

A Report on the IPPS Exchange Program Between New Zealand and Japan[®]

Shigenari Ohuchi

SCRE Ltd., 447 Mitsu Yoshio, Kita-ku, Okayama-city, Okayama 709-2122, Japan

Email: momotaro@scre.jp

This is a report on the first IPPS exchange program held between New Zealand Region and Japan Region. For about a month from 15 May to 14 June 2010, I participated in the program. While staying in South Island (New Zealand) until 30 May and then in North Island for the remainder of the time. I attended the New Zealand IPPS annual conference as a member of “4-Pack.”

The IPPS conference was held in Blenheim. From 27 to 30 May there was a workshop in the morning and a nursery tour in the afternoon. The workshop was a valuable experience for me because I first studied at a workshop abroad. I was particularly interested in many presentations on the plants native to New Zealand (NZ), which were very different in species diversity and growth environment from those in Japan. The tour was also rewarding because I had a chance to visit a range of agricultural and cultural places such as nurseries, greenhouses, agribusinesses, commercial facilities, and museums. The large tomato production company which I visited was larger in scale than I had expected (Fig. 1). I also visited garden centers that dealt with small rare flowers like *Acmadenia tetragona* ‘Star Blush’ (Fig. 2), Nelson Nursery, which gave us a grubbing presentation (Fig. 3), and Yealand Winery, which arranged a tasting event (Fig. 4).



Figure 1. Visiting a tomato greenhouse at HOPS Ltd. (May 26).



Figure 2. 'Starblush' at a garden store (May 26).



Figure 3. A grubbing machine at Nelson Nursery (May 27).



Figure 4. Wine tasting at Yealanad Winery (May 28).

During the conference, I met a range of horticultural people including tree/flower nurserymen and horticulturists, and was able to get valuable information from them. At the banquet held at night, all the participants livened up the party, enjoying humorous performances. I took great pleasure in the friendly atmosphere.

I found NZ had its own plants and cultivation methods. I was able to see many plants native to NZ. They had different features in size and type from those in Japan. For example, some native ferns were tall while others small, and some had green leaves on the upper side and silver on the lower side. Many trees were best suited to the unique terrain known to be windy, and were used as windbreaks. I also saw many production methods such as producing plants efficiently by using giant machines and selecting plants appropriately for weather conditions.

My host family took good care of me. With them, I went cycling in the mountains, watched soccer games, worked together, and discussed cultural difference between the two countries while dining.

For a short period of 1 month, I met a lot of people and had a lot of unforgettable experiences in NZ. I would like to thank Murray Mannall, president of IPPS New Zealand Region. He was kind enough to meet me at the airport and made all my stay happy and comfortable. Thanks also go to the staff of IPPS NZ Region for their warm welcome. And lastly, I also thank IPPS Japan Region for supporting this exchange program. I hope the program will promote exchanges between the two regions through a long-lasting relationship.