

## Acknowledgments

There are concerned individuals and institutions to whom I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for their contribution to this research work and my graduate program at the University of Tsukuba.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Masayuki Koike, my academic advisor, for giving me the invaluable opportunity to study at the University of Tsukuba and for his encouragement throughout my period of study here. Without his invaluable guidance, I would not have been able to accomplish this dissertation, and I am deeply indebted to him.

I also would like to express my profound appreciation to Prof. Dr. Toshio Konaka, my former academic advisor, for his supportiveness in both academic and daily life during the first four years of my study here.

Grateful acknowledgments are also given to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tomohiro Takigawa who has been very kind to me. His invaluable assistance and sharp ideas have been very helpful to me, especially for preparing transducer fabrication. Sincere thanks should also be expressed to Mr. Akira Yoda for his kind assistance and suggestions in both academic and daily life concerns.

Also, I would like to acknowledge invaluable comments and useful suggestions for improvement of this thesis that I have received from my examination committee: two of them I have mentioned above, Prof. Dr. Masayuki Koike and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Tomohiro Takigawa; and another two included Prof. Dr. Atsushi Tada and Prof. Dr. Yasuo Yamada.

To the respected people at the National Agricultural Research Center, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Dr. Junichi Sato (moved to National Grassland

Research Institute), Dr. Kazuto Shigeta and Mr. Yoshisada Nagasaka, I will never forget their hospitality in providing me with working space and facilities for the experiment and their useful guidance during the time I was with them.

Also, I would like to extend my profound gratitude to Dr. Shigeru Tani, National Research Institute of Agricultural Engineering, for arrangement of the triaxial test apparatus and his technical assistance.

Special gratitude is to Dr. Hideo Hasegawa, my former tutor, and Asst. Prof. Dr. Ryoza Noguchi for their assistance both to my related research work and to my daily concerns. Also, my special thanks go to Mr. Tsuyoshi Homma for his help in fabricating transducers.

Appreciation is also extended to all of my laboratory's senior and junior friends, Prof. Dr. Yang Yinsheng, Mr. Mimin Muhaemin, Mr. Eulito U. Bautista, Mr. Lilik Soetiarso, Mr. Weerachai Arjharn, Mr. Norihiro Hoshi, Mr. Tomoyuki Furuichi, Mr. Hideto Kurosaki and Mr. Wanrat Abdullakasm. Fellows, thanks for the great camaraderie.

Sincere thanks also go to the Japanese language teachers in the Foreign Language Center. Without them, I would not have been able to overcome language problems in my daily life in Japan.

I am also indebted to my former academic advisor in Thailand, Assoc. Prof. Bانشaw Bahalayodhin, for giving me the opportunity to study in Japan and his continuous encouragement while I was studying here.

The various help extended by my friends, Thais, Japanese, and others who made my stay in Japan a memorable one, is hereby greatly appreciated.

With all humbleness and sincerity, I wish to express my thanks to the Japanese Government for providing financial support throughout my graduate study.

My deep gratitude is also to my beloved mother, father, brothers and sisters for their love and moral support for both the time I was with them and the time I was away.