

For the memory of Prof. Seiichi Tokura



The 30th Anniversary Symposium,
Shikoku Research Institute, Takamatsu, Japan in 1998



The 13th APCCS at Jeju, Korea in 2023

I was deeply saddened to hear that Prof. Tokura passed away on April 22 at the age of 91. We have lost not only a giant scientist, but also one of the most respected scholars in the field of chitin and chitosan research worldwide.

I first met Prof. Tokura around 1997 at a scientific meeting in Japan, where I was invited as a speaker at the age of 39. At that time, Prof. Tokura was in his early 60s and was serving as a professor and dean at Hokkaido University. From our first meeting, I felt that we could become valuable collaborators in the field of chitin and chitosan research.

Prof. Tokura was one of the pioneers of chitosan research in the world. He guided me in developing scientific strategies and research plans for chitin and chitosan, much like a teacher, advisor, and parent. He kindly recommended me as an invited speaker for the 30th Anniversary Symposium of the Shikoku Research Institute in Takamatsu, Japan, in 1998.

Prof. Tokura and I had many discussions about the future of chitin and chitosan research after he moved to Osaka to serve as a professor at Kansai University. Since 1998, I visited Japan frequently—at least twice each year—to meet him. Through his encouragement, I was invited to many academic meetings in Japan, including the Japan Society of Chitin and Chitosan and the Japan Society of Food Science and Technology, as an invited speaker. Because of Prof. Tokura, I have visited Japan more than 100 times throughout my academic career.

In 2023, when I served as Chair of the 13th APCCS in Jeju, Korea, I invited Prof. Tokura as the Honorary Chair and a plenary speaker. During the conference, I presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his outstanding accomplishments and contributions to the field of chitin and chitosan research. That was the last time I had the privilege of meeting him in person.

I hope Prof. Tokura rests in peace. I will always remember and miss him.

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