FOREWORD

Food supply in a rapidly changing world is no certainty. The world's growing population, climate change, limited farmland, increasing land degradation and evolving pest, pathogen and weed issues are all contributing to the problem of how to ensure we all have sufficient to eat.

I have heard that New Zealand delivers food for 30 million people or 5% of the diet of 500 million. The government and economic analysts are pointing out that primary production is the engine of the New Zealand economy. The common feature in the numerous economic forecasts for New Zealand is that primary production is one, if not the main, platform for sustainable growth of New Zealand GDP. There are stated visions from many of the crop sectors setting out ambitious plans to grow their production volumes, lift grower returns and increase the sales into existing and new markets. An example was presented to us last year by our opening speaker for the pipfruit industry. To achieve these goals the industries will have to get bigger, better and more efficient every year. In a small and vital way the contribution of the smart, focused science presented here contributes to that. Other countries mine the land for wealth creation – we farm it.

The tools that are needed to tackle and achieve these aspirations and the needs of the growing global population are being researched and becoming available. Some of them are published by the authors of the papers in this, and all our past and future journals. Most significantly, the outcome of the research is presented and opened to challenge, clarification and debate at our conference. The work contributed by the scientific members of this Society creates an ongoing revolution in plant protection, fostering positive change and delivering solutions, as well as reviewing and assessing outcomes of implementation. The journal and the conference allow our findings to be heard and communicated to those who utilise it to increase production, improve quality, ensure sustainability and reduce environmental impacts. This journal is filled once again with clear and compelling research that will, as in past journals, leave a rich legacy for future scientists, farmers, plant protection researchers and advisors.

New Zealand's primary production industries face vulnerability from pests, pathogens and weeds. To counter this they must have an adaptive capability, which is the ability to prevent and mitigate serious threats. This is what creates New Zealand's edge – and plant protection research is a key component. For this capability to be realised, we need strong research providers, sufficient learning institutions (including universities focused on primary production) and adequate funding to ensure smart choices based on smart science are made. Also we need a place to gather, publish, present and discuss our work. This is why we attend the conference and why this journal is vital to New Zealand primary industry. As Werner Heisenberg stated “in the history of human thinking the most fruitful developments frequently take place at those points where two different lines of thought meet”.

I thank the executive committee and the newsletter editor for all their work over the past year. It is their passion, enthusiasm and commitment that ensures the Society continues to deliver on its objectives and is in such good heart with a strong future.

George Follas
President, New Zealand Plant Protection Society