

Inaugural Address

Hitoshi Chaya
Director, National Research Institute
of Agricultural Engineering, Ministry
of Agriculture and Forestry

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates and Participants.

On behalf of the Symposium Organizing Committee and the Tropical Agriculture Research Center sponsoring the Symposium, I have the honor to inaugurate the Symposium on "Water Management in Rice Fields".

First of all, I would like to extend my cordial welcome to all the distinguished delegates and participants, particularly those who have come over to Tokyo from abroad.

Since 1967, the Tropical Agriculture Research Center has held a series of symposium annually with the objective of offering a forum for discussion and exchange of information on selected subjects of tropical agricultural technology to the scientists of Asian countries, including Japan.

The present symposium is the ninth one of that series, and it deals with water management aspects for the first time. Most of the distinguished delegates and participants may recall that in 1972 a Seminar on Water Management and Control was held in Tokyo sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in cooperation with FAO.

In that Seminar, it was pointed out that, if we divide irrigation and drainage into two phases: one is water resources development and flood control in wide area and other is water management at the farm level, the latter is lagging far behind the former.

Major agricultural facilities based on civil engineering are fully equipped and are functioning well in large-scale agricultural development projects. However, water management at the farm level has failed to play fully its important role in increasing agricultural productivity, because of insufficient facilities and undeveloped technology.

This is due to the fact that the water management is not only an integration of engineering technology and agronomic technology but also is closely related to the socio-economic conditions. Therefore, it is impossible to develop water management without synthetic cooperation among them.

The purpose of the present symposium is to attempt to tackle such a complicated problem of water management.

Although water management is the basic technology indispensable for mechanization, diversification, and intensification of paddy production, directions and ways of applying water management technology may depend on the conditions of each country.

However I believe that the discussions in this symposium contribute to the development of water management technology, principle of which is common throughout Southeast Asia.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the cooperation extended by every participant to this symposium, and I sincerely hope that this symposium will result in a great success by our joint efforts.

Thank you.