

## Inaugural Address

Toshihiro KAJIWARA  
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 Crop Losses due to Disease Outbreaks in the Tropics and Countermeasures" which is being held as a satellite symposium of the Fifth International Congress of Plant Pathology under the co-sponsorship of the Tropical Agriculture Research Center (TARC), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan.

Above all, I would like to extend my cordial welcome to all the participants, in particular to those who have come 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 area 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 countries. The activities of the Center cover a fairly wide range of research fields such as crop production, crop protection, forestry, agricultural engineering, farm management in the tropics, etc.

One of the major activities of the Center is to send research scientists from Japan to overseas research institutions located in the tropical countries to conduct collaborative research work in agricultural fields. 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, animal production, methods of crop breeding, optimization of fertilizer effect, water management in paddy fields, silvicultural technologies, tropical soybean cultivation, pesticide use, etc.

The present symposium, the twenty-second of its kind, will give the opportunity to consider and estimate more accurately the yield losses of crops due to disease outbreaks in the tropics. It is well recognized that the incidence of diseases is one of the important factors for the instability of crop production. There are, however, few statistical data on the yield losses associated with disease outbreaks, mainly due to the lack of standardization of assessment methods of yield losses and partly due to the limited understanding of crop diseases.

In future, to promote sustainable food production, it will be necessary to analyse the epidemiological factors controlling the occurrence of crop diseases and then to implement appropriate measures to control the diseases.

In the present symposium, the crop losses due to the major diseases in the tropics will be evaluated based on scientific data. Also the establishment of more precise and practical methods for the assessment of yield loss and for the development of more appropriate methods for controlling the diseases in the tropics will be discussed.

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 effective methods for the decrease of crop losses in the tropics.

I also hope that our friendship and cooperation will be further strengthened through our joint effort in reaching this common target of immense importance.

Thank you