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Aria

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The Arable Research Institute Association (ARIA)



David Brightman

ARIA is the Members' Association of Rothamsted Research and was launched in 1990, merging the Long Ashton Members' Association and the Friends of Rothamsted. ARIA aims to forge two-way links between the Institute's scientists and people involved in the cereals and arable farming business. Members have privileged access to the latest developments in agricultural research through direct contact with scientists involved in relevant research programmes. Regular interactive workshops on targeted research topics are run throughout the year and members receive a quarterly newsletter covering different aspects of Institute science. The ARIA website is at <http://www.rothra.org>



ARIA is independent of Rothamsted Research and is run by a board of directors, chiefly appointed from the membership.

The past year has seen a great amount of change within the structure of ARIA, some of which is still ongoing. The secretariat move to Rothamsted was finally completed and at the AGM in November 2002, Dr Susannah Bolton took over the role of Company Secretary from Harry Anderson who retired after many years service to both the Institute and the Association.

This restructuring was carried out alongside the extensive changes within the Institute. ARIA must respond to new developments in the work of the Institute and in the needs of the industry. The face of modern agriculture has changed dramatically over recent times and the changes in ARIA are designed to reflect the needs of a wider membership, and to take account of new science that has been developed within the Institute. The first of these changes during the coming year will be to change the name from the Arable Research Institute Association to Rothamsted Research Association (RRA), thus reflecting the close alliance that the Association has with the Institute.

This however is all in the future and the past year has been successful in itself. The Science Day in June, entitled "Research and Development - Integrating Priorities and Fulfilling Industry Needs" was well attended and looked at addressing the issues that are becoming prominent in the arable sector. Senior figures from LEAF, HGCA, Defra and BBSRC, as well as speakers from various research organisations, all contributed to making it a success. A key output from the day was a report submitted to Defra by the Association, in response to the Defra

Stephen Moss contributed to the joint ARIA/HGCA workshop in January entitled "How to tackle herbicide resistance"



steering document, which followed the publication of the Curry report.

The AGM in November was held at Long Ashton and was a farewell from ARIA to the Station. The subsequent workshop focused on work that will be transferring from Long Ashton to Rothamsted, following the closure of the Long Ashton site. This covered a number of topics, including GM, understanding and improving the bread-making quality of wheat and genetic diversity. Harry Anderson also gave a presentation looking back at the 100 years of research that was carried out at the Long Ashton site.

January saw the first workshop run jointly with HGCA entitled "How to Tackle Herbicide Resistance" and held at Broom's Barn. It was a resounding success in terms of both presentations and attendance. This style of workshop, focusing on a specific

subject and led by a scientist or expert in the field, has proved to be a popular format and will continue with further joint workshops planned. The first will be in April with a "Farm Strategies to Avoid Resistance" workshop, this time held at Newbury racecourse, and further events are planned for the coming Autumn / Winter.

I would like to take this opportunity to

thank all the staff of the Institute, both past and present, who have supported ARIA in so many ways. I am grateful to the board who have given both time and thought to the needs of the organisation and who have had the foresight to plan for change. Lastly I thank the members and others who have contributed to the events, which we hope have benefited both themselves and the Institute in promoting a modern industry based on sound science.

