

Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society

Award for 2014

Dr Maitree Suttajit PhD

Dean of the School of Medical Sciences, University of Phayao, Thailand



Dr Maitree Suttajit was born in Chiang Mai, Thailand on March 2nd, 1939. His educational background is in chemistry and biochemistry. He graduated in BSc (Chemistry with Honors), Chulalongkorn University, 1960, MSc (Biochemistry), Mahidol University, 1962 and PhD in Biochemistry from the University of New York in Buffalo, USA, 1971. His PhD, under Prof Richard J Winzler, involved the therapeutic structural characteristics of N-acetyl neuraminic acid for glycoproteins. He then joined the Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Medicine, and Chiang Mai University, Thailand, where he became Head and remained until his retirement in 2000. He was also became Associate Dean for research.

In 1997, he was appointed Professor of toxicology and biochemistry and, on retirement, a Professor Emeritus of Chiang Mai University. He taught across the fields of biochemistry and health sciences in medical science, medicine, pharmacy, nursing, dentistry and public health. He received an outstanding teaching award in 1997 from Chiang Mai University. In 1998, he was awarded the royal honor and insignia of “The Most Noble Order of the Crown of Thailand (*Mahawachiramonkut Thai*)”. In 2009, he received the Cerebos Award for his findings about health benefits of proanthocyanidins from red and purple rice in diabetes and Alzheimer’s disease.

He became a visiting professor in the Faculty of Science, Mahasarakham University and in the School of Medical Sciences, University of Phayao, 2001-2005. In 2010, he was appointed as the Dean of the School of Medical Sciences, University of Phayao, Phayao where he has introduced undergraduate and graduate studies in nutrition and dietetics. Other appointments have included those at the Cancer Unit, Princess Chulabhorn Research Institute Center, Chiang Mai University, visiting researcher at the Mt Sinai Medical Center, NY, USA and the National Cancer Research Institute, Tokyo, Japan

Dr Suttajit’s nutrition research contributions have ranged across the biochemistry of the dietary prevention and management of certain cancers, cardiovascular disease, diabetes and HIV+/AIDS. He has had a particular interest in aflatoxins in Thai foods and in polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons as air pollutants, giving an environmental and toxicological orientation to his nutritional interests. Yet again, cancer chemo-prevention has been a theme in his work as has the place and understanding of traditional foods and of medicinal herbs in health maintenance and care in Thailand. He has been author and coauthor of over 67 papers published in peer reviewed journals, and written and edited several Thai textbooks such as Environmental Toxic Substances, Food for Health and Foods and Cancer.

These various endeavours have been the background to Prof Suttajit’s interest in plant-based diets and to his founding and Presidency of the Chiang Mai Vegetarian Society, the Thai Vegetarian Union, the Asian Vegetarian Union, the Thai Centenarian Society and the Thai Society for Free Radical Research. He is also an Editor of the Phayao Journal and Vegetarian Nutrition Journal (online).

For his pursuit of an appreciation of the scientific basis of traditional food and medicinal usage and toxicology in the Asia Pacific region and for its peoples’ health and well-being, Prof Maitree Suttajit has been bestowed the Award of the Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society for 2014.

Citation By
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Asia Pacific Clinical Nutrition Society