



Conference report

5TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CHITIN AND CHITOSAN

Princeton, New Jersey, USA, October 17-20, 1991,
organized by the American ChitoScience Society, Inc.

Following the 4th International Conference on Chitin and Chitosan in Trondheim (1988), this conference was sited in the beautiful surroundings of the New Jersey autumn-coloured forests. The conference was attended by some 120 participants from 18 different countries. The organizers had divided the presentations into nine sections: *Biomedical Applications, Chemical and Physical Properties, Enzymology and Genetic Engineering, Agricultural, Nutritional and Personal Care Applications, Derivatives and Reactions, Films, Fibers, Gels and Membranes, General Papers* and *Regulatory Aspects*. Two parallel sessions were necessary in order to give the 55 speakers and the 40 poster presenters the opportunity to present their results.

It was one of the conclusions from the previous conference that more basic research directed to understanding the relationship between the chemical structure and the physical properties of chitosans was necessary. The 5th International Conference in New Jersey did present such new knowledge, showing that chitosans are a non-mysterious class of polysaccharides with properties to be expected from a charged (1→4)-linked glycan.

Chitosan manufacturers have been waiting for the 'exponential growth phase' of their product for a number of years. The 'lag-phase' has been surprisingly long, but may well be ended by the expected environmentalists' ban of synthetic polycationic polymers, a market which can be taken by chitosan and chitosan derivatives.

The organizers had chosen a professional conference site which offered high-class conference facilities and accomodation at the same location. The advantages of such a compact setting for the conference is obvious, but it is also important that graduate students and other participants with limited financial supplies may attend such conferences by offering alternative and less expensive accomodation.

The 6th International Conference on Chitin and Chitosan will take place in Gdynia, Poland in 1993.

Congratulations to the American ChitoScience Society and Dr Charles J. Brine for a successful and well-organized conference in Princeton.

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