

Foreword

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This special issue of *Carbohydrate Polymers* contains the proceedings of the Frontiers in Carbohydrate Research—3 Conference organized by the Whistler Center for Carbohydrate Research and held at Purdue University (USA). Twelve of the sixteen papers presented at the conference were deemed appropriate for this journal and are published here.

The objectives of the Frontiers Conferences are several. The faculty, students and research associates of the Whistler Center concentrate on projects that provide unique contributions to furthering understanding of the chemical and physical properties of carbohydrates related to practical applications. One reason for these conferences is to present results of some of this work.

Another objective is to present developments in methods which can answer important fundamental questions related to the functionalities of carbohydrates, and developments in concepts and principals which provide a better understanding of the properties of

carbohydrates. Related to both are presentations of problems that need solving.

A third objective is the presentation of topics, some of which are directly related to carbohydrates, some not so obviously related, which stimulate thinking on how to apply the rapidly expanding base of scientific knowledge and methodologies to carbohydrate research.

Included here are the conference papers related to polysaccharides and, therefore, appropriate for *Carbohydrate Polymers*. Some papers are review papers; others contain primarily original data. Included are two papers on the physical properties of polysaccharides, one of which describes a practical use; four papers on analytical methods for polysaccharides and the cell-wall material containing them; and four papers on the three-dimensional structures of polysaccharides. One of the latter four and two others discuss relationships of structure to physiological activity of biologically active polysaccharides.