

## Foreword

In a world in which perishable products, such as fruits and vegetables, flowers and ornamental plants, must be stored for long periods before being sold and must make long journeys from the place of production to that of consumption, often even from one continent to another, the development of appropriate technologies that allow these products to preserve their qualitative, product and commercial characteristics as much as possible becomes an essential strategy for the productive sector. Postharvest technology is an area in which Italy occupies a leading position worldwide both in R&D and in the manufacturing industry for sorting, grading, packaging technologies, and refrigeration and controlled atmosphere storage facilities. A strong cooperation between the world of research, both public and private, that of agricultural production and that of product conservation technologies is the key point of this predominant position of our country in this specific sector.

The *Postharvest Working Group (PWG)* of the **Italian Society for Horticultural Science (SOI)** organised **Postharvest 2022**, the **8<sup>th</sup> Postharvest Conference** in Pescia, on September 29-30, 2022. Previous edition was held in October 2019 (shortly before the pandemic) in Milan when the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of PWG was celebrated.

Like previous conferences, Postharvest 2022 aimed to bringing together scientists, students, and Industry representatives, with different background, to discuss the state of the art in R&D and technological development in the postharvest physiology and technology of fresh fruits, vegetables, and ornamentals, analysing perspectives and future needs, and indicating possible synergies.

Over 70 delegates participated in the Conference from prestigious Italian and Foreign Institutions and companies, with 25 oral presentations and 25 Posters.

A policy of maintaining relatively low costs for students and scholarship holders allowed the participation of numerous young researchers who had the opportunity to present their results and interact with leading national and international postharvest experts and industry representatives.

Two technical visits (to one of the most important companies in the Pistoia Nursery District and to the Pescia Flower Market) and one cultural event (the splendid Historic Garden of Villa Garzoni in Collodi) completed the Program, together with the social dinner and the Business meeting of SOI-PWG, and allowed further interactions among participants.

Our heartfelt thanks go to Ilaria Mignani and Stefania Nin, Associate Editors of this "Postharvest" Special Issue, whose precious work in editing definitely led to the success of this event.

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