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Conference Report: The 6th Asia-Pacific Drying Conference (ADC2009) October 19-21, 2009, Bangkok, Thailand

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Conference Report: The 6th Asia-Pacific Drying Conference (ADC2009) October 19–21, 2009, Bangkok, Thailand

It seems that the year 2009 will go down in the recent history of drying R&D as the year when a record number of conferences devoted to drying took place around the globe. As Professor Mujumdar, a cofounder of the ADC series, put it in his plenary lecture at ADC2009, we had a tsunami of drying symposia! Interestingly, despite being the last major drying event of 2009, ADC2009 attracted the largest number of abstracts, full papers, and participants. Congratulations are due to the program chair, Dr. Sakamon Devahastin of the King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (KMUTT), as well as his dedicated and hardworking colleagues and students responsible for the impeccable and smooth organization of this major event.

Statistically speaking, ADC2009 program consisted of 120+ full papers that were presented in both oral presentation and poster formats. Two plenary speakers, Professor Arun S. Mujumdar of the National University of Singapore (NUS) and Professor Somchart Soponronnarit of KMUTT, covered a wide spectrum of topics in drying. Professors M.S. Rahman (Sultanate of Oman), G.S.V. Raghavan (Canada), H.S. Ramaswamy (Canada), B. Bhandari (Australia), S. Pang (New Zealand), X.D. Chen (Australia), T.A.G. Langrish (Australia), and C.G.J. Baker (Kuwait) also gave keynote lectures covering many interesting aspects of drying.

The proceedings of refereed papers are available on CD from the ADC2009 secretariat. Participants also received a book of abstracts in hardcopy format. The overall technical quality of papers presented was high. There were only a few no-shows, which were largely confined to the poster session and hence did not affect the program flow adversely.

ADC2009, like its predecessors and sister conferences in drying, also included a major awards program. The following is a list of the award winners:

- Arun S. Mujumdar Medal for Excellence in Drying Research and Mentorship: Professor S. Soponronnarit (KMUTT, Thailand)
- Outstanding Contribution to Drying Community: Professor W.R.W. Daud (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia)
- Excellence in Drying Process Innovation: Professor T.A.G. Langrish (University of Sydney, Australia)

- Young Scientist Award for Excellence in Drying R&D in Asia-Pacific Region: Dr. S.V. Jangam (National University of Singapore, Singapore) and Dr. C. Borompichaichartkul (Chulalongkorn University, Thailand)

A special note is made of the award sponsored by Taylor & Francis Group, LLC, which recognized the awardee's contribution to *Drying Technology*. Dr. Devahastin was presented with this award by the Editor-in-Chief, Professor Mujumdar, on behalf of the publisher. One noteworthy and innovative feature of the awards program was that the winners were given special framed certificates, which included special watercolor artworks by Professor Mujumdar and Purnima Mujumdar, both of whom have been involved with the "drying movement" right since the start of the first IDS! Photographs of the special framed certificates can be viewed by visiting <http://serve.me.nus.edu.sg/arun>.

As far as the technical content is concerned, as expected, papers on food and agricultural produce drying dominated the program, with 76 papers on this subject. Energy-related topics were covered in 9 papers. In terms of the technologies themselves, there were 24 papers on spray drying, 8 on fluidized-bed drying, 7 each on solar and freeze drying, and smaller numbers on microwave, osmotic, vacuum, and superheated steam drying and heat pumps. Academics overpowered industry participation by a wide margin. Also, it was heartening to see that participants came from several countries outside Asia as well. The greatest number of papers came from the host country, Thailand.

Overall, ADC2009 was a success despite the sharp economic downturn in 2008–2009. Dr. Zhonghua Wu of Tianjin University of Science & Technology made a proposal to host ADC2011 in Tianjin, China. The proposal was accepted by all participants. It already promises to be a success with a record number of participants in view of the rapidly advancing economy of China and Asia in general.

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