

Foreword

Welcome to the **Third Issue 2016** 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 **nine articles**, out of which one is a review article and eight are regular papers. The authors of these articles come from different countries, namely, **Malaysia, Iran, Bangladesh and Pakistan**.

The review paper briefly reports on the effects of superabsorbent polymers (SAPs) on soils and plants. The findings show that the SAPs could store water and nutrients and release them in drought stress conditions in light soils. Therefore, an acceptable biological and grain yield with less irrigation water depth could be achieved (*D. Khodadadi Dehkordi*).

The eight articles cover a wide range of topics. In the first research paper, the effects of flooding and alternate wetting and drying on the yield performance of upland rice are reported by the researchers from Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (*Mohd Khairi, Mohd Nozulaidi and Md Sarwar Jahan*). The next research paper discusses the impact of different temperature-time profiles during superheated steam roasting on some physical changes of Robusta coffee (*Ooi Ee Shan, Wahidu Zzaman and Tajul A. Yang*). The other papers consist of the report of the improved pre-treatment protocol for scanning electron microscopy coupled with energy dispersive X-ray spectroscopy analysis of selected tropical microalgae (*Yau, S. K., Yusoff, F. M., Khong, N. M. H., Foo, S. C. and Lai, J. I.*); population fluctuation and dispersion patterns of apple snails, *Pomacea* spp. (Gastropoda: Ampullariidae) in a rice ecosystem (*Arfan, A. G., Muhamad, R., Omar, D., Nor Azwady, A. A. and Manjeri, G.*); urine versus pre-mix (sugar:salt): baits for stingless bees (Hymenoptera: Meliponini) (*Kumara, T. K., Farisya, M. S. N., Wan Noor Aida, W. M., Suhaimi Omar, Marcela, P. and Aurifullah, M.*); effect of dietary soy lecithin on laying performance, egg quality and meat texture of aged layer hen (*Akit, H., Sazili, A. Q., Ismail, N. A., Atan, N. A., Shazali N. and Loh, T. C.*); preliminary studies towards identification of ginger wilt disease in Sabah, Malaysia (*Cosmas, L. L., Atong, M. and Poili, E.*); and finally, estimation of grain quality components and their correlation of basmati rice (*Oryza sativa* L.) (*Mahmuda Ratna, Shahnewaz Begum, Md Abu Kawochar, Shiuli Ahmed and Jannatul Ferdous*).

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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