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Niagara Branch Newsletter Ontario Institute of Agrologists

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF NB OF THE OIA

Hello everybody. I hope that everybody had a great summer, despite the few days of extreme heat. For those, who missed the news: this summer, we lost Jim Rainforth, an old-time member of our Branch to an untimely death. Jim was very dear to me, as he provided me with my first real job, namely floricultural extension specialist with OMAFRA. He went out on a limb at that time, as the only credential which I had was that I could speak Dutch!!

Last week, we held an executive meeting and discussed the standing of your Branch. Financially, we are in a good shape, and we are welcoming a few new members as well. The main focus of our executive meeting centred on a new program for the coming year. Meaghan McIntyre, our program chair, has some great suggestions for the coming season.

We are starting off with Dr. Hielke de Jong, who will give a presentation on the Chinese potato industry. Hielke and his son (Cornell U.) had travelled to China this summer, so this may be of interest to anybody, either professionally or for general interest. We are trying a new venue for our first meeting, namely the Grand Oak Culinary Market, formerly the Red Oak barn on Victoria Ave, Vineland Station, which received new ownership this past summer. The new owner is the previous chef at Vineland Estates, so the meal should be great. Hope to see you all and please bring a guest.

On a personal note: I officially retired from the University of Guelph as of July 1, 2011. However, I will still be spending some time at the university for the next two years in order to finish a few research projects and do some teaching (Fall and Winter semesters). Hopefully this will give me some time to pursue some other interests.

Hope to see you on Monday night, October 3.

Dr. Theo J. Blom, PAg.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The Branch will have the honour of presenting membership certificates to two new OIA members. They are Oscar Rodriguez Gonzalez, A.Ag. and Bret Schuyler, A.Ag. We welcome them to our membership and look forward to their active participation in OIA, Branch and professional activities.

NIAGARA BRANCH OF OIA MEETING NOTICE

Monday, October 3, 2011, Grand Oak Culinary Market, 4600 Victoria Ave., Vineland

6:00 pm Gathering Time

6:30 pm Dinner

7:15 pm Program followed by a brief meeting

Speaker : Dr. Hielke DeJong, P.Ag.(Sr)

Topic : "*Potatoes in China*"

Hielke DeJong is a native of the Netherlands. He spent most of his career as a potato breeder at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Potato Research Centre in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Hielke has traveled widely throughout the Americas, Africa and East Asia where he served as a volunteer consultant and lecturer on potato related issues. He is a fellow of the Agricultural Institute of Canada, a member of the Niagara Branch of the OIA, an honorary life member of the Potato Association of America and an honorary professor of the Hunan Agricultural University in China. He just returned from a professional trip to China studying potato production there. He is co-author of a recently published book, *The Complete Book of Potatoes: What every Grower and Gardener Needs to Know*.

Hielke and his wife, Siegelinde, reside in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario where he enjoys gardening, biking, and collecting potato stamps. They have three grown children, including his co-author Walter.

Dinner : \$25.00 – Prepared by chef Jan-Willem Stulp

Confirm reservation by Thursday, September 29 to Neil Miles – nmiles@cogeco.ca or 905-687-6964.

Directions to Grand Oak :

Exit QEW at Victoria Ave., south 0.3 km past Petro Canada to Grand Oak [right/west side of Victoria Ave. [Previously called The Oak Barn]