



May 2022 Newsletter

Welcome to this May 2022 Edition of the AFCP newsletter which includes

- a report on the AFCP Student Forum held in March,
- news of AFCP charities jointly funding project at Cambridge Crop Science centre
- information about the John Forrest Memorial Award.

AFCP exists to inspire closer collaboration between charities and organisations in order to drive greater impacts from the charitable donations being made in food and farming.

AFCP Student Forum2022 held at the Cranfield University, March 2022

The AFCP Student Forum was hosted by Cranfield University and took place on Wednesday 30th March 2022, having been postponed from 2021 because of COVID-19.

Sixty participants registered for the forum, including 35 AFCP member-funded post-graduate students who presented their research via two platform presentations and a poster session.

The other participants included trustees of the AFCP member charities and

post-graduate supervisors. Agriculture students from Cranfield were also invited to join the Forum and present their research in the poster session.

Professor Leon Terry, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Innovation at Cranfield, who had been funded by the Perry Foundation when a PhD student, opened the Forum.

Twelve students, who were more advanced in their research, gave platform presentations and all students were invited to present posters.

Lord Curry of Kirkharle, the AFCP Patron, gave a short presentation entitled 'A Decade of Transition' in which he outlined the challenges ahead for agriculture in the UK and stressed that 'science was the way forward.' He encouraged the students to meet the challenges they will face.

The AFCP is very grateful to Dr Ken Pallet (a Trustee Director of the Perry Foundation) for the many hours he spent organising this very successful meeting. We also thank Professor Leon Terry and the University of Cranfield for hosting the Forum.

AFCP Member charities to support new PhD research project at the Cambridge Crop Science Centre

Four charities (Morley Agricultural Trust, Chadacre Agricultural Trust, Felix Thornley Cobbold Agricultural Trust and the Perry Foundation) have agreed to fund, alongside the University of Cambridge, a doctoral studentship at the Cambridge Crop Science Centre based at NIAB, commencing this autumn.

The project, entitled 'New technologies to accelerate crop breeding' will transfer fundamental knowledge gained from research in *Arabidopsis* into soybean. The technology has huge potential to accelerate breeding across a range of crop species. The findings will be readily applicable to UK legumes (i.e. faba beans and peas) and also to non-legume species.

Following a rigorous interviewing process, Elena Bidash has been selected as a suitable student. She will be supervised by Dr Natasha Yelina at the Crop

Science Centre. The project will be managed for AFCP by Dr Steve Rawsthorne, a Trustee Director of the Morley Agricultural Trust.

AFCP is planning an autumn meeting at NIAB when, among other speakers, Steve Rawsthorne will explain opportunities for charities to be involved in the BBSRC Doctoral Training Programme. More information on the Cambridge programme can be found at <https://bbsrcdtp.lifesci.cam.ac.uk/>

John Forrest Memorial Award

John Forrest was a modest man with a love for the countryside and farming. He also had a lifelong interest in agricultural research and the pursuit of excellence.

Before his early death, he was chairman of the Felix Thornley Cobbold Trust (FTCAT) and a Director of the Morley Agricultural Foundation (TMAF). These trusts established an annual memorial award in his name to 'further the personal development of young agriculturalists for the wider benefit of the industry'. This took the form of a three day, fully funded residential training course in January each year in Cambridge, designed to sharpen the communication skills of potential industry leaders in the Anglia region.

The course, run by Suzie Emmett of Green Shoots Productions, celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2019.

Each year eight candidates are selected from applications received by FTCAT, TMAF and NIAB. Applicants ages range from early 20's to 45 and include farmers, students, researchers and professions associated with agriculture. All participants envisage that public communication will play a major part in their career development. Feedback from those who have undertaken the course is highly complimentary. The agricultural industry benefits from greater professionalism in presentation and ability to communicate to policy makers, farmers and the general public.

Course numbers are limited to eight per session to ensure participants receive individual attention. Other agricultural charities may be interested in supporting similar courses themselves and FTCAT and TMAF would be happy to offer

advice. They would also be pleased to receive suggestions for suitable candidates for the John Forrest Memorial course if they live and work in East Anglia. These names can be submitted in the first instance to michaela.canham@tmf.co.uk or colinsmith3438@gmail.com

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AFCP was registered as a company limited by guarantee in February 2008 and became a registered charity in June 2015. The Board and its Directors and advisors represent a range of charities and organisations from across the UK.

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