



Dr. HIROSHI YONEHARA

Obituary

Dr. HIROSHI YONEHARA, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, a member of both the Board of Directors and the Editorial Board of the Japan Antibiotics Research Association, passed away on 30th November, 1988, at the age of sixty-nine. It is a great loss and sadness that is keenly felt by his fellows and associates.

Those of us who knew him well associate HIROSHI YONEHARA with gentle and genteel, quiet spoken, well reasoned, always striving for excellence, enthusiastic concern for the welfare of his colleagues, friends and students. He was a thoughtful man with the personality of patience, humanity and modesty.

HIROSHI YONEHARA was born on May 22, 1919 in Tottori Prefecture. He was educated at the University of Tokyo, Faculty of Agricultural Science and graduated with a B. S. degree in 1942. In 1945, after the Second World War, he backed to the University of Tokyo, at the laboratory directed by the late Professor YUSUKE SUMIKI in the Department of Agricultural Chemistry as an assistant professor, where he started his lifework on the antibiotic research. In 1954, he moved to the Institute of Applied Microbiology, the University of Tokyo, in the newly-formed Division of Antibiotics as an associate professor. He obtained a Ph. D. in agricultural science from the University of Tokyo in 1958, and advanced to a Professor in 1961 as a successor of the late Professor SUMIKI.

In the 1950's, HIROSHI YONEHARA focused his interest on antifungal antibiotics; he discovered variotin, an antibiotic produced by a strain of *Paecilomyces variotii*, which is still clinically used for the treatment of trichophytosis successfully. Then he initiated studies on new antibiotics effective for the prevention of rice blast disease caused by a pathogenic fungi *Pyricularia oryzae*. He was able to discover blasticidin A, blasticidin S, blastomycins and a number of antifungal antibiotics; amongst them, blasticidin S has been used in practice as a fungicide for the rice plant disease.

In the course of his screening program for new antibiotics, he isolated more than thirty new compounds, including mikamycins, multhiomycin, pentalenolactone whose structures and biological activities have been investigated in detail. HIROSHI YONEHARA was a recipient of honors of the Japan Agriculture Prize (1962) and the SUZUKI Prize of the Japan Agricultural Chemical Society (1979).

He had many close friends in the antibiotic field throughout the world and his warm humanity will be missed by all who know him. Our deepest sympathies are extended to his family.

(NOBORU ÔTAKE)