

Welcome Address

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It is a great pleasure and honour to have the opportunity, on behalf of the Japan Society of Breeding Science, to express our heartfelt welcome to all the participants, from abroad and Japan, in this international symposium on "Methods of Crop Breeding" organized by the TARC.

In the past two decades, nearly ten international or regional agricultural research institutions have been established in the world and great accomplishments made by those organizations to increase agricultural production in tropical regions are being recognized. In spite of this, food production in the world is still far from meeting the needs of populations and the supply of food remains quite unstable. There are still too many complex constraints on food production in the tropical countries of Southeast Asia, although this region has the potential to double food production if these constraints were removed. In crop production, it is well-known that in addition to good management of land and environment, appropriate cultivation methods and revolutionary improvement of germ plasm are required. Therefore, the responsibility assumed by all the participants in this symposium is, needless to say, quite important.

Although, theoretically, breeding methods in rice and wheat are already developed, in each country many problems still remain to be solved so as to adapt them to agricultural situations and demand. Although rice originated from Southeast Asia, most of the research and development of modern high yielding varieties has taken place in temperate zones. Research projects and technology advancement of crop breeding in the temperate zones can be transferred and utilized more or less adequately in tropical regions despite regional and environmental differences. It should however be emphasized that breeding improved germ plasm of most tropical crops should take place under tropical conditions, since information on soil, crop, and vegetation management as well as the interaction between the level of technology and the environment are very scanty.

I have no doubt that the objective of this symposium is to exchange ideas and technology and to discuss problems on the development of crop breeding techniques directly or indirectly related to tropical agriculture. I really hope that the symposium will be successful and fruitful.

Before closing my address, I would like to outline some of the activities conducted by the Society. Presently, a little over one thousand members belong to our Society. Among them, breeders and geneticists who are attached to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry may already have been in touch with you through their activities. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my sincere desire to extend in the future the circle of acquaintances so as to include the members of SABRAO, or those belonging to universities or research institutes in order to promote mutual understanding and cooperation in the field of agricultural development.

Thank you.