

**RASC Next Generation  
3<sup>rd</sup> Understanding & Assistance Mission  
Singapore/India  
12<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> November 2011**



**RASC Trustees Meeting Report**



KRANJI  
COUNTRYSIDE  
ASSOCIATION  
SINGAPORE



It is our pleasure to report on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Next Generation Understanding & Assistance Mission to Singapore & India. John Bennett, Anna-Clare Seymour and Leona Dargis have been working diligently in preparing a valuable itinerary, calculating efficient costs, attaining monetary support, acquiring relevant information, communicating with all persons involved, encouraging a strong NG participation list and everything in between. We are proud to say that we have had great success and are happy to report an influential and most adventurous mission.

We are thrilled to have had the financial support from the Commonwealth Foundation and the RASC to fund 5 additional participants from developing countries. In addition we are also appreciative of the support received from Antony Pemberton to fully fund an Indian participant to join the group in Singapore. We have also allocated £2,000 GBP for the Inaugural Warangal Agricultural Show. This will help 500 farmers travel to and attend the show. This will also help establish the needed platform for Government Officials in Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry, Irrigation, NREGA and Agricultural Marketing Departments to encourage future support and continuity.

We have an exciting list of enthusiastic NG participants, coming from 12 different commonwealth counties, who will bring unique perspectives within all faces of the agricultural industry. Together we'll share a diversified skill set from crop production, animal nutrition and welfare, research and development, educational programs, and show society involvement and experiences. The confirmed NG participant list of 20 is as follows:

- Miss Leona Dargis** – Canada – Representing Northlands & Calgary Stampede
- Mr Will Pritchard** – Wales, UK – Representing Royal Welsh Agricultural Society
- Mr Greg Harris** – New Zealand – Representing RAS NZ
- Mr Breyton Milford** – South Africa – Sponsored by Agri-Expo/Western cape Department of Agriculture
- Dr Brendan Sharpe** – Australia – Sponsored by RAS of NSW
- Miss Cassie Macdonald** – Australia – Sponsored by ASC of NSW
- Miss Toni Jericho** – Australia – Sponsored by ASC of NSW
- Miss Stephanie Tarlinton** – Australia – Representing ASC of NSW/RAS of NSW
- Mr Isaac Kankam Boadu** – Ghana – Marshal Papworth Scholar of 2008 Sponsored by: Commonwealth Foundation
- Mr Michael Dom** – Papua New Guinea – NARI/Morobe Provincial Agricultural Society
- Miss Mildred Kasonde** – Zambia – Pestalozzi African Children's Village and Educational Farm Sponsored by: Commonwealth Foundation
- Mrs Gloria Kasongo** – Malawi – International Institute of Tropical Agriculture Sponsored by: Commonwealth Foundation

**Mr Mcloud Kayira** – Malawi – Marshal Papworth Scholar of 2010 Sponsored by: Commonwealth Foundation

**Mr Chaparthy Ravinder** – India – Sarvodaya Youth Organisation

**Mrs Bhumipaga Abshalom Hepsibah** – India – Sarvodaya Youth Organisation

Sponsored by: Commonwealth Foundation

**Chelsie Wan** – Singapore – Kranji Countryside Association Singapore

**Mrs Shahida Binti Hashim** – Malaysia – Sponsored by the Malaysian Agricultural Research & Development Institute (MARDI)

**Mr Will Hyde** – UK – (To be confirmed pending sponsorship application)

**Mrs Anna Clare Seymour** – UK – Royal Bath & West of England Society

**Mr John Bennett** – Australia – RAS of NWS

Each individual shared their knowledge and perspectives. More importantly the NG's were genuinely enthusiastic to participate and stepped into Singapore and India with open eyes and mindsets. The learning opportunities were sometimes more than we could handle but the experiences gained have become truly priceless.

### **Singapore**

In helping to develop the leaders of tomorrow, the conventional thoughts of agriculture were challenged in learning about the legacy of farming in Singapore, the real issues/challenges faced by farmers today, the government's view/role on land use in Singapore, and the need for sustainable urban farming. The Kranji Countryside Association was kind enough to guide and organize a 4 day high energy agenda in which the city and countryside was well toured. This metropolitan city has a lot to offer but when faced with the challenge of losing its rural roots it resonated a clear message in the NG's of how important involving the community and promoting innovative growth in urban sustainability really is.

### **India**

In continuing our quest to India, the group traveled down the unbeaten path in visiting with RASC member society - Deva Organisation Rural Development Society (DORDS) and Welfare Organisation for Rural Lean Development (WORLD). The group spent a day amongst ordinary life learning about agricultural practices, the community and experienced Indian customs first hand. It was somewhat overwhelming at times for members because the constant attention and being surrounded by so many people all the time was foreign. Knowledge was further shared with village farmers creating a greater understanding of the similarities and differences in agricultural challenges across the Commonwealth through the broad range of projects implemented by Sarvodaya. The highlight of the mission was no doubt the Inaugural Warangal Agricultural Show set-up and show day. The community was given an insight into the benefits in encouraging excellence through competition as well as networking and educational benefits. In celebrating agriculture and the rural way of life promoting a sustainable future in the industry is key.

Once again a special "Mission Diary" will inspire those who read the collection of personal experiences, thoughts and lessons learned from each NG throughout this adventure. We believe that ever lasting friendships and memories were made all in which will lead us to a fulfilling future in agriculture.

NG Mission Report By: John Bennett & Leona Dargis