

# Foreword

*The 18th International Specialised Symposium on Yeast (ISSY) was devoted to the yeasts, a large group of microorganisms notable for their morphological and biochemical diversity. Specialised yeast meeting entitled »Yeast nutrition and natural habitats« took place at the beautiful location in Bled, Slovenia from 24 until 29 August 1997, in the congress hall. At the meeting were more than 200 participants from 37 countries, with 76 oral presentations and 115 posters in 9 sessions.*

*After this international scientific and professional experience, a conclusion would be that a specialised yeast meeting with profound orientation to yeast ecology and nutrition was one of the most necessary meetings for today. Nevertheless, it is also one of the most needed meetings for tomorrow because it has opened new questions about yeasts and their natural habitats and artificial habitats created by human needs, technology and pollution.*

*The problem of yeast ecology is rather old, but with biodiversity issue it received a new strong push toward environments where the yeasts had not been traditionally studied. However, also in traditionally recognized niches there are still some of the undiscovered topics which could be of technological or medical importance.*

*The second strong point of this meeting was that among the participants we found many new, young researchers who are active in the molecular biology of yeast. We believe that this fresh breath is essential for further comprehensive studies of yeasts.*

*Connection between ecology and nutrition seems to be so obvious that it has been pushed aside in belief that there is really not much to be elucidated in this area. However, the yeast commission of the International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS) discussed this idea and the commissioners felt that there should be established a forum for open debate among yeast experts about the impact of ecology and nutrition on physiology, genetics, molecular biology, taxonomy, engineering, technology, health, etc. The 18th ISSY meeting provided such a forum.*

*The selection of papers shows that there is great interest among yeast people in the problems concerning yeast nutrition and various natural habitats. We may regard this as a big success for the yeast community. The selected and reviewed papers, which were read during the symposium on Bled, Slovenia are printed in this special issue of Food Technology and Biotechnology. Choice of this particular journal was based on its importance and recognition as one of the leading journals of biotechnology in middle Europe.*

## Editor of the special issue

Professor Peter Raspor



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