

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Top agronomist takes the helm at TIAR's Vegetable Centre

The Tasmanian Institute of Agricultural Research (TIAR) has welcomed the arrival of a leading agronomist.

Dr Colin Birch has taken up the position of TIAR's Vegetable Centre Leader where he will lead a team dedicated to research, development and extension projects into the State's vegetable industry.

He is based at TIAR's Cuthbertson Laboratory at the UTAS Cradle Coast campus in Burnie.

Dr Birch has spent more than two decades teaching and researching in primary industries and holds a Masters in Plant Nutrition and a PhD in Crop Modelling.

Prior to his arrival, he was a senior lecturer in agronomy with the University of Queensland where he was also Director of Studies in the University's Faculty of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Vet Science from 2003 to 2007. He also coordinated field crop production activities on the University's Gatton Campus.

Dr Birch began his career working in research, extension and development of the fertiliser industry before taking up a lecturing appointment with the Queensland Agricultural College (now the University of Queensland, Gatton Campus) in the early 1980s.

He has taught in agricultural systems, agronomy, crop physiology, crop modelling, plant nutrition and soil management; supervised a number of postgraduate students and participated in numerous industry training courses and field days.

Dr Birch's research interests surround crop modelling, physiology of crops including vegetables, cereals and oilseeds, and resource recovery and reuse. He has worked on research projects in the United States, France and the Netherlands.

His research focus has also supported the development of strong links with industries including seed, agricultural chemical, fertiliser and other manufacturing industries, and farm management.

Dr Birch has received an Ian Hamparsum Memorial Award for Outstanding Service to the Maize Industry and is a Fellow of the Queensland Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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