

Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society Award for 2019

Professor Andrew Sinclair

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Professor Andrew Sinclair is Professor Emeritus in Nutrition Science at Deakin University, Australia and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Nutrition, Dietetics and Food at Monash University, Australia. He is currently a Trustee of the Australian Nutrition Trust and serves as an academic Trustee for ILSI South East Asia. He is a deputy Editor of the British Journal of Nutrition, and on the Editorial Boards of Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition and Essential Fatty Acids, Prostaglandins & Leukotrienes. Professor Sinclair was chair of the National Nutrition Committee of the Australian Academy of Science and has been the Scientific Advisor to the Omega 3 Centre (Australia & NZ). Professor Sinclair was Chair, FAO/WHO Review Panel on risks and benefits of seafood consumption, 2010. He has been involved with the Nutrition Society of Australia for more than 50 years, including being President, Secretary, Editor of the Proceedings and Chair of the Melbourne Group. He is a Fellow of the Nutrition Society of Australia, the Australian Institute of Food Science and Technology and the Australian College of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine. He was awarded the AOCS-Australasia Research Award in 2015, the ISSFAL Alexander Leaf Lifetime Research Award in 2014, and the Supelco/Nicholas Pellick AOCS Research Award in 1999.

He was born in Melbourne in 1942 and trained in Agricultural Science at the University of Melbourne, graduating in 1964. Following that he completed a PhD in nutritional biochemistry at the University of Melbourne, graduating in 1969. Since that time, he has worked in various research institutes and Universities, including several multi-disciplinary organisations, which have enabled him to work with professionals from other disciplines such as haematology, histology, immunology and microbiology. Apart from his research achievements in nutritional biology, his training of post-graduate and undergraduate students and mentoring of younger scientists has fostered many health-directed food and nutrition science careers in the Asia Pacific region. He worked as a postdoctoral fellow for two years in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Western Ontario, London, Canada and then for four years as a postdoctoral fellow at the Nuffield Institute of Comparative Medicine in London, UK. He returned to Melbourne in 1974 where he was a Senior Research scientist at the Veterinary Research Institute in the Victorian Department of Agriculture in Melbourne for a period of ten years. From 1985 until 2005, he worked at RMIT University in three different departments: Applied Biology, Medical Laboratory Science and Food Science. He was Professor of Biochemistry and then Professor of Food Science at this University. From 2006 until his retirement in 2014, he was Professor of Human Nutrition and then Professor of Nutrition Science at Deakin University in Victoria, Australia. While at Deakin, he was Director of the Metabolic Research Unit (2008-2012), and Chair of the Animal Ethics Committee (2008-2014). On retirement he taught Nutrition and Molecular Nutrition and Immunology at Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, China in 2014 and 2015, and was an Adjunct Professor in the School of Food Science and Engineering at South China University of Technology, Guangzhou, China in 2015 and 2016.

His research has largely focussed on lipids. Highlights include the first report of essential fatty acid deficiency in an adult human; the identification that docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and arachidonic acid were the main polyunsaturated fatty acids in the brain of different mammals (a brain grey matter fatty acid fingerprint); the first report that cats were unable to metabolise 18-carbon polyunsaturated fatty acids to longer chain fatty acids; the first report of linolenic acid deficiency in a primate; identification that lean meat from ruminant animals was a source of long chain omega 3 fatty acids; the identification that DHA is required for optimal visual function in guinea pigs; the first report that a novel pathway for the deposition of linolenic acid (in guinea pigs) is in skin and fur (hair); that cocoa polyphenols have beneficial effects on platelet function in humans; the identification of novel lipid mediators derived from docosapentaenoic acid (DPAn-3) in humans; the discovery that omega 3 deficiency in the perinatal period disturbs brain zinc metabolism, and that DHA and zinc have opposing effects on expression of histone H3 and H4 expression in human neuronal cells.

His achievements have promoted and developed food and nutrition science in the interests of the peoples, not only of Australia, but also of the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society's 2019 Award to him is further recognition of his distinguished contributions to nutrition science.

Citation by
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