

## BRAZILIAN FORESTRY RESEARCHERS VISIT FABI

FABI hosted a visit by two research and development specialists from the Brazilian-based forestry company Suzano Pulp and Paper. Dr Thiago Romanos Banetti and Dr Aurelio Mendes Aguiar were in South Africa to meet with colleagues in Mondi and Sappi and ended their time in the country with a brief visit to FABI. They shared with the FABI team the information that Suzano has 1.3 million hectares of *Eucalyptus* plantations and that (as is true for other Brazilian companies) faces serious pest and disease challenges. These include (amongst others) damage due to the gall wasp *Leptocybe invasa*, rust caused by *Austropuccinia psidii* and wilt caused by *Ceratocystis* and *Erwinia*.



During their visit to FABI on 12 March, the visitors participated in a round table discussion including FABI Director Prof. Bernard Slippers, FABI founding Director Prof. Mike Wingfield, Prof. Brenda Wingfield, Prof. Cobus Visagie, Prof. Irene Barnes, Prof. Sanushka Naidoo, Prof. Brett Hurley, Prof. Wilhelm de Beer and Dr Almuth Hammerbacher. This discussion provided an opportunity to interact and for both groups to become familiar with their research activities. The visitors informed the FABI team that they had chosen to visit FABI because the Institute is widely recognized as a world leader in forest pest and pathogen research. They were also shown the FABI Biocontrol Centre on the University of Pretoria's Hillcrest campus where they were familiarized with the extensive FABI biocontrol programme.