

### Abstract:

Looking back twenty-one years when the Georgia Postharvest Team started its work that help lead to these conferences, much has changed. In the world of fruit and vegetable quality the most significant changes have been the introduction of fresh-cut products with many more pre-packaged items, the promise and lack of adoption of irradiation and GMOs in the marketplace, and a much more consumer-driven market. We predict that the next 10-20 years will see less total consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables with less emphasis on fresh and natural products, less emphasis on extended shelf life and low prices, fewer bulk items, and less interest in postharvest physiology and low-cost crop production. During the time there will be a similar emphasis on convenience of fruit and vegetable products and Purchase Quality. We also expect to see more emphasis on Quality of the products, particularly Consumption Quality and Value, with more local production and technological innovations to deliver fuller flavour, and research emphasising preharvest factors in postharvest quality as well as sustainable production to lessen undesirable impact to the environment.

If this series of conferences retains its triennial cycle, it will be interesting to review these predictions at the 2012 and 2021 conferences, possibly back here in Wageningen. We suspect that some of these predictions will be on target while others miss the mark completely. What is important is that we learn from the past, realise that extrapolating into the future solely from present circumstances is almost always inaccurate, and that flexibility to changing circumstances is a hallmark of success.