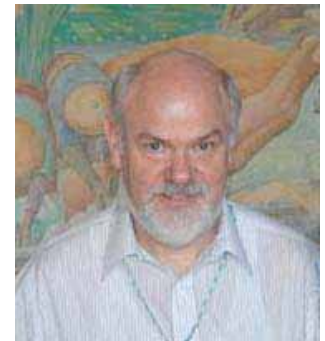


### Greeting to J-SRI from Prof. Norman Uphoff

To the Japan Association of SRI (J-SRI):

It has been a great pleasure to learn of your Association's establishment, and I look forward to the contributions that I am confident your members will be able to make to better understanding and to disseminating the System of Rice Intensification. Japanese scientists have over the past hundred years produced some of the best scientific knowledge about rice, and already, some have made important contributions to our growing accumulation of knowledge for SRI. The privileged place that rice has in Japanese culture and history makes it all the more likely that the growing interest in SRI now evident in Japan will be fruitful. (Speaking of the cultural aspects of rice, you may be interested to know that I have two flags from Inari shrine in Kyoto hanging outside my house here in Ithaca, New York.)



The first name given to SRI was 'the Katayama system' -- in honor of the discoveries that T. Katayama made in the 1920s and 1930s when he illuminated the phenomenon of phyllochrons, based on his study of the tillering patterns of rice, wheat and barley. Unfortunately, this work was not published until 1951, after the war, and then, even more unfortunately, it was never translated into English. Thus many rice scientists around the world have not known about this excellent and insightful research on rice physiology -- unless they learned it through Japanese colleagues or teachers. One service of the Association could be to get Katayama's work translated into English and at least posted on the web if not published in book form.

Fr. de Laulanie, the originator of SRI, was fortunate to learn about phyllochrons in Madagascar from reading a book on rice, published by Didier Moreau, a French agriculturalist, in 1986. I do not know how Moreau learned about phyllochrons, but Fr. de Laulanie saw that they could explain why his transplanting very young seedlings (before the start of their 4th phyllochron of growth) gave such splendid. In gratitude, he began calling the new system of rice management that he was assembling 'the Katayama system.' However, as it happened, a Japanese diplomat stationed in Madagascar publicly objected that since Katayama had not originated this system, it should not be called by his name. Perhaps the diplomat did not want his country associated with this new system because it was at that time already controversial.

My own understanding of SRI was greatly helped by an article that Prof. Nemoto and colleagues published on phyllochrons in the U.S. journal CROP SCIENCE in 1995, which made clearer to me (and others) the physiological patterns and mechanisms that are roughly, but only crudely, understood in terms of 'degree-days.' Once I had an appreciation of phyllochrons as a pattern of rice plant growth, my own confidence in the results we were seeing in Madagascar was increased.

I am very grateful to Prof. Takeshi Horie, formerly at Kyoto University and now president of NARO, for his early interest in SRI and for the paper that he presented to the 4th International Congress of Crop Sciences and later published. This was a landmark in laying out the scientific foundations for SRI. Having a rice scientist of such eminence take SRI seriously like this was a great boost for those of us in the SRI network who have less scientific knowledge than Horie-san has.

And I am especially grateful to our friend Shuichi Sato for the interest that he has taken in SRI from his vantage point of Eastern Indonesia and for the tireless and imaginative leadership he has given for SRI promotion, really on a worldwide scale, ranging from Senegal to Japan. That he started out with great skepticism is understandable. I remember being myself skeptical about SRI for three years because it sounded too good to be true. But when the farmers with whom we worked around Ranomafana National Park had averaged 8 tons per hectare yields for three years -- having previously gotten yields of only 2 tons per hectare -- I concluded that skepticism is something to be optimized rather than maximized. Fortunately, Sato-san reached the same conclusion.

So I thank Prof. Yamaji and all of the members of the Japan Association for SRI for their efforts to bring together so much talent and concern for the improvement of rice production. I wish you much gratifying intellectual challenge and stimulation through the Association, the fulfillment of your ideals for development, and a rewarding friendship among members, continuously expanding in number. I look forward to meeting with Association members in July. Until then,

Norman Uphoff