

## Dedicated to Lin Kongxiang



### **(Kung Hsiang) (1910-1986)**

These Proceedings are dedicated to the memory of Professor Lin Kongxiang, Ph.D., a devoted citrus pathologist, who made important observations and experiments on the nature, cause and control of huanglongbing (HLB).

Professor Lin Kongxiang (Kung Hsiang) was born in 1910 in the village of Cunxia, which is located in the citrus belt of Fujian Province, China. He obtained his Ph.D. at Cornell University in early 1941, and returned to China to join the Christian University of Lingnan in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. This later was incorporated into the South China Agricultural University. He worked in the Plant Protection Department and later became Department Head.

Soon after returning to China, he undertook a field survey of citrus in Guangdong, Fujian and Jiangxi, covering over 2,600 km. During this survey,

he observed the severe decline of citrus we now know as Huanglongbing (HLB) (yellow shoot disease, or greening). Further work at that time was prevented because China was fighting against the Japanese who were occupying parts of China. In 1947, Lin resumed his research, concentrating on HLB of citrus. He conducted more extensive surveys of several provinces, namely Guangdong, Guangxi, Fujian, Jiangxi, Sichuan and Taiwan. He also carried out numerous field and glasshouse studies, and published his findings in 1956 in *Acta Phytopathologica Sinica*, in spite of fierce criticism from some of his colleagues in plant pathology and other disciplines. This paper gives an excellent history of the disease and its symptomatology, and describes his pioneering epidemiological and etiological experiments. His experimental data proved that it is a graft-transmissible disease, and ruled out other suggested causes. He also presented evidence of natural spread of the disease indicating the existence of a vector. He later demonstrated that HLB could be eliminated from budwood by thermotherapy. Because of the significance of his research, an English version of his original paper was published in the Proceedings of the Asia-Pacific International Conference on Citriculture in 1991. His findings were in advance of his contemporaries' writings, and the paper is now considered a classic in citrus pathology. Although he resumed his work on HLB after this period of criticism, it was later suspended again during the cultural revolution. In 1980, he published an extension pamphlet containing instructions to Chinese nurserymen on the propagation of citrus in HLB-infected areas.

Professor Lin was the father of hot-moist air thermotherapy treatment for eliminating viruses in citrus budwood. This technique was later used to eliminate tatterleaf virus from Meyer or Beijing lemon.

Professor Lin passed away after a long illness on June 6, 1986 in Guangzhou, and was survived by his wife, Lucille Lin, three sons and two daughters. He is buried in Cunxia, his birthplace, near the Minhou virus-free foundation block orchard. This is a fitting resting place for this great scientist.

Prepared by Lin Kung-hsun (brother of Prof Lin), C. N. Roistacher, and J. V. da Graça