CSD44C

Report on Overseas Travel, June-July 1994

Helen McFadden

June 19th - 24th. 4th International Plant Molecular Biology, Amsterdam.

This conference was attended by over 3000 people with 2000 poster and oral presentations. It was therefore impossible to attend more than a selection of sessions. I concentrated on presentations describing work on plant-pathogen interactions. I made several useful contacts including workers from Mogen, Leiden, Zeneca U.K. and Leuven as well as several Australians whom I had not encountered previously. Several posters were presented describing transgenic plants containing genes for antifungal proteins. In general, there is still a lack of field data, and instances of notable protection being achieved have not yet been reported, maybe because of commercial considerations. Exciting work in the signalling area was described with progress being made in the understanding of the role of salicylic acid in systemic acquired resistance. I presented a poster "Antifungal proteins with potential applications in the genetic engineering of *Verticillium*-tolerant cotton". July 1. Collation of notes from above conference.

July 4-9th. 8th IUPAC Internation Congress of Pesticide Chemistry

This conference was also attended by a large number of delegates (~2000) with many representatives from the chemical industry. There was a session on the use of molecular biology in pest control which was disappointingly small. I met and had useful discussions with John Ryals, Ciba-Geigy. I presented a poster "Chemically induced disease resistance in plants" which engendered a fair amount of interest and several requests for offprints.

July 10 - 11th. University of Guelph

This visit to the Department of Molecular Biology and Genetic proved most valuable. Dr Jane Robb leads a group that is one of the few in the world specialising in the molecular biology of *Verticillium* species. Her group is active in the use of PCR-based detection of *Verticillium*, so she was able to provide useful information about this technique. She was also able to provide the names of several other workers active in the study of wilt pathogens.