

AHS

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Foreword

This year three Japanese scholars – Profs. Yoichiro Hoshino (Hokkaido University), Eriko Yasunaga (University of Tokyo) and Tomonori Kawano (University of Kitakyushu) – joined the editorial team of *Advances in Horticultural Science* (AHS). This is surely a milestone in the century-long history of this traditional journal of Italian origin, which is on its way to a drastic shift towards successful internationalizations. To boost the link between European horticultural science communities, chiefly in Florence, Italy, and those in Asian countries, firstly Japan, we held a memorial workshop entitled “First Advances in Horticultural Science-supported Workshop in Asia – Plant-sensing Technologies for Agricultural Applications” in February 2014, with aid from the West Japan Industry and Trade Convention Association. The workshop took place at Kitakyushu Science and Research Park in Kitakyushu, Japan, where the first international branch of the International Laboratory of Plant Neurobiology (LINV-DiSPAA, Department of Agri- Food and Environmental Science, University of Florence) was established two years ago (known as LINV@Kitakyushu).

This special issue which has attracted environmental and horticultural specialists based in Japan, is one such effort aimed at enhancing an exchange of knowledge among scientific communities world-wide, especially between Italian and Japanese horticultural science specialists and environmental science specialists. Responding to our invitation, a number of submissions were received. Amongst them, 10 articles selected after the peer-review process are collected in this special issue; additional contributions (13) from Japanese institutions will appear in the next forthcoming issue (4, 2014) of this journal. Here, as special issue guest editor, I since rely express my deepest acknowledgement to all contributing authors, editorial team members, and colleagues in Florence for enabling the release of this memorial issue. I hope it may stimulate further discussion and international research collaborations among European and Asian scientific communities.

Tomonori Kawano