been increasing nicely for the past several years, and the projected number of submissions for 2005 may shatter previous records (Fig. 1). Our acceptance rate has ranged from 21 to 43% on a yearly basis (Fig. 2), and the average acceptance rate is 32% for the 1999-2004 interval. These acceptance rate values would be higher, were it not for the large number of manuscripts that must be declined by the editors without further peer review (Figs 1,2). Unfortunately, we still receive many papers that are outside the scope of the journal or are not substantial enough for further consideration.

Our impact factor (for those of you who like to, or have to, keep score) is very acceptable for a quarterly publication; the overall SSR impact factor for 1999-2004 is 4.36.

FIG. 1
Seed Science Research: 1999-2005
(***2005 data annualized based upon Jan-Apr submissions)

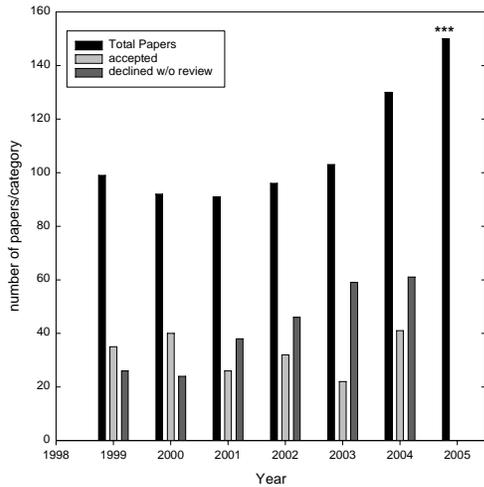
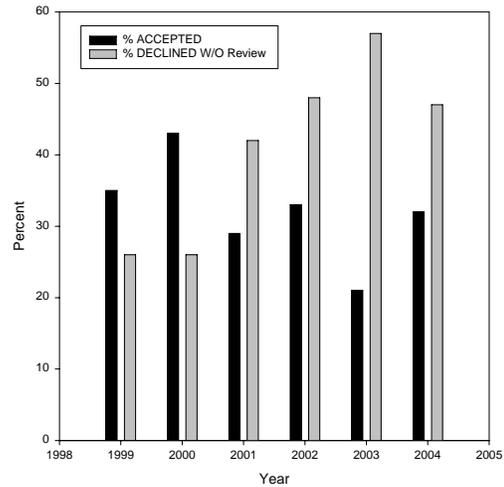


FIG. 2
Seed Science Research: 1999-2004
(Percentage basis)



The editors continue to strive to process and evaluate submitted manuscripts as quickly as possible. Electronic submission and careful preparation by the authors help greatly. However, there are only so many hours in a day, and there are times when we do have other activities besides SSR. Please remember that all of the editors still maintain their own research and teaching programs.

I look forward to a productive 2005 publication year, and heartily thank the associate editors, editorial board members, and our team of peer reviewers. We couldn't do it without your help. Cheers, MAC

Appendix V. Executive Committee Members and Representatives (2005-2008)

See beginning of Newsletter (pp. 1-2) for the lists.

students honoured at 8th International Workshop on Seeds

Students presenting their research at the 8th International Workshop on Seeds were honoured for the excellence of their presentations. Congratulations to J.Q. Wang (Chinese University of Hong Kong) and Kerstin Müller (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität, Freiburg), who were honoured for the best oral presentations, and to Clair Rosnoble-DuBois (Université D'Angers) and Lucy Commander (University of Western Australia), who received awards for the best poster presentations. The judges were unanimous in their praise for all the student presentations and noted that it was difficult to single out a few among the many excellent presentations.

The ISSS was proud to provide partial support to eight students to attend the 8th International Workshop on Seeds. Recipients of the eight International Student Awards were: M. Veronica Arana (Argentina), Laura Butler (United Kingdom), Julie Catusse (France), Dean Mackenzie (Canada), Pascaline Moreau-Valancogne (France), Loic Rajjou, (France), Kerstin Müller (Germany), and Rachel Webster (United Kingdom).

notice of upcoming publication on seeds (discount for iss members)

The Encyclopedia of Seeds: Science, Technology and Uses

Edited by M. Black, Kings College London, UK, J.D. Bewley, University of Guelph, Canada, and P. Halmer, Germain's Technology Group, Kings Lynn, UK

This encyclopedia is the first scholarly reference work to cover all the major scientific themes and facets of the subject of seeds. In its approx. 1000 pages, this volume comprehensively outlines the latest fundamental biological knowledge about seeds, interwoven with the principles of agricultural seed processing, storage and sowing, the food and industrial uses of seeds, and the roles of seeds in history, economies and cultures.

With contributions from 110 expert authors worldwide, the editors have created 560 authoritative articles, illustrated with plentiful tables, figures, black-and-white and colour photographs, suggested further reading matter and 670 supplementary definitions. The contents are alphabetically arranged and cross-referenced to connect related entries.

Subjects include:

- ○ anatomy, structure, composition; the molecular biology, biochemistry, physiology, pathology and ecology of development, maturation and germination, dormancy, storage and deterioration; the modeling of germination and seedling emergence; genetic modification; preservation in gene banks.
- ○ production and processing for crop cultivation - multiplication, conditioning, handling and storage; germination, purity, vigor and health testing; treatments and enhancements such as priming, coating, disinfection, inoculation, and chemical and biological protection; planting systems; descriptions of individual crops, and of industry structures, organizations, laws and regulations;
- ○ sources of food, food additives and beverages, poisons, pharmacological and psychoactive substances, and fibers and other manufactured products.

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● breaking news about seeds

Ancient seed

An article in the San Francisco Chronicle on June 12th, 2005 reports that Israeli scientists have succeeded in growing a sapling from what is the oldest seed ever germinated, that of a date palm, which carbon dating at the University of Zurich determines is 2000 ± 50 years. Several seeds were recovered from archeological excavations at Masada, which fell to the Romans in AD 73, when many Jewish defenders martyred themselves rather than be captured. Researchers have named the plant Methuselah after the biblical character purported to have lived for 900 years. Thus the palm seeds exceed the longevity of the previous record holder, a sacred lotus, by about 800 years.

An insect that directs seed development

Patrick van Aderkas from the University of Victoria, BC, Canada and his coworkers recently published a paper in the Proceedings of the Royal Society, Series B on a parasitic insect that directs seed development to its own advantage. The female chalcid parasitizing insect (*Megastigmus spermotrophous*) lays its eggs in the ovules of Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) before the latter are fertilized. Unfertilized ovules that would normally degenerate are directed by the developing larva to produce storage reserves which it exploits to support its own growth. This allows the insect to develop within the seed without dependence upon initial pollination and fertilization for megagametophyte formation.

Online publication: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2005.3061>

If you have any interesting information about seeds, either from your research, the news, or from meetings you attended, please send it to the Editor of the ISSS Newsletter, Chris Wood at RBG Kew (c.wood@rbgkew.org.uk).

● membership and brochure

A new, updated ISSS brochure has just been printed and is available on our website (www.SeedSciSoc.org). Please interest your colleagues in joining the Society, for the more members there are the more we can work together to hold meetings and to sponsor speakers, support student travel, etc., etc. Printed copies are also available if you wish to take them to display at meetings of your local societies: Contact Derek Bewley (dbewley@uoguelph.ca) and he will mail them to you.