

CHRONICLE

Juozas Benediktas Staniulis – one of the most prominent plant virologists in Lithuania



Juozas Benediktas Staniulis was born on 13 January, 1938 in Digriai village, Kaunas district. During the period 1956–1961, he studied at the Lithuanian Academy of Agriculture, Department of Agronomy and graduated with a diploma of scientific agronomist. In 1963–1966, he did a post graduate course at the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences' Botanical Institute. In 1967, he defended a thesis for the degree of candidate of biology sciences in Leningrad (currently Saint Petersburg). In 1974, he was conferred the title of senior research worker. In 1994, he defended a thesis "Causal agents of viral and yellows-type diseases of leguminous plants in Lithuania" for the degree of doctor habilitatus. In 1961–1963, he was employed at the Lithuanian Institute of Agriculture's Rumokai Experimental Station as a junior research worker, in 1966–1968 – at the Institute of Botany's Laboratory of Phytopathogenic Microorganisms as a junior research worker, in 1968–1980 – as a senior research worker, in 1980–1997 – at the laboratory of Phytoviruses as head research worker. In 1989–1992, he held the position of deputy director for research work at the Institute of Botany, in 1992–1997 – the chairperson of the Institute Board, since 1997 – head of the Laboratory of Plant Viruses, head research worker.

The research interests of doctor habilitatus Juozas Benediktas Staniulis encompass phytovirology, phytopathology, plant viral diseases, viruses, bacteriophages, phytoplasmas, electronic microscopy, microbiology, molecular biology. In 1963, he started researching viral, later phytoplasma plant diseases.

The researcher was involved in the high technology development program's project "Enhanced surveillance of respiratory viruses" (2003–2006), industrial biotechnology program's project "Engagement of metagenomic analysis of extremophile viruses from hot underground waters of Lithuania searching for the new enzymes" (2007–2009). He took part in the international projects: "Co-ordination of research on genetic resistance to plant pathogenic viruses, and their vectors, in European

crops" ("ResistVir") (2005–2009), "Enhanced control of potato mop-top virus in the Nordic and Baltic Sea Region" (2005–2008). He was in charge of the international Lithuania – Ukraine research projects: "Research into plum pox potyvirus distribution in Lithuania and the Ukraine and elaboration of biotechnological methods for the development of virus-free planting material" (2007–2008), "Identification of isolates of virus causing sugar beet rhizomania and other soil-borne viruses in Lithuania and the Ukraine and comparative molecular characterization of a genome" (2009–2010). He led the project on "Investigation of genetic diversity of alien viruses of fruit trees and vegetables and factors determining their distribution" (2010–2011).

The researcher participated in the internship programmes abroad: in 1972 – in the Slovak Academy of Sciences' Institute of Virology (Virologicky ustav SAV, Bratislava, Czechoslovakia); in 1972 – in the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences' Institute of Experimental Botany (Ustav experimentalni botaniki ČSAV, Prague, Czechoslovakia); in 1989 – in the Dutch Institute of Plant protection (Instituut voor Plantenziektenkundig Onderzoek, Wageningen, the Netherlands); In 1996 – in the Plant Science Institute of Agricultural Research Service USDA, Beltsville, USA; in 2005 – in the Norwegian Agricultural Research Institute's Plant protection Centre (Norsk Institutt for Planteforskning Plantevernet, Ås, Norway).

During the period 1975–1989, the researcher was a member of the International Working Group on Legume viruses. He is a board member of the research journals "Botanica Lithuanica" and "Žemdirbystė=Agriculture". Since 1996, he has chaired the Lithuanian Association of Phytopathologists, since 1998 he has represented Lithuania in the European Foundation for Plant Pathology.

In 2002–2003, he was awarded a State Scholarship of the Highest Degree.

He has been a research supervisor for 3 PhD students and 6 MSc students, has been involved in the work of 15 PhD studies and thesis defence boards.

He has published several research publications: "Plants virus diseases" (1967, with co-authors), "Investigation of plant virus diseases in Lithuania" (1973, with co-authors, a monograph "Plant yellows-type disease and its causal agents" (1988), has published over 160 research articles, of which 40 in the ISI publications.

Dr. Juozas Benediktas Staniuli's activities and research accomplishments are highly valued in Lithuania and the world. His diligence, responsibility, youthful energy makes him a role model for the whole research community.

We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations on the nice anniversary by wishing him endless patience, significant achievements, the best of health and personal happiness.