

## General Comment 1

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In a society in absolute poverty, postharvest technology is not important because people will eat anything they can get. At this stage, production must be emphasized. When a society develops to a stage where people are able to purchase what they need, especially through industrialization, postharvest technology becomes important. Urbanization and trade of food make it necessary to preserve agricultural products for sale.

For the last 2-3 decades, many East Asian countries have achieved remarkable economic growth, and the need for postharvest technology is now emerging in this region. In this respect, the symposium organized by JIRCAS was very timely and raised many interesting common issues and provided solutions for future collaboration between the countries in the region.

During the symposium, we discussed various aspects relating to the need to promote postharvest technology, as well as the constraints and priorities of technology and the impact on the food industry as a whole.

The need to promote postharvest technology was well documented by Dr. G. Johnson of ACIAR yesterday. The constraints of postharvest technology confronted by the countries in Asia can be summarized as follows :

- 1 Lack of standards and grading system
- 2 Poor hygienic standards both in the food sector and public sector
- 3 Lack of well-trained work force for food chain, especially extension
- 4 Poor infrastructure—roads, transportation, marketing system
- 5 Under-utilization of by-products, low efficiency
- 6 Difficulty in technology transfer and application of new technology

In this context, I would like to make some suggestions and recommendations to JIRCAS for future international collaboration. JIRCAS could initiate the following international research activities :

- 1 International collaborative research on postharvest technology, especially at the extension level, by-product utilization and environmental protection
- 2 Research and training on quality standards of agricultural products and control systems
- 3 Regional harmonization of food regulations and hygienic standards for international trade
- 4 Exchange program of experts and trainees in the field of postharvest technology among Asian countries
- 5 Economic evaluation of postharvest technology and national development to persuade the policy makers