

Foreword

Welcome to the **Fourth Issue 2015** 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 **13 articles**, out of which **one** is an invited review article, **one** is a review article, **six** are regular research papers and **five** are derived from the 2nd International Conference on Kenaf and Allied Fibres, ICKAF 2013. The authors of these articles are from **Australia, India, Nigeria and Malaysia**.

The invited review paper discusses in detail the topic of current and future challenges in conserving freshwater biodiversity in the molecular perspective (*Jane M. Hughes*). The relation of arbuscular mycorrhizal symbiosis and water stress is well discussed in the review article (*Navnita Sharma, Kuldeep Yadav, Jagbeer Cheema, Neetu Badda and Ashok Aggarwal*).

The first research paper by researchers from Universiti Putra Malaysia discussed the meat characteristics of red jungle fowl (*Gallus gallus Spadiceus*), Malaysian domestic chickens (*Gallus gallus Domesticus*) and commercial broilers (*Lokman I. H., Goh, Y. M., Sazili A. Q., Noordin M. M. and Zuki A. B. Z.*). The second research paper, written by researchers from Nigeria, discusses the influence of nut size, hydro priming duration and storage period of seedling emergence and early seedling vigour characteristics in cashew (*Anacardium occidentale* L.) (*Adebisi, M. A., Kehinde, T. O., Abdul-Rafiu, A. M., Amira. J. O., Oyewumi, A. A., Oni, O. D. and Onyeka, C. V.*). The next research paper describes the effects of extended heating time and post-urea treatment on formaldehyde emission and properties of phenolic *compreg* rubberwood (*Zaidon, A., Lee, S. H., Rasmina, H., Roslinda, S., Mariani Ayu, O. and Shuhaibah, S.*)

In the following research paper, a group of researchers from Universiti Putra Malaysia reports on the life table of *Cochlochila bullita* Stål (Hemiptera: Tingidae) on *Orthosiphon aristatus* (Blume) Miq. and *Ocimum basilicum* L. in laboratory conditions (*Tan Li Peng, Ahmad Said Sajap, Lee Han Jeen, Lee Seng Hua and Lum Wei Chen*) while another group of researchers from Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Malaysia reports on glutathione functions on the physiological characteristics of corn plants to enhance Mn-induced corn production (*Nur Inani, Mohd Nozulaidi, Mohd Khairi, Abdulaziz Rabiul Abdulkadir and Md Sarwar Jahan*). The last research paper in this issue, which describes a new model sampling site for a secondary forest area, focusses on the colonisation of the dung beetle (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae) of smaller body size in Bangi forest reserve, Selangor, Malaysia (*Muhaimin, A. M. D., Hazmi, I. R. and Yaakop, S.*).

I conclude this issue with five articles arising from the ICKAF 2013 international conference: a review of the compression moulding of natural fibre-reinforced thermoset composites; material processing and characterisations (*Ismail, N. F., Sulong, A. B., Muhamad, N., Tholibon, D., MdRadzi, M. K. F. and WanIbrahim, W. A. S.*); the effect of cutting speed on cutting torque and cutting power of varying kenaf-stem diameters at different moisture content (*Dauda, S. M., Ahmad, D., Khalina, A. and Jamarei, O.*); reinforcing mechanical, water absorption and barrier properties of poly(lactic acid) composites with kenaf-derived cellulose of thermally-grafted aminosilane (*Tee, Y. B., Rosnita, A. T., Khalina, A., Chin, N. L., Roseliza, K. B. and Khairul Faezah, M. Y.*); tensile strength of some natural-fibre composites (*Salleh, J., Mohd Yusoh, M. K. and Ruznan, W. S.*); and the effect of filler loading and NaOH addition on mechanical properties of moulded kenaf/polypropylene composite (*MdRadzi, M. K. F., Sulong, A. B., Muhamad, N., MohdLatiff, M. A. and Ismail, N. F.*)

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.

Chief Executive Editor

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