

Editorial

The research on the use of microparticulate systems is an important discipline of the pharmaceutical, medical, veterinary, food, cosmetic and consumer products fields, being performed in many academic and industrial laboratories all around the world. Because of their unique properties and the flexibility of the manufacturing processes, microparticulate systems are expected to continue to play a major role in the controlled release activities. This special issue contains papers derived from some plenary and invited lectures, as well as awarded posters, presented at the 15th International Microencapsulation Symposium, held in Parma, Italy, between September 18th and 21st, 2005. The event was organized by the University of Parma, the International Microencapsulation Society and the Inter-University Consortium TEFARCO Innova.

The Symposium attracted more than 260 participants from academic and industrial institutions from Europe, America and Asia to discuss topics related to microencapsulation. At the symposium, 230 contributions were made as oral or poster presentations and published in the form of two-page abstracts.

The papers included in this issue reflect the current developments in the preparation, characterization, analysis and uses of microparticulate systems. The major aspects covered include microcapsules, microspheres, nanoparticles and

beads. The different production methods are discussed, with particular emphasis on innovative methods, such as spray-freezing, electro-hydro-dynamic atomization, prilling and emulsion droplets encapsulation.

As co-chairs of the conference we are indebted with the individuals and the institutions that participated in the organization of the Symposium.

We wish to thank Professor A.T. Florence and Elsevier for providing the opportunity to publish the selected papers of the Symposium. We also want to thank the authors of the papers, as without their contributions this work would not be available to those who are interested in the progress of this fast growing scientific area.

The 16th International Microencapsulation Symposium is planned to take place in 2007 in Lexington, Kentucky, USA, chaired by Prof. Patrick DeLuca (School of Pharmacy, University of Kentucky).

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