



**ORGANIZATION OF NEMATOLOGISTS OF TROPICAL AMERICA  
ONTA NEWSLETTER**

<http://www.ontaweb.org/>

November 2020

**SEVENTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF NEMATOLOGY**

**1-6 MAY 2022 ANTIBES JUAN-LES-PINS-FRANCE**



"Crossing borders: a world of nematode diversity and impact to discover"



<b>Inside this issue:</b>	<b>p.</b>
Changes to Seventh International Congress Dates	2
ONTA-IFNS Councillors News	2
Message from the 7 <sup>th</sup> INC Chair	3
From the ONTA President and Vice-President	4
From the Newsletter Editor	5
ONTA Members News	6
IIP and <i>NemAfrica Lab</i>	6
News and Greetings from Brazil	7
Greetings from Arequipa	8
Dr Mariella Finetti Sialer	9
M.Sc. Fabio Chaverri-Fonseca	10
New Books	11
Obituaries	12
Prof. Stephen Koenning	12
Dr Ahmed Gamal Al-Sharif	12
ONTA Gallery	14
ONTA Agenda	15
Invitation ONTA Foundation	16
Invitation Active Membership	16
Invitation Newsletter	17
Acknowledgements	17

<b>Christmas Season's Greetings</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>ONTA Sponsors</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>ONTA Officers</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Committees and Representatives</b>	<b>21</b>

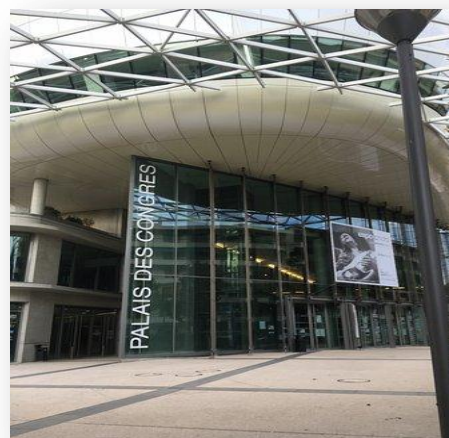


Fig. 1. Palais des Congrès (Juan-les-Pins, France)

**CHANGES TO 7<sup>TH</sup> ICN CONGRESS DATES  
ONTA-IFNS COUNCILLORS NEWS**

**First Virtual Meeting of IFNS Officers and Councillors (29-30 September, 2020)\***

A virtual meeting was called by IFNS officers Larry Duncan (President), Vice-President Ernesto San-Blas and Andreas Westphal (Secretary) to discuss the fate of the Seventh international Congress of Nematology (Fig. 1). The meeting was conducted via Zoom during two consecutive days (29-30 September) to accommodate the wide range of time zones involved. Sixteen out of 22 IFNS councillors and the new IFNS-elected officers Florian Grundler (President), John Jones (Vice-President) and Thomaé Kakouli-Duarte (Secretary) attended the Zoom sessions. The consensus among councillors and IFNS officers was that the international congress should be face-to-face and be held during the first week of May 2022. The Chair of Local Arrangements Committee (Dr Pierre Abad) was subsequently informed of the decision to hold a face-to-face Congress and move the dates to May 2022. It was also unanimously decided to install the new IFNS elected-officers during the 7<sup>th</sup> ICN to be held in 2022.

**Aurelio Ciancio and Rosa H. Manzanilla-López ONTA-IFNS Councillors.**

\*Information based on Minutes of IFNS Virtual Meeting by Andreas Westphal, Larry Duncan and Ernesto San Blas (Fig. 2).



*Fig. 2. From left to right : Rosa H. Manzanilla-López, Larry Duncan, Ernesto San Blas, Frieda Decraemer, Andreas Westphal (IFNS meeting at Cape Town, South Africa, May2014)*

Message From the 7<sup>th</sup> INC Chair

**Dear participants,**

The Seventh International Congress of Nematology meeting dates have **once again** been rescheduled due to the coronavirus situation. **The ICN 2020 will be held 1-6 May 2022 at the Palais des Congrès in Antibes Juan-Les-Pins (France).**

This decision was proposed by the meeting organizers in consultation with the European Society of Nematologists. Representatives of the 18 nematology societies comprising the Congress met and agreed unanimously that the change is necessary because of continuing uncertainty about when travel and meeting restrictions will end, and when most people will decide it is again safe to travel. All societies rejected the option of cancelling the 7<sup>th</sup> ICN, because it is the only nematology meeting fully organized, funded and ready to occur when the pandemic ends, and because cancellation would incur enormous financial penalties. Most other 2021 on-site, international conferences are rescheduling to 2022 for similar reasons.

**The scientific program** will be maintained as nearly as possible in its current form, but with revised dates. Authors will have the opportunity to revise their original abstracts and session organizers will have the ability to review and revise their agendas. We kindly ask authors not to contact us at this time as conference arrangements are being adjusted. More information will be sent in due course.

**Bursaries** that were awarded previously will be honored for those attending the Congress. A second bursary competition for graduate students is being considered, pending the availability of funds.

Official letters from the ICN Organizing Committee, requesting refunds/rescheduling of airline tickets for Congress delegates, will be sent to airlines and can be obtained from [lwducan@ufl.edu](mailto:lwducan@ufl.edu).

Again, we advise you to make the appropriate changes regarding travel and, if you made your own booking (not with Alpha Visa Congrès), hotel reservations. Participant's registration fees will be transferred automatically and hotel reservations arranged by Alpha Visa Congrès will be rescheduled to the new dates which you will be able to modify according to new travel plans.

Registration for the Seventh International Congress of Nematology is currently 744 nematologists from 59 countries, including 100 student and early career scientist bursary recipients. The scientific program comprises 32 concurrent sessions with 288 oral presentations, 12 workshops, 12 keynote speakers, and poster sessions with more than 500 presentations. The mid-meeting excursions will provide outstanding opportunities to explore the splendid nature and the amazing culture of the French Riviera. Very few nematology meetings will have occurred in the entirety of 2020-21. Hopefully, opportunities to interact virtually will be provided by some societies and possibly the IFNS in the coming months. But the 7<sup>th</sup> ICN will be an important opportunity to finally meet together again, face to face, to renew our work among friends, colleagues and students. We look forward to welcoming you in Antibes in 2022, where we shall celebrate an end to the crisis at a truly memorable scientific meeting.



*Fig. 3. Dr Pierre Abad 7<sup>th</sup> ICN Chair*

FROM THE ONTA PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT



Fig. 4. Martín Augusto Delgado Junchaya



Fig. 5. Fabio Chaverri Fonseca

**Dear ONTA members,**

As the year of 2020 is nearly at an end, it is difficult for us to write a positive message because of the known difficult circumstances faced by all of you through the year. Many of us have not only suffered extensive confinement but may have lost loved ones, and even we were not being able to accompany or express sympathy to a person or family for the loss of their loved one. Difficult times are coming on economic issues. However, the hope of re-gathering as a group of friends gives us strength to stand up and continue.

We would like to use this opportunity not only to wish you a happy Christmas season but share our intention to invite the ONTA's Executive Committee members to held an ONTA 2021 Executive Meeting using virtual tools (e.g. ZOOM, Google Meets, Microsoft TEAMS), to plan and start ONTA activities for 2021. We will even like to organize a seminar where some talks can be presented online and be accessed by ONTA members.

In 2020 many organizations had to cancel international congress for COVID-19, but some of them are reorganizing them as webinars. What we want to do next at the Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA) is to test at the beginning of next year UNA's online platform system, and if it is successful,

we would like to propose the ONTA Executive Committee to organize an ONTA 2021 virtual annual meeting with this system, probably by the end of 2021.

Our experience in using online platforms by the academics of UNA, was that they were not very excited at the beginning, but as they became familiar with these digital tools, we noticed very interesting advances in their willingness to adapt and adopt such technologies in teaching and other activities; furthermore, the students themselves have presented us with new options for online poster presentation. Our conclusion is that by using these digital tools more frequently, people become more familiar and adopt them faster, their use becoming part of the normal process of communication and exchange of information.

ONTA is an active organization, and we will have the opportunity to move forward with our projects and activities for 2021, which could also attract new members to the Organization. We hope that we can count on you as well.

We wish you a Happy and Prosperous 2021.

Best regards,

Martín and Fabio (Figs. 4-5)

## FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR



Fig. 6. Rosa H. Manzanilla-López

### Dear ONTA members,

We are very pleased to be in contact again with you through the ONTA Newsletter. We also hope that all of you are fine and are coping well. Although the SARS-COVID-2 pandemic may have stopped or limited our face-to-face activities (lab work, field trials, research, teaching activities), it is good news that digital, non face-to-face, technologies have allowed us to continue with many of our day to day activities; furthermore, many free-access congress and webinars have been held on line, thus helping to maintain communication and interaction through most of the year. However, the face-to-face interaction between peers and students, which normally occurs at a congress or annual meeting, is much missed by many colleagues, especially as this kind of interaction proves difficult to be replaced 100% by digital platform services alone. The possibility of being able to organize again face-to-face large events has not yet been fully discarded by

scientific societies, and plans continue to meet as soon as health conditions and authorities will allow larger gatherings. Hence, the 7<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Nematology (7<sup>th</sup> ICN) has been rescheduled for **1-6 May 2022 at the Palais des Congrès in Antibes Juan-Les-Pins (France)**. Meanwhile, some nematology societies are going to hold their annual meetings online next year, until all societies meet together again at the 7<sup>th</sup> ICN.

Digital technologies increasingly underpin and support online teaching and nematology has not been an exception. Many colleagues are at this very moment exploring or using different platforms to teach and communicate by holding regular online meetings and webinars, even from different countries. Many experts consider that the use of digital technologies in teaching and science communication has arrived to stay, and we would like to extend you an invitation, as a Newsletter's contributor, to share with ONTA members your experience of teaching nematology courses online.

We would like also to reassure you that all ONTA officers keep working to maintain our Organization active and alive, and that we would like to hear from you wherever you are.

On behalf of ONTA, we wish you all a happy Christmas season and prosperous 2021.

Kind regards,

Rosa  
(Fig. 6)



ONTA MEMBERS NEWS

*IIP and NemAfrica Lab (Nairobi, Kenya)*

A profile of the *NemAfricaLab* was included in our previous issue of ONTA’s Newsletter (Vol. 50 Issue 1). On this occasion, we are very pleased to thank Dr Danny Coyne and Dr Kanan (Fig. 7) for kindly having accepted



Fig.7. Drs Kanan Saikai and DannyCoyne

I am currently a postdoctoral researcher at IITA in Nairobi. I started my position at IITA this September and it has been a wonderful two months working as a member of *NemAfrica Lab*. My responsibilities here are to lead a project with an objective of developing management strategies against *Meloidogyne*



Fig. 8. Coffee trees at a research farm

ONTA’s Newsletter invitation to share with our readers her stay experience at *NemAfrica Lab* and IIP as a JSPS overseas research fellow. We welcome, on behalf of ONTA members, **Dr Kanan Saikai**’s contribution to this issue of the ONTA Newsletter.

species on coffee (Figs 8-9) as well as to lead a nematode screening project for Breeding Better Bananas (BBB) program. My research here is supported by Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).

The JSPS research fellowship is awarded to about 30 early career Japanese scientists in the field of Agriculture every year and offers them an opportunity to conduct research based on their innovative ideas at research institutions of their choices. I was awarded the fellowship last year and was supposed to start my position at IITA as a JSPS overseas research fellow on April in 2020 but this was postponed due to COVID-19. I finally made it to Nairobi in September 2020 (Figs 10-11). I am very much excited and looking forward to all the learning experiences and adventures I will certainly have in the course of two years at IITA under the guidance of Dr Danny Coyne!



Fig. 9. Collecting soil samples on a coffee farm. Left to right: Odongo Geoffrey (RealIPM), Situma Wanjala (IITA), Kanan Saikai and Celestine Oduori (IITA)

## ONTA MEMBERS NEWS (Cont.)

*IIP and NemAfrica Lab*

Fig. 10. A farewell and welcome cake for Melvin Adhiambo and Kanan Saikai



Fig. 11. Eating Nyama choma (Kenyan BBQ). From left to right: Celestine Oduori, Kanan Saikai, and Situma Wanjala

## NEWS AND GREETINGS FROM BRAZIL

The new board of directors of the Brazilian Society of Nematology (BSN) assumed their duties at the beginning of 2020 facing all the difficulties brought by the pandemic of Covid-19. Dr Cesar Bauer Gomes and Dr Mara Rúbia Da Rocha (Fig. 12) are the new President and Vice-president, Dr Claudia Dias Arieira is the Secretary and Dr. Fernando Godinho Araújo, the treasurer. Despite the unusual year the BSN managed to keep its members active by organizing live online events. On September, 1<sup>st</sup> the II Workshop on Integrated Management of Nematodes from Cerrados (Brazilian Savanah) took place with three invited speakers (Fig. 13): Dr Henrique Debiase (Embrapa), Dr Rosangela Silva (Fundação MT) and Dr Luciany Favoreto (Epamig). September, 22<sup>nd</sup> another live was broadcast (Fig. 14) covering the subject of Nematodes in Vegetable Crops with talks given by Dr Jadir Pinheiro and Dr Leonardo Boiteux, both from Embrapa. In October MSc. Tatiane Zambiasi (Agromax) and Dr Claudia Arieira (UEM) spoke about Nematode Management in Soils of Low Fertility (Fig. 15) and in November, Nematodes on Coffee (Fig. 16) was the subject

discussed by Dr Andressa Machado (IDR-Parana) and Dr Sonia Salgado (Epamig). There is still one more online live event scheduled for December, 10<sup>th</sup> that will be about Quarantine Nematodes. All these events were free for any participant.

While waiting for the 7th International Congress of Nematology that had to be postponed for 2022, the organizing committee of the 37<sup>th</sup> Brazilian Congress of Nematology has been making all the arrangements holding high hopes that it will be face-to face in 2021.



Fig. 12. Dr Mara Rúbia Da Rocha (Cape Town, South Africa, May 2014)

ONTA MEMBERS NEWS (Cont.)

News from Brazil



Fig.13. Nematodes from Cerrados (Brazilian Savannah)



Fig. 14. Nematodes in Vegetable Crops



Fig. 15. Nematode Management in Soils



Fig. 16. Nematodes on Coffee

GREETINGS FROM AREQUIPA



Fig. 17. Dr Alberto Anculle-Arenas

Muchos saludos, desde Arequipa, Perú, a todos los integrantes de ONTA y deseo que todos nos encontremos bien, en especial de salud. [Many greetings, from Arequipa, Peru, to all the members of ONTA and I especially hope that all of us are in good health.]

Un abrazo:

Alberto Anculle-Arenas (Fig. 17)  
Universidad Nacional de San Agustín de Arequipa



CONGRATULATIONS!

**On 30 October 2020 Dr Mariella Finetti Sialer was appointed principal investigator**

Dr Mariella Finetti Sialer (Fig. 18) obtained her professional degree in Biological Sciences from the Ricardo Palma University studying the plant parasitic nematode *Nacobbus aberrans* at the International Potato Center in Lima (Peru). After a short term stage at University of California Riverside (UCR), working with Prof. David Bird, she moved to Bari, Italy, where she got her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in 1993, investigating the molecular biology of phytoparasitic nematodes. In 1994 her studies shifted from nematodes to viruses and other plant pathogens, working at the Department of Plant Protection of the University of Bari, keeping an interest also in nematode vectors. Starting 2008 she was appointed research scientist at the Istituto di Bioscienze e Biorisorse, of the Italian National Research Council (CNR). The acquired experience in molecular biology allowed her to develop a wide range of studies in different fields, looking principally to close relationships involving nematodes, viruses and microorganisms associated with cultivated plants. Mariella spent some time abroad in 2007, working with Brian R. Kerry at RRES (UK) on the transcriptomics of *Pochonia chlamydosporia*. During 2015, she worked on microbial growth promoters of coffee with Prof. Doris Zuñiga at La Molina University, Lima. Later on she was in charge of an IBBR research unit located at Metaponto (Italy) and has been involved in national and regional projects.

Although her professional career has shifted from investigating the plant-pathogen interaction from the point of view of the pathogen, to studying plants, from the point of view of the host, Mariella keeps an interest in plant parasitic nematodes and viruses. Dr Mariella Finetti Sialer was appointed principal investigator (20 October 2020) after 12 years of service as a researcher. Congratulations Mariella!



*Fig. 18. Dr Mariella Finetti Sialer*

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

**Professor Fabio Chaverri-Fonseca, M.Sc. new appointment as Associate Dean**

On the 28 October 2020 Prof. Fabio Chaverri (Fig. 19) was appointed new Associate Dean (2020-2025) of the Faculty of Earth and Marine Sciences (Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica). The Faculty of Earth and Marine Sciences is constituted by the School of Agricultural Sciences, School of Environmental Sciences, School of Geographical Sciences, Regional Institute of Studies in Toxic Substances, Institute of Volcanological and Seismological Observatory Research of Costa Rica, International Institute for Conservation and Management of Wildlife, Center for Tropical Beekeeping Research and the Institute of Forest Research and Services.

The Faculty of Earth and Marine Sciences has the following strategic areas: Risk management and climate variability, Environmental health and management, Sustainable production systems, Management and conservation of natural resources, Territory and environment.

Prof. Fabio Chaverri is also ONTA's Vice-President. Congratulations Fabio!



*Fig. 19. Prof. Fabio Chaverri-Fonseca*

NEW BOOKS

Open-access book “Transforming Agriculture in Southern Africa” (2019). Joyce Chitja, Richard A. Sikora, Paul L.G. Vlek, Eugene R. Terry (eds). Taylor and Francis/Routledge. London 346 pp. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429401701>; EBOOK isbn 9780429401701 (Fig. 20)

Dr Richard Sikora has kindly sent to ONTA members a message to share with them the book “Transforming Agriculture in Southern Africa”. Dr Sikora is one of the four editors of the book that can be downloaded as a pdf file or read online through the link: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9780429401701>. The book contains 34 short chapters written by experts and covers a wide range of topics across scientific fields dealing with agriculture of the smallholder farmer. The book targets Southern African agriculture but the chapters are designed to be of importance wherever smallholder farmers are fighting for food security and survival. The book is also used for those interested in Agricultural Science, African studies, rural studies, development studies and sustainability. It will also be a valuable resource for policymakers, governmental and non-governmental organizations, agricultural practitioners and even be used in classes for students.

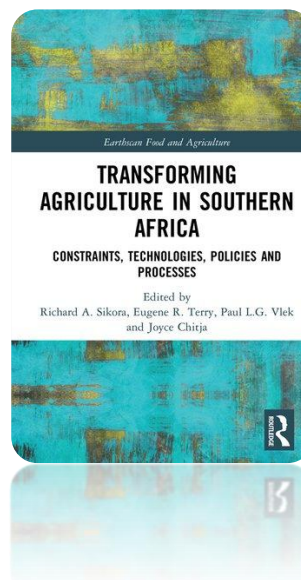


Fig. 20. Agriculture in Southern Africa New book

OBITUARIES

**PROF. STEPHEN R. KOENNING**  
(July 24, 1950-September 5, 2020)

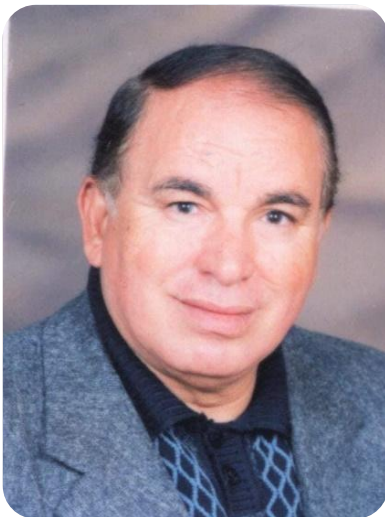


*Fig. 21. Prof. Stephen Robert Koenning (left), Godelieve Gheysen (centre) and Haddish Melakeberhan (right). Cape Town, South Africa, May 2014.*

Our dear friend and colleague **Dr Stephen Robert Koenning** (Fig. 21) passed away on 5 September 2020 in Raleigh, North Carolina, USA. He obtained a B.Sc. and M.Sc. from the University of Arizona before completing a Ph.D. at NCSU, where he worked as an Associate Professor of Plant Pathology until partially retiring in 2013. Steve most enjoyed his Cooperative Extension work with agents and farmers. His published research and book chapters have been cited thousands of times. Steve worked on a project advancing sustainable cultivation techniques in West Africa until his passing. He brought so much laughter through his goofy sense of humor, and shared so much beauty through his delight in nature and photography.

More information can be found at <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/newsobserver/obituary.aspx?n=stephen-koenning&pid=196803714&fhid=12393>

**DR AHMED GAMAL AL-SHARIF**  
(June 20, 1941-October 19, 2020)



*Fig. 22. Dr Ahmed Gamal Al-Sharif*

**Dr Ahmed Al-Sharif** (Fig. 22) – a husband, father, and dear friend to many of us in Egypt, USA, and other countries – passed away in hospital at age 79 from Covid-19 on October 19, 2020. Dr Ahmed Al-Sharif was born June 20, 1941 in EL-Sinbellaween District, Dakahlia Governorate, Egypt. He received B.S., M.Sc., and Ph.D. degrees from the Plant Protection Department at Cairo University where he chooses nematology to be his career-long research and teaching focus. He was appointed as an Assistant Lecturer at the Agricultural Zoology Department, Mansoura University in January 1975, then Lecturer (Assistant Professor) in December 1976,



Associate Professor in March 1981, and Professor in June, 1985. He retired as Professor Emeritus in the same Department in 2001.

Dr Al-Sharif had a long history of research, teaching and administrative positions at Mansoura University and he taught nematology and agricultural zoology courses elsewhere in Egypt and Saudia Arabia. He contributed to more than 60 publications during his career. He chaired the Agricultural Zoology Department twice (1993-1995 and 1998-2000). He received many prestigious governmental and university awards including the Mansoura University Merit Award (year 2002), Best Lecturer in Agricultural Zoology and Nematology (2006) and the University of Taif (Saudia Arabia) Merit Award (1978). He chaired or was a member of the Higher Education Promotion Committee for associate and full professor in Egypt for 2 cycles. He

participated in over 75 national and international conferences and workshops. He visited UF (Dr Donald Dickson's) laboratory as a visiting professor in 1993 where both supervised an Egyptian Ph.D. student.

Dr Al-Sharif was more than one of the finest nematologists in Egypt. He was known as a very giving person who spent a great deal of his time helping young scientists, students and peers who were never refused his help. I had the pleasure and the honor to know him closely during the times I applied to become Associate and Full professor in Egypt and I deeply appreciated his kindness. I watched as he introduced new topics and research ideas to others and fondly recall his generosity, his smile and the comfort he gave to anyone who knew him.

**Dr Fahiem EL-Borai Kora**

PAST ONTA MEETINGS



*Fig. 23. Field visit . ONTA meeting at Mayaguez, Puerto Rico (2017)*



*Fig. 24. ONTA-BSN joint meeting (Maceió, Brazil, 2009). Front row (left to right): Emma Zavaleta, Rosa H. Manzanilla-López, Paola Lax, Janete Brito, Jenny Escobar, Rodrigo Rodríguez-Kábana. Back row (left to right): Patricia Stock, Luis Payán, Paula Agudelo, Patrick Quénéhervé, Larry Duncan, Marcelo Doucet*

ONTA AGENDA



**Quarantine Nematodes.** 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020.  
Brazilian Society of Nematology.  
Free access to participants.

Fig. 25. Quarantine nematodes online event

NEMATODE SYSTEMATICS AND PHYLOGENY COURSE

From Dorota Porazinska

Dear Colleagues,

I am excited to let you all know that together with Thomas Powers we will be offering a graduate-level online course “Nematode Systematics and Phylogeny” (NEM6102) during the Spring 2021 semester. A detailed syllabus is available at the link:

[http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/academics/syllabi/NEM\\_6102\\_Lecture\\_Spring2020\\_syllabus.pdf](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/academics/syllabi/NEM_6102_Lecture_Spring2020_syllabus.pdf)

This course may be followed by an intense 1-week workshop with hands-on activities in the summer, depending on COVID situation.

Thank you and cheers,  
Dorota Porazinska

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Please give generously to support the activities and projects of the ONTA Foundation.

**Get busy! ONTA Foundation, Inc. status is clear and high. Open your wings and take a flight!**

Dear ONTA member,

ONTA Foundation is ready for a campaign to request donations and expand its contributor base in a big way. ONTA Foundation can receive funds through several means: 1) checks made out to the ONTA Foundation and mailed to Janete Brito (Fig. 26); 2) credit card, same information required as for membership payment; 3) wire transfer. Janete Brito and Renato Inserra have full codes for wiring if requested.



*Fig. 26. Janete Brito*



Dear ONTA Member,

A list of active members with their e-mail addresses and countries has been posted on the ONTA website (<http://www.ontaweb.org/onta-membership-directory/>). Please verify your membership status on the posted list. Contact Maria Mendes (mlmendes@ufl.edu) if your membership status is not updated.

Thanks,

Maria Mendes  
ONTA Secretary



*Fig. 27. Maria Mendes*



## ONTA NEWSLETTER INVITATION

Dear ONTA member,

Do you have a passion for nematodes and nematology? Would you like to share nematology news and pictures with our ONTA members? If so, welcome aboard!

We would like to extend to you a warm invitation to send or share information for our next ONTA Newsletter issue.

Please contact us. We are looking forward to hearing from you and to learn about your local nematology events and news.

Thanks,

Rosa



*Fig. 28. Rosa H. Manzanilla-López (ONTA Puerto Rico, 2017)*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editor would like to thank all ONTA Newsletter contributors for sending and sharing information through the year of 2020. Thanks also to M.Sc. Walter Peraza Padilla, laboratory of Nematology, National University Costa Rica (UNA), for preparing this year ONTA's Christmas card.

Rosa H. Manzanilla-López  
ONTA Newsletter Editor



*Fig. 29. Image courtesy of M.Sc. Walter Peraza Padilla (UNA, Costa Rica)*

ONTA SUSTAINING MEMBERS

ONTA gratefully recognizes the support received during 2019-2020 from the following sustaining members: ADAMA, AGBIOME, AMVAC, BAYER, CORBANA, CORTEVA AGRISCIENCE, DUPONT, E-NEMA, KOPPERT BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS, FMC, MARKETING ARM INTERNATIONAL, MARRONE BIO INNOVATIONS, EBIO-PIONEER CHEMICALS and SYNGENTA.



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