Foreword

Welcome to the **Fourth Issue 2013** of the Journal of Tropical Agricultural Science (JTAS)!

JTAS is an open-access journal for the Tropical Agricultural Science published by Universiti Putra Malaysia Press. It is independently owned and managed by the university and run on a non-profit basis for the benefit of the world-wide science community.

This issue contains **eight articles,** out of which **one** is a short communication and **seven** are regular research papers. The authors of these articles are from **Malaysia, Nigeria, the Netherlands** and **Algeria**.

The short communication discusses the prevalence, clinical outcome and *cag* pathogenicity island (*cag*PAI) virulence gene profiles of *Helicobacter pylori* strains in response to ethnic differences in patients in Malaysia (*Hamat, R. A., Nor Amalina, E., Malina, O., Zamberi, S., Alfizah, H., Rizal, A. M., Aminuddin, A. and Ramelah, M.*). The preliminary data made available in this study might explain why many Malaysian patients of Indian show a low prevalence for gastric cancer and peptic ulcer disease despite having had a persistently high prevalence of *H. pylori* infection for many decades ("Indian enigma").

The seven research papers cover a wide range of topics. Researchers from Universiti Putra Malaysia investigate the potential of using a single-chemical parameter, namely electrical conductivity, as an indicator of water quality pollution in relation to dissolved oxygen and suspended solids parameter (*Yap, C. K.*). Another research group from the same university describes in detail the accumulation of heavy metals and antioxidative enzymes of *Centella asiatica, a* medicinal herb in relation to metals of the soil (*Ong, G. H., Yap, C. K., Maziah, M. and Tan, S. G.*). In yet another report, on length-frequency distribution, the length-weight relationship and condition factors of sompat grunt *Pomadasys jubelini,* a fish species found off the coast of Lagos, Nigeria, were investigated in order to study the growth pattern of the species (*Adebiyi, F. A.*).

Collaboration work between Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI) has successfully constructed a phylogenetic tree in reconfirmation of the parasitoid species (Braconidae: Opiinae), reared from fruit flies (*Bactrocera papayae*) infesting star fruit (*Averrhoa carambola*) and based on their mitochondrial 16S rRNA sequences (*Ibrahim, N. J., Shariff, S., Idris, A. B., Md-Zain, B. M., Suhana, Y., Roff, M. N. and Yaakop, S.*), while anther group of researchers from UPM has characterised Chok Anan mango fruit after hot water treatment (*Phebe Ding and Salumiah Mijin*).

One more collaborative work between Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Naturalis Biodiversity Center in the Netherlands has proved the usability of the freezing method as a new non-destructive modification method of DNA extraction to obtain a sufficient quantity and a high quality of DNA for molecular work (*Yaakop, S., C. van Achterberg, Idris, A. B. and Aman, A. Z.*).

The last manuscript in this issue is on research conducted by a group of researchers from Algeria. They investigate the antioxidant activity of two mesomeric heterocyclic betaines containing a pyrimidine moiety in *in vitro* assays (*Malki, F., Touati, A. and Moulay, S.)*.

I anticipate that you will find the evidence presented in this issue to be intriguing, thought-provoking and useful in reaching new milestones in your own research. Please recommend the journal to your colleagues and students to make this endeavour meaningful.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all the contributors, namely, the authors, reviewers and editors who have made this issue possible. Last but not least, the editorial assistance of the journal division staff is fully appreciated.

JTAS is currently accepting manuscripts for upcoming issues based on original qualitative or quantitative research that opens new areas of inquiry and investigation.

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