Two Symposia on Human-Horticulture Interactions in the 25th International Horticultural Congress in Belgium

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SUMMARY. In August 1998, there were two symposia concerning human-horticulture relationships held at the International Horticultural Congress. The speakers at the first symposium introduced many activities that are occurring in this field around the world. The second symposium addressed allotment and community gardens. A brief summary of these symposia is presented.

At the 25th International Horticultural Congress (IHC) in Brussels, Belgium, in August 1998, two symposia concerned human-horticulture interactions were held. They were “Human-Horticulture Relationships: An International Perspective” and “Allotment and Community Gardening as Part of Urban Horticulture.” Previous symposia on human-horticulture relationships, including “The Role of Horticulture in Human Well-being and Social Development” at Arlington, Va., in 1990, and “Horticulture in Human Life, Culture, and Environment” in Kyoto, Japan, in 1994, have dealt with various aspects of human-horticulture interactions, addressing such issues as the influence of plants and horticulture on human health and well-being, what humans learn through horticulture, using horticulture for education, horticultural influences in different cultures or community development, and the roles of living plants in human daily life and environment. Such symposia have drawn wide attention to human-horticulture relationships among horticulturists in many countries and set the stage for those at the 25th IHC session.

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The goal of the IHC symposium on "Human-Horticulture Relationships: An International Perspective" was to present an overview and summary of what is happening in research, education, and application of human-horticulture relationships in four regions of the world. The topics were "Human-Horticulture Relationships in North and South America" (V.I. Lohr, Washington State University, Pullman), "Human-Horticulture Relationship: Current Situation in Europe in Research, Education, and Application" (A. Evers, University of Helsinki, Finland), and "Present Status of Human-Horticulture Relationships in Asia/Africa" (E. Matsuo, Kyushu University, Fukuoka-shi, Japan). "Present Status of Human-Horticulture Relationships Research: Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific" (D. Aldous, University of Melbourne, Australia). Each of these topics was followed by enthusiastic discussion among the 30 participants. The symposium made the participants feel that studies on human-horticulture relationships are greatly needed to provide enlightenment and exchange of information, especially in developing countries.

The second IHC symposium presented the current status of allotments and community gardening in the world and explored ways to work collaboratively to promote the development of allotments and community gardens in urban areas. There are many people, not only in European countries but also Ameri-

can and Asian countries, who are interested in allotments and community gardening as part of urban horticulture. However, little is known about the current status between countries, as there is no effective system for exchange of information.

The presentations in this session included: "Allotment and Community Gardening in North America" (S. Cosgrove, Toronto Food Policy Council, Canada), "Special Community Garden for Old Person in Japan" (H. Konoshima and Y. Kataoka, Shiga University, Otsu, Japan), "Japanese Perspectives of Allotment and Community Gardening" (E. Matsuo, Kyushu University, Fukuoka-shi, Japan), "Swedish Perspectives of Allotment and Community Gardening" (S. Sidblad, Swedish Federation of Allotment and Leisure Garden, Stockholm, Sweden), "Chinese Perspectives of Allotment and Community Gardening" (W.S. Zhou, Yangzhou University, Yangzhou, China), and "Aspects of Allotment Gardening Policies in Berlin, Germany Between 1985 and 1995" (G. Groening, Hochschule der Kuenste Berlin, Berlin). Engaging discussions concerning the different situations of community gardening in each country followed.

In addition to participating in these symposia at the 25th IHC, people with interests in these areas also began making plans for new sessions on human-horticulture relations at the 26th IHC, scheduled in Toronto, Canada in 2002.