

## **Welcome Address**

Prof. Joao Lucio de Azevedo

Dean, Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture University of Sao Paulo, Piracicaba, SP, Brazil

Members of the Conference

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great privilege to welcome all of the participants to this Second International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming. Also, I would like to welcome you to our institution, the Escola Superior de Agricultura “Luiz de Queiroz” (ESALQ) which on this occasion is celebrating its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding.

We consider this Conference to be of great importance because various themes on alternative agriculture will be discussed which include new and unconventional techniques. The concept of alternative agriculture has generated renewed interest in the role of microorganisms in soil productivity and plant protection. We are hopeful that these new approaches will provide major advances in biotechnology, and reduce the dependence of farmers on chemical fertilizers and pesticides through integrated nutrient management and integrated pest management.

Some of the technical papers to be presented at this Conference will report the results of research on a new technology involving effective microorganisms (EM). We at ESALQ are most interested in this technology and how it can be used effectively and practically by farmers to enhance soil health and the yield and quality of crops. Such an alternative practice is of great importance to all of us who are so concerned with the preservation and protection of our environment.

I would like to thank the organizers of this Conference who have chosen the Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture at Piracicaba for its venue. This is a major contribution to our national agricultural program.

Again, welcome to our College and thank you for your participation in this important Conference. I wish you much success in your deliberations. We here at ESALQ are ready and willing to collaborate with others in developing research and education projects that will improve the productivity and sustainability of agriculture in Brazil and throughout the Region.

Thank you very much.