

PROLOGUE TO THE ARTICLES ON EDIBLE MUSHROOMS INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE

Mexico holds one of the largest diversities of edible wild mushrooms worldwide. More than 450 fungal species are consumed in the country, and more than 5,500 names are used to designate them in the different languages spoken by the ethnic groups inhabiting mainly Central and Southeastern Mexico during the last millennia. The wild mushrooms are a non-timber forest product of great ecological, physiological and economic importance in the planet. Particularly those establishing mycorrhizal relationships have a paramount importance in the structure and functioning of the ecosystems where they live. They control nutrient cycling and establish interconnections among the plants with which they establish mutualistic symbioses in natural conditions. In addition to their unique nutritional composition that includes large amount of proteins, vitamins and minerals and low contents of fat and carbohydrates, they are also able to produce abundant bioactive compounds with anti-carcinogenic, anti-hypertensive, anti-diabetes and anti-oxidant properties.

Taking into account this background, we organized the *9th International Workshop on Edible Mycorrhizal Mushrooms (IWEMM9)* from July 10 to 14, 2017 at *Colegio de Postgraduados*, with the participation of around 500 delegates from 20 countries from five continents. Additional to keynote lectures, plenary lectures and posters, a biocultural fair was held with the participation of mushroom gatherers from different Mexican ethnic groups including Mazahua, Chinantec, Zapotec, Mixtec, Tlahuica, Mixe and Nahuatl people. There was also a mushroom exhibition and a mycogastronomic festival, showing the great diversity and biocultural importance of wild mushrooms consumed in Mexico. In this volume, six articles of contributions presented during the IWEMM9, written by authors from Chile, China, Ethiopia, Italy, Japan, México, New Zealand, Spain and Thailand are kindly published by the prestigious *Revista Fitotecnia Mexicana*, thanks to the kindness and generosity of Dr. Victor A. González Hernández, with the support of Dr. Amalio Santacruz Varela, Editor in Chief. We acknowledge their great editorial effort to make available this information worldwide

Dr. Jesús Pérez-Moreno
Chairman of IWEMM9
Texcoco, México, autumn 2017

