



**Prof dr Janoš Berenji**  
**(1954-2015)**

## IN MEMORIAM

### **JANOŠ BERENJI (1954-2015)**

A rich and eventful life of professor Janos Berenji, a man of life wisdom and science ended on Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2015 in Novi Sad. He was born on July 15<sup>th</sup> 1954. in Torda (Zitiste municipality) in the middle of the Banat plain where he attended elementary school and secondary agriculture education in Kanjiža. He graduated in 1979. at the Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad and was one of the best students of the Faculty of Agriculture of all time. Postgraduate studies at the Genetics and Plant Breeding at the Agricultural Faculty in Novi Sad, he completed in 1985, and he obtained a PhD degree in 1990. at the same Faculty. He gained the scientific advisor title in 2002. and the full professor title in the field of Genetics, Plant Breeding and Seed Production, in 2008. He has been teaching at the Faculty of Agriculture in Novi Sad, Faculty of Agriculture in Belgrade - Zemun, at the Faculty of Biofarming in Backa Topola, Megatrend University, Belgrade. During 1985, he did a six-month scientific training at several universities in the United States. He attended in 1987. the three-month international course in applied plant breeding in Wageningen, the Netherlands. In 2001. he did a four-month study trip to the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The Institute of Field and Vegetable Crops, hired him in 1979, where he worked until the last days of his life in the field of genetics, breeding and seed production of millets, sorghums, hems, tobacco and pumpkins. As a scientist, he visited the fields under sorghum in Asia, Africa, North and South America, from where he brought new skills for new classes. He was a true professional serious, responsible always reliable and accurate in carrying out his tasks. Because of that in 1990 he was appointed as the Leader of the Institute Department for hops, sorghums and herbs, today the Department of alternative culture of this Institute. It should be pointed out that at Corvinus University in Budapest, in 2009. he received an honorary doctorate of Honoris caus. A scientist, university professor, whose dedicated work in every transformed and modernized scientific thought. Since 2006, he has been the President of the Group for the sorghum EUCARPIA for Maize and Sorghum Section.

He was a member of the Presidency of the Serbian Genetic Society (2004-2014), he was the vice president of the Section for Breeding Organisms Serbian Genetic Society (1994-2004), and the President of the Section elected in 2004. He was intensively involved in the application of knowledge from science into practice. Professor Berenji had repeatedly been a member of the organizing and program committees of national and international conferences, or as chairman in our country and the worldwide. In basis of such lectures at faculties or at conferences, world-class congresses were great preparations with a lot of effort and creativity.

Janoš Berenji was responsible for a series of activities of urban and rural areas and thus contributed to the conservation of ethnological and cultural traditions in Vojvodina. It should be noted his contribution to the development of the Agricultural Museum in Kulpin where he was the author of permanent exhibitions about hemp, tobacco and Sorghum vulgare. In 2009. he prepared memorable exhibition at the Museum of Agriculture in Budapest on scientific topic he loved the most - marvelous world of pumpkins. Very few of scientists probably did not know to participate with so much passion in local consultations, television, conferences or world-class congresses as Janos did. He was among the first scientists in Serbia who spoke about genetically modified plants. His favorite theme was: Transgenic plants Pro et contra.

Most of the time professor Berenji spent in the experimental fields. The results of painstaking but expert work on the creation of new varieties of alternative crops were

not lacking. He unselfishly delivered the rich scientific experience and knowledge of plants breeding to his associates. He was a successful and popular team leader. Ability in coaching as a start up process which developed and released personal potentials in individual work is used to motivate colleagues and followers to persistent work and the creativity. So it must have been with 300 published scientific papers in the country and abroad, as well as several books of which the most important was the monograph „ Oil pumpkin“ published by the Institute of Field and Vegetable Crops in Novi Sad in 2011. In his research work he has participated in 21 national and international projects as a manager, researcher or manager of topics. He was intensively involved in the application of knowledge from science into practices and is author or co-author of 27 varieties of agricultural plants, of which 17 are recognized abroad. Such work did not remain unnoticed. Professor Janos Berenji received the prestigious award “Janos Arany” of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for outstanding scientific production of Hungarian scientists in the Diaspora in 2014, the same year he also received the “Kapetan Misa Anastasijevic” acknowledgment. He was engaged in the work of the Hungarian National Council.

Prof. Dr. Janos Berenji in gratitude on 26 June. 2015. the Hungarian government has opened an office for Agroculture Innovation in Senta titled: “Dr. Janos Berenji – Office of Agriculture Innovation”. Broadness, diversity and depth of his scientific works, modernity and significance of his scientific opus, innovative academic work, total dedication to the pedagogical and public intellectual engagement Janos Berenji for life earned the status of a scientific institution. Janos Berenji remained in the minds of scientists, students, intellectuals or simply people who are interested in the science of life.

All written above, classified Janoš Berenji as a scientist who has influenced the attitude, knowledge, understanding and interpretation of the microcosm and genetics, plant breeding, change and promote new knowledge. As Andre Malrux wrote: „When oaks are cut, forests fall harder“. Janoš will remain in lasting memory of many generations students and scientists. At the very end I will say, “I could not find many people with so much knowledge, love, patience and inspiration talk to about science, ethics, freedom, permanent life’s struggle and hoping he will make all of us to believe that it is not lost faith in Mankind”

On July 2015,

Jelena Bošković