

Inaugural Address

Chukichi Kaneda
Director General
Tropical Agriculture Research Center

Distinguished Guests and Participants,

On behalf of the Symposium Organizing Committee of the Tropical Agriculture Research Center, I have the honor and privilege to open the "International Symposium on Production of Vegetables in the Tropics and Sub-Tropics" sponsored by the Tropical Agriculture Research Center, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan.

Above all, I would like to extend my cordial welcome to all the guests and participants, in particular to those who have come over to Japan from abroad.

The Tropical Agriculture Research Center was established in 1970 with the objective of contributing to the development of agricultural technology in the tropical areas in undertaking research programs in a spirit of international collaboration. The basic principle of our research activities is to work together with overseas scientists on a partnership basis to solve technical obstacles which hamper the agricultural development of the tropical and sub-tropical countries. The activities of the Center cover a fairly wide range of research fields such as crop production, soil management, plant protection, pasture and animal husbandry, agricultural engineering, forestry, etc.

One of the major activities of the Center is to send research scientists to overseas research institutions located in the tropical and sub-tropical countries to conduct collaborative research work in the above-mentioned areas. About 40 staff members of the Center with long-term assignments are engaged each year in such collaborative activities in many parts of the world, mainly in the Asian countries and partly in Latin America and Africa.

Another important activity of the Center is to hold international symposia for exchanging information and views among different countries and among scientists concerned. Since 1967 the symposia have been held every year, covering such subjects as crop diseases, methods of crop breeding, tropical soybean cultivation, tropical pastures, animal diseases, soil and water management, silvicultural technologies, and so on.

The present symposium, the twenty-third of its kind, will give the opportunity of considering the current situation and future prospects of vegetable production not only in Asia but also in South America and other areas of the world. It will also cover recent developments in techniques for breeding, seed multiplication, pest and disease control, mulching cultivation, post-harvest handling of vegetables, along with physiological, pathological and entomological studies relating to vegetables.

In recent years, the importance of vegetables for improving the nutrition of the people in developing countries has been widely recognized among researchers, administrators and policy makers. In this context, the activities of the Asian Vegetable Research and Development Center and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations have been particularly remarkable. In addition, the International Agricultural Research Centers (IARCs) are paying more attention to this research area, and are collaborating with national research organizations in different countries. We are pleased that the leading scientists from these organizations accepted to participate in the symposium and present recent achievements of research in different areas.

I am convinced that these exchanges of information will further contribute to the

enhancement of research in these fields.

I sincerely hope that the symposium will be successful and useful in contributing to the development of elite cultivars and effective methods for sustainable cultivation of vegetables in the tropics and sub-tropics.

Distinguished guests and participants, I also hope that all of you will have a fruitful and enjoyable time during the present symposium, and that our friendship and cooperation will be further strengthened through our joint effort in reaching the common target of supplying the people in developing countries with enough food and nutrition.

Thank you