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1. Preface

In my home county, we say that summer months are a "cucumber season" for news. What it means is that there are not so many news during summer, maybe because people try to relax and think more about holidays than politics. I think it is quite different for researchers, especially at the universities in Japan. Finally freed from lectures and duties, most scientists enjoy summer as their main research season. Not speaking of people working with rice like me! There is nothing more exciting than browsing paddy field in the middle of a hot-burning summer day in Japan! This statement has - of course - ironical meaning. Not sure what "irony in language" means? Check my Postscript for explanation or look in Vol. 82, where I have, once, been touching this point already..

2. International Plant Web Forum 2021

The Institute of Plant Science and Resources (IPSR), Okayama University will hold an International Plant Web Forum 2021 on September 6-7, 2021.

The forum will consist of two sessions: the IPSR International Workshop by Early Career Researchers, which will feature presentations and discussions by early-career researchers, and presentations by distinguished researchers in various fields of plant science. We are calling for poster presentations from a wide range of research fields, which will provide an excellent opportunity to deepen scientific exchange among participants.

One of the main objectives of this forum is to support early-career researchers. There will be opportunities for interaction with invited speakers and possibility of active promotion to oral presentations for early-career researchers, and we therefore welcome the active participation of all early career researchers.

This is an international forum that you can enjoy without being bothered by the time difference. We look forward to seeing you in the forum!

Date:

September 6-7, 2021 (Japan time: UTC+9)

Venue:
Online

Website & detailed program:
<https://www.rib.okayama-u.ac.jp/information/webforum2021/>

Free registration:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdf7Oj1_9zAaRE9JaC7jRtbSldfzhlEkaWoc_lN6JRFDF9iw/viewform

Abstract submission for poster: July 12 - August 9, 2021
Registration: July 12 - August 25, 2021

Invited Speakers:

Regine Kahmann (Max Planck Institute for Terrestrial Microbiology)
Takashi Akagi (Okayama University)
Caitlin Byrt (Australian National University)
Yen-Ping Hsueh (Academia Sinica)
Keiji Nishida (Kobe University)
Kenichi Tsuda (Huazhong Agricultural University)
Ertao Wang (CAS Center for Excellence in Molecular Plant Sciences)
Satoko Yoshida (Nara Institute of Science and Technology)

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3. Recently released publications

Mujiono, K; Tohi, T; Sobhy, IS; Hojo, Y; Shinya, T; Galis, I
Herbivore-induced and constitutive volatiles are controlled by different
oxylipin-dependent mechanisms in rice.
PLANT, CELL AND ENVIRONMENT: On line first (2021)
<https://doi.org/10.1111/pce.14126>

Mori, I.C.; Arias-Barreiro, C.R.; Ooi, L.; Lee, N.H.; Sobahan, M.A.;
Nakamura, Y.; Hirai, Y.; Murata, Y.
Cadmium uptake via apoplastic bypass flow in *Oryza sativa*.
Journal of Plant Research [Online first] (2021)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10265-021-01319-y>

Ogasawara, M; Miyazaki, N; Monden, G; Taniko, K; Lim, S; Iwata, M; Ishii, T;
Ma, JF; Ishikawa, R
Role of qGZn9a in controlling grain zinc concentration in rice, *Oryza sativa*
L.
THEORETICAL AND APPLIED GENETICS: On line first (2021)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00122-021-03873-4>

Wakamatsu, A., Mori, I.C., Matsuura, T., Taniwaki, Y., Ishii, R., Yoshida, R.
Possible roles for phytohormones in controlling the stomatal behavior of
Mesembryanthemum crystallinum during the salt-induced transition from C3 to
crassulacean acid metabolism.
Journal of Plant Physiology 262, 153448 (2021)
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jplph.2021.153448>

Okamura, E., Ohtaka, K., Nishihama, R., Uchida, K., Kuwahara, A., Mochida,
K., Hirai, M.Y.
Diversified amino acid-mediated allosteric regulation of phosphoglycerate
dehydrogenase for serine biosynthesis in land plants.

Biochemical Journal 478, 2217-2232 (2021)

<https://doi.org/10.1042/BCJ20210191>

Inagaki, H; Miyamoto, K; Ando, N; Murakami, K; Sugisawa, K; Morita, S; Yumoto, E; Teruya, M; Uchida, K; Kato, N; Kaji, T; Takaoka, Y; Hojo, Y; Shinya, T; Galis, I; Nozawa, A; Sawasaki, T; Nojiri, H; Ueda, U; Okada, K
Deciphering OPDA signaling components in the momilactone- producing moss *Calohypnum plumiforme*.

FRONTIERS IN PLANT SCIENCE 12: 987 (2021).

<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpls.2021.688565>

Rikiishi, K; Sugimoto, M; Maekawa, M

Transcriptomic analysis of developing seeds in a wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.) mutant RSD32 with reduced seed dormancy.

BREEDING SCIENCE 71(2): 155-166

<https://doi.org/10.1270/jsbbs.20016>

Wari, D; Kuramitsu, K; Kavallieratos, NG

Sap-Sucking Pests; They Do Matter.

INSECTS 12(4): 363 (2021)

<https://doi.org/10.3390/insects12040363>

4. International Joint Research introductions * 76-th series *

In July, we received a letter from Ethiopia written by Dr. Hewan Demissie. Hewan is a plant breeder working on barley. She visited Japan several times under the auspices of Prof. Sato from the Barley and Wild Plant Center. Hope you will enjoy a short story that is radiating her deep passion for Japanese people and culture!

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The voyage to Wisdom and Understanding!

It was in 2018, I have got a request from Hawassa University to work on barley. I have been stressed at first because I have never been working on barley in my previous researches. My method of learning about different crop plants was using extensive literature reviews. Following my predecessor student at Tsukuba University, I started my literature review from studies in Japan. I asked my Master's and Ph.D. supervisor, Professor Tatsuhito Fujimura. For me the best person to describe me better is him. He knows my ups and downs. He guided me towards science with his caring and nurturing spirit and support. I called him from my mobile phone directly. And asked him how he can help me with my future research.

He directed me to Professor Kazuhiro Sato. As usual, I started browsing the website and downloading the research papers done by Professor Sato. My interest was especially on acid stress tolerance of barley. When I found his paper from Nature publication, I was delighted for two reasons. First, because the work is done in Japan, the country I admire and respect. Second, the work is so detailed and was easy to understand with good references for each step and activity. These helped me to learn about his laboratory. Then, I decided to write him an email. And from that first email exchange, I started learning about Okayama, Kurashiki, and IPSR. Through the email conversation, I got a chance to visit IPSR, Kurashiki campus. In the process, I have learned, the unique nature of Japan. When documents are sent, they contain all the necessary details with clear information. Finally, I got a

visa for Japan and I landed in Japan, after ten years of my departure. The airport's smell, bus ride to Haneda Airport, and my flight to Okayama all were filled with smiles and happiness. Eating onigiri and drinking my favorite tea (ulong cha), seeing all the things which I missed from Japan were my memorable parts of the trip. Even I visited the Lawson, 7-Eleven, and McDonald's found in the airport and train stations. Above all, seeing my former academic advisor Professor Fujimura and my seniors in my former laboratory was part of the delight I never forget. I felt like I was reincarnated, as in the Japanese saying 'umare kawari 生まれ変わり'. It was the moment that I realized how my life is connected to Japan. I never have had a single doubt about this country. I still have full confidence that I am part of Japan. It seems the God of Japan already welcomed me. That must be why I feel peace, ease, the most calmness, and gentleness in myself since I landed in this beautiful country.

I took the afternoon flight to Okayama and arrived at the airport station. From the airport, I took a bus. The well-organized station, the respectful driver made me think that there is a heaven on earth. To have the spirit of gratefulness and respect, service to the human beings in all the jobs we are doing are indeed signs of the ultimate mind development and synchronization to the heaven world. On the way to Kurashiki, I met a British Scientist who was also traveling for the same cause to the IPSR. We got introduced to each other and started talking about Japan. She was overwhelmed as everything was exciting for her. I could see that her curious eyes were enjoying the view and the beauty of the sights from the airport up to Kurashiki.

At Kurashiki station, Professor Sato was waiting for us. The humble and kind professor took us for a lunch. I was served my favorite dish the delicious noodle. And then, we began our voyage to Kurashiki's IPSR campus. I started my research from the first day I landed at Kurashiki; every day I was learning, improving, and advancing. I was exposed to a completely different world of science. I aimed to find the gene controlling acid tolerance, but now I am looking to the domestication process of the Ethiopian barley. I have never expected to be overwhelmed by barley research, but the research at Kurashiki campus gave me wings to explore more. Every day I am thankful for the great efforts they make for the development of science and research on barley. The training on genomics of Triticeae gave me tools to search more to the genome of barley. The experience from the laboratory enabled me to design and develop mini projects in my home country. After returning home from Japan, I was able to work with several multiple students on screening acid-tolerant barley from Ethiopia, the ethnobotanical aspect of barley use, and the diversity. From this research project, I could advise six master's students of whom three of them graduated with an excellent grade for their theses. This created research interest on the Ph.D. students whom I and Professor Sato were supervising, particularly on the barley genome structure variant from Ethiopia.

The presence of an advanced laboratory, dedicated and highly professional laboratory members are the reasons for my success. I like to thank Professor Sato, his collaborative laboratory members, the Ohara foundation for making my travel to Japan, and the IPSR for the valuable contribution to my life. From the big light I got from IPSR, I could shine this knowledge of wisdom to the Ethiopian young students, who are eager to learn and gain wisdom. Currently, I managed to collect more than 1000 barley accessions from Ethiopia. I could adopt the protocol developed at IPSR to screen acid tolerance. Even the thematic research from Hawassa University was influence

is my job and I will go again this summer to collect my data, hoping for the Nature paper next year.

But "I really hate Nature". What do you think? Irony or truth?

Some Westerners can be complicated. Aren't they?

- 「Plant Stress Science Network Mail Magazine」
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 - WEB <http://www.rib.okayama-u.ac.jp/pssnet/>

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