

NYAWA 2014

## fruity microbes

Leslie Than Tian Lung  
Rukman Awang Hamat  
Vasanth Kumari Neela  
Chee Hui Yee  
Suresh Kumar

Microbes are small living things; bacteria, fungi and viruses are all microbes. Generally, we cannot see the majority of microbes using our naked eyes. However, with the invention of a compound microscope by a Dutch whose name was Antonie van Leeuwenhoek in the 17th century, human for the first time 'entered' into another 'realm' of life and began to appreciate that our world are not just being inhabited by them, animals and plants but also by their tiny close neighbours, the microbes. The fact that microbes have been in existence for the past four billion years ago perplexes many. To put things into perspective, modern human being, who is scientifically known as *Homo sapiens* only came to existence about two hundred thousand years ago!

Microbes come in different shapes and conformations. It is by no accident that their shapes and conformations do have some resemblance to things in nature e.g. fruits. Among the common shapes seen in microbes are round, oval, rod and spiral. In addition to exist singly, they may appear among themselves in pairs, in groups of four, in chains, and in cluster. These unique arrangements resemble some fruits such as cherries, avocados, lemons, grapes, langsat, bananas and so forth. Not many of us are privileged enough to have the access to microscope to appreciate all these fine details of microbes. Thus, in this article, we showcase some of the common portrayals of shapes and conformations of microbes and their resemblance to fruits for better appreciation and understanding.

