

Inaugural Editorial

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Many loved beverages worldwide are derived from plants. Some of the most important and popular examples of these beverage crops are tea, coffee, and cacao, which provide great economic value from source to consumption across the world. The buds and tender leaves of the tea plant (*Camellia sinensis*) can be used to make various tea products by specific processing or manufacture methods. The seeds (beans) of the coffee (*Coffea arabica* and *C. canephora*) and cacao (*Theobroma cacao*) trees once roasted create products with complex aromas and tastes loved by many on a daily basis. As the most popular non-alcoholic drinks in the world outside of pure water, they each contain an abundant mixture of specific secondary metabolites. These secondary metabolites not only give the beverage unique aroma, taste and flavor, they also have been correlated or directly shown through hundreds of clinical peer reviewed studies to benefit human health. These extensive studies have been reported and indicated that tea, coffee, and cacao drinks are able to reduce the risk of memory disorders, Parkinson's disease, type-2 diabetes, cancer, and so much more. Many other crops have also been used for beverage making, such as cacti, coconut, etc.

Tea has been grown in China, for thousands years, while coffee and cacao have been grown in Latin America, Asia and Africa for many centuries. These beverage crops are growing on both small and large farms providing income and livelihood in the producing countries. They are then processed into the ingredients used to make these beverages ready for consumption in many different formats or delivery systems.

Beverage crops research is considered a branch of horticultural and agricultural sciences. Today, this research shares many aspects with agronomic/horticultural crop research since they obey the same biological principles, employ similar research methodologies, and share many of the same objectives as other crop research and production programs, such as breeding for greater yield and biotic and abiotic stress resistances, higher quality, and richer nutrients. Understanding these fundamental processes of plant life such as development, reproduction, adaptation to biotic and abiotic stresses, quality trait controls is prerequisite for meeting such goals. Besides the benefit along the entire supply chain, better crops can greatly help to develop diverse products for consumers with added value and possible health benefit.

In past decades, basic research in beverage crops has far lagged behind that in other agricultural and horticultural crops. This is largely due to the limitations and bottleneck in

this area of study, such as long breeding cycles, large plant sizes, non-efficient transformation technique, and the lack of genetic database resources. As such, manuscripts on beverage plant research are often depreciably evaluated by some journals with broad audience. However, the expertise or fields of basic beverage crops research have undergone remarkable progress in the last 10 years, mainly due to: (1) revolutionary technologies like genomic sequences of all major beverage crops, tea, coffee and cacao; (2) the health effects of the specific secondary metabolites in beverage crops which greatly stimulated the fundamental research in beverage plants, and the global effort in promoting beverage crop farming through internationally coordinated efforts, especially in developing countries. These research and economic efforts have greatly increased research output, which requires and deserves a dedicated professional journal to publish and disseminate the research. Beverage Plant Research (BPR) solely will fill this specialty area.

Launching BPR, a new journal for this particular community, became possible through a shared long-term vision of Tea Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (<http://www.tricaas.com>), China Tea Science Society (<http://www.chinatss.cn>) and Maximum Academic Press (<http://www.maxapress.com>), the publishing arm of TranSanpientia, which has set the lofty goal to become one of the premier global research institutes on tea science and technology, and a specialized academic publisher in the area of agriculture and life sciences, respectively.

The scope of BPR is to report and follow the most interesting and impactful research discoveries in basic research areas for all beverage crops worldwide. The Journal will accept and publish original research articles, reviews of recent progress in specific subjects, and forward-looking perspectives. Subject areas include, but are not limited to, breeding and genetics, genomics, biotechnology, biochemistry, food chemistry, quality regulation mechanism and safety, physiology, cellular and molecular biology, evolution, environmental biology and chemistry of beverage crops, newly developed technologies/protocols, and useful resources. The Journal will also publish News and Views on current events and hot topics in global beverage research and industry. BPR embraces new and emerged trends by timely publishing of focal issues.

There are numerous benefits for publishing in BPR. We will strive to complete the initial review process in 6–8 weeks

while ensuring a vigorous review process. All the accepted manuscripts will be finalized by professional editors for language and consistency of format. Each accepted paper will be open-access published as online shortly after acceptance for free view and download under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) 4.0 License. All papers published in BPR will receive the highest exposure to both professionals and popular press through online hosting on <http://www.maxapress.com>, and through various social media, including WeChat, Twitter, Facebook, and precision email promotion, etc.

It is our privilege to work with an outstanding team of Associate Editors (AEs) to build Beverage Plant Research into a highly reputable international journal and appreciate their contribution of their valuable time and experience. Together we will provide the best academic service to the basic beverage crops research community. All AEs will have the privilege to propose and organize timely focal issues in their expertise areas. As basic research continues to advance, we will continuously expand our editorial board with new expertise as needed.

Finally, we wish to invite plant biologists who are working with beverage plants to submit their exciting discoveries to this new journal. We greatly appreciate your support as

editors, authors, reviewers, and readers. BPR is a community journal, it will serve the community, and in turn, it needs strong community support. We welcome your valuable suggestions and ideas for us to better serve you and the community. Together, we can build the journal as the specialized flagship journal in the beverage crop field, and in horticultural and biological sciences in general, which will advance science and industry, further benefiting our lives and health.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Dates

Received 24 March 2021; Accepted 24 March 2021;
Published online 30 March 2021



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