

Closing Remarks

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Session 3 of the fifth JIRCAS International Symposium has just ended. On behalf of the organizing committee, JIRCAS and collaborating institutes, I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the participants for their active cooperation.

Throughout the last four JIRCAS symposia, improvement of crop production was the main theme, whereas in this symposium, postharvest technology was taken up as the main theme for the first time. This reflects that in Asian countries a great improvement in crop production has been achieved over the last 30 to 40 years. Now, in the face of the serious economic crisis, the situation that surrounds us is not entirely satisfactory, but research on agriculture is definitely assuming a wider scope.

The chairpersons have done a wonderful job in steering discussions and focusing on the problems which were so diverse and complex. It will not be easy to solve these problems, but I am convinced that we all obtained some valuable information in the sessions and we now have a better understanding of the present situation of postharvest technology and the food industry in Asia. Some of us may already have new ideas for collaborative research programs or some clues to address the problems. I believe that in the near future, this symposium will bear fruits, for example by providing a solution to postharvest loss. In short, this symposium was truly meaningful and productive. I would like to inform you that another international symposium on postharvest technology is scheduled to be held in Vietnam next year.

Taking advantage of this opportunity, I would like to briefly introduce some of the activities of the National Food Research Institute in the field of international collaboration. We actively cooperate with Asian countries. Our researchers frequently, visit or stay in Asian countries to carry out collaborative research. At the same time, we receive a considerable number of scientists from Asian countries. You will be able to meet some of them when you visit our institute during the study tour tomorrow. The collaboration is being carried out under the various programs including JIRCAS projects. The United Nations University Fellowship Programme is also one of such programs through which we receive five scientists each year mostly from Asian countries.

Before closing my remarks, I would like to thank Dr. Nobuyoshi Maeno, Director General of JIRCAS, and his colleagues for organizing this symposium.