

PROF. DR. FERENC ZSOLDOS IS 70 YEARS OLD



FERENC ZSOLDOS Professor Emeritus of József Attila University is 70 years old. This anniversary offers the occasion to recall his course of life, the milestones of the half century of his scientific career.

FERENC ZSOLDOS was born in Sarkad, Hungary, on 24th March, 1927. After secondary school studies in Sarkad and then Békéscsaba, he matriculated in 1947. He next enrolled as a student of biology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences of Eötvös Loránd University, in Budapest, from which he received his diploma in 1952. Following this, he took part in postgraduate training for three years at the Department of Plant Physiology, and then from 1955 worked as an assistant lecturer at the Department of Applied Botany of the University. He moved to the Department of Plant Physiology of the University in Szeged in 1957. He held the position of research worker till 1974, in which year he was appointed Reader, followed in 1984 by his appointment as Professor. He became Chairman of the Department of Plant Physiology in 1985, and continued to hold this position until 1995, and retired in 1996.

FERENC ZSOLDOS started his educational and teaching activities at Eötvös Loránd University where, while still a university student, he regularly took part as a demonstrator in the botany practicals. Later, following his move to Szeged, he led plant physiology practicals, held courses of special lectures, and delivered lectures in the main courses on plant physiology. Under his guidance, an appreciable number of university students have prepared their diploma work and theses for their degrees, or have obtained their university doctoral degrees. He delivered regular lectures of plant physiology and courses of special lectures on the topics of mineral nutrition, deficiency diseases of plants, and the practical use of hydroponic cultures, within the framework of national (agricultural engineer, teacher, etc.) training courses and postgraduate training courses.

FERENC ZSOLDOS started his research work in 1952 at the Department of Plant Physiology of Eötvös Loránd University, where in 1957 he prepared and successfully defended his university doctoral dissertation [*Studies on the nitrogen metabolism of rice*], and later his dissertation for the degree of Candidate [*Physiological studies in rice seedlings*] and Doctor of Science of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences [*Effects of environmental factors on ion uptake by plants*]. His scientific activities were greatly influenced by the circumstance that, first as a scholar, and then as a visiting scientist, he was able to spend a long period in 1962 at the Laboratory of the International Atomic Energy Agency near Vienna (Seibersdorf). Here he learned the modern isotope techniques relating to ion-transport research. Later he started dealing with the effects of environmental stress factors (low temperature, pH, nitrite, aluminium, etc.) and various, biologically active compounds (e.g. herbicides) on the nutrient uptakes and growth of grain crops. In connection with this topics, he has published 173 papers in national (*Acta Biol. Hung.*, *Acta Biol. Szeged.*, *Bot. Comm.*, etc.) and international (*Nature*, *Physiologia Plantarum*, *Plant and Soil*, *J. Plant Physiology*, etc.) scientific periodicals as well as in the publications of international congresses.

FERENC ZSOLDOS is at present a member of several Hungarian (Hungarian Society of Biology, Hungarian Society for Plant Physiology, Plant Physiological and Botanical Committees of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences) and foreign (European Society for New Methods in Agriculture, Federation of European Societies of Plant Physiology) scientific societies and committees, respectively. He was editor of the journal *Botanikai Közlemények* (Botanical Communications) 1980–95, and an editorial board member of *Acta Biologica Szegediensis* (1984–), *Physiologia Plantarum* (1978–92) and *Oryza* (1985–90). He is a member of advisory board of the „Japan Prize” Selection Committee (1985–).

Besides his university educational and research activity, FERENC ZSOLDOS has been, or still is taking an active part as project leader in the direction and elaboration of objectives connected with plant mineral nutrition in collaboration with Hungarian (Institute of Biophysics, Biological Research Center of Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Szeged, ERDEI, L.; Cereal Research Institute, Szeged, BÓNA, L.; Research Institute for Irrigation; Rice Laboratory, SZARVAS, S. KISS, I.) and foreign (Institute of Agriculture, Austrian Research Center, Seibersdorf, Austria, HAUNOLD, E.; University of Bayreuth, Germany, KOMOR, E.; University of Udine, Italy, MACRI, F. and VIANELLO, A.) partners. The co-operation of these partners in a multidisciplinary research was emphasised, when FERENC ZSOLDOS and co-workers (PÉCSVÁRADI, A., TARI, I., SZABÓ, M., NAGY, M. and VASHEGYI, Á.) launched a project entitled „Study of Physiological Changes in Plants Exposed to Nitrite: an Environmental Stress Factor and/or N Source” in PHARE ACCORD Programme (1993–94) supported by the European Community.

As an acknowledgement of his successful activities in university education, research and scientific life, in 1987 he was awarded the honour „For Outstanding Work” by the Hungarian Cultural Minister, in 1992 an Award of Hungarian Academy of Sciences for the activity in the stress physiology of plants, and in 1996 a title of Professor Emeritus from the József Attila University.

Now he is an active Professor Emeritus, still working untiringly in teaching and research projects of the department, participates in committees of the University and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, in scientific public life.

We wish professor FERENC ZSOLDOS good health and successful activities.

László Erdei

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