

tivity of dairy animals. The energy and enthusiasm of Prof. Todorov, who continues his active research despite his age, are remarkable. After retiring, he commenced a second work cycle. In 15 years, he published 74 scientific works, 15 monographs and textbooks, 66 popular science and problem issue articles and mentored 7 PhD candidates.

Prof. Todorov's contribution in founding the Institute of Grain and Feed Industry, developing and modernizing the Thracian University Agricultural Faculty, founding the Union of the Zooengineers of Bulgaria, creating the Organization of animal professors and scientists on the Balkan peninsula - Balnimalcon and organizing a discussion club for livestock nutrition for all scientists, regardless of the institutions they work for, should not be overlooked.

We should not forget his international activity in four big international scientific projects, the numerous reports at international conferences and symposiums, conclusion speeches at several symposiums, in which he summed up the development of science in a given sphere and charted the directions of future development, his participation in organizing a number of international symposiums, in the management of the European Federation of Animal Science and in the editorial boards of a number of international and foreign magazines, etc.

The activity of Prof. Todorov is vast and varied, which makes it difficult to point out his overall contribution to the Bulgarian and international animal science. We wish him health and strength to continue his activity for the benefit of science and the development of young specialists as well as his efforts for the evolving of the Bulgarian Journal of Agricultural Science.

ACAD. ATANAS ATANASSOV TURNS 70



Acad. Atanas Ivanov Atanassov was born in 1943 in the town of Dalgopol, Varna district. He graduated in agronomy at the Higher Agricultural Institute in Sofia. He obtained post-graduate degrees under Acad. R. Butenko at the Institute of Plant Physiology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia; at CNRS in Gif-sur-Yvette and INRA - Versailles, the Tissue and Cell Culture Laboratory in France; the Institute of Plant Physiology, Biological Research Center, Szeged, Hungary; the Laboratory of Genetic Engineering, Experimental Station of Ottawa, Canada; the Laboratory of Molecular Genetics, University of Gent, Belgium under Prof. Marc Van Montague and Prof. Dirk Inzé and as a visiting professor at the Institute of Plant Sciences CNRS, Gif-sur-Yvette, France.

He is fluent in the English, Russian and French languages and is an internationally acclaimed scientist, member of the Ukrainian, Russian and Romanian academies of agricultural sciences, Doctor Honoris

Causa of the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Cluj-Napoca, Romania and the Agricultural Academy of Bulgaria. He has been granted numerous international awards, honorary diplomas and certificates.

Pioneer in the field of plant biotechnology in Bulgaria since 1967.

His scientific activity is closely connected to the development of genetic biotechnologies in Bulgaria, of clonal propagation of cultivated and wild plants and genomics. He has contributed to the development of efficient gene transfer schemes, gene cloning and sequencing in Bulgarian tobacco, alfalfa, potato, sugar beet, tomato, apple, plum and vine cultivars. He developed an *in vitro* method of corn, sunflower, cherry and vine, etc. germ growing. He was the first to prove the possibility of obtaining embryos and whole plants from stamen pollen and introduced genes, ensuring plant resistance against pathogens, herbicides and stress. He created new cultivars and selection lines. He is active in creating and implementing biosafety legislation, in the control of the use of genetically enhanced plants, risk evaluation and management with regard to the creation and release of GMO in the environment.

The scientific works of Acad. Atanasov have been published in over 190 prestigious Bulgarian and foreign journals and have been quoted over a thousand times (the summary impact factor is over 50 and the personal - 43 out of a maximum of 50). He has presented hundreds of papers and posters at conferences and symposiums; has published teaching handbooks, collected scientific works, books, a number of brochures and bulletins.

He has lectured at the Faculty of Biology, St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia, The Agricultural University of Plovdiv and the University of Chemical Technology and Metallurgy, Sofia on the subject of plant cell and genetic engineering. He had mentored 21 graduates, 32 PhDs, 31 postgraduate Bulgarian and 28 foreign students in the field of plant genetic engineering. He is a visiting professor at the Administration of Agricultural Development of the Republic of Korea and the Agricultural University of Wuhan, China, the Izmir University, Turkey and De Montfort University, the United Kingdom.

He has held various posts such as Director of the Tissue and Cell Culture Laboratory of the Sugar Beet Institute; Leader of the Cell Genetics Group at the Institute of Genetics, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences; founder and Director of the Institute of Genetic Engineering, Agricultural Academy, Kostinbrod 1985 - 2008. He is the coordinator of the Plant Biotechnology Program in Bulgaria and the Balkan region. He is one of the founders and co-manager of the AgroBiotech Park and Joint Genome Center at St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia. Member of 25 Bulgarian and foreign management and scientific boards and commissions. He has been involved as an expert and consultant in Bulgaria and abroad. He is a member of 13 editorial boards and 7 international organizations. He is the Editor-in-Chief of the Bulgarian Journal of Agricultural Science since 2011. He has organized over 65 international events.

Acad. Atanas Atanasov is a major figure in the development of genome research in the field of agriculture both in Bulgaria and worldwide.