

Ing. Pavel Bartoš, DrSc. – 90th birthday



Pavel Bartoš will celebrate his 90th birthday on March 30th 2020. He is a world-renowned expert on genetic resistance of cereal crops to fungal pathogens, especially to rusts and smuts. He has spent much of his life investigating the genetic background of the disease resistance in cereal crops, genetic variability of pathogens, and classical methods of experimental work with rusts and smuts. He has closely cooperated with breeders and is a co-author of numerous widely grown winter and spring wheat cultivars.

Pavel Bartoš finished his studies at the Czech University of Agriculture in 1953 and since then he has worked at the Crop Research Institute in Prague. In 1961, he completed his first level of his doctoral degree (aspirantura) with the topic “Resistance of oat cultivars to loose smut of oats” and later, in 1983, he completed his doctoral degree with his work on “Genetics of wheat resistance to leaf and stem rust and genetic variability of these rusts”. A two-year internship in Winnipeg, Canada in years 1966–1968 and also other stays in Netherlands and Cuba were an important phase in his professional and personal life. Multilingualism has served him to effectively communicate with colleagues from all around the globe. During such internships, he also built many professional connections with colleagues he has later worked with, such as Dr. Nielsen, Dr. Kolmer, and Dr. McIntosh.

He worked in the research of the genetic translocation of 1BL.1RS from rye to wheat, widely utilised in breeding for resistance. He coordinated a working subgroup “Leaf rust of wheat and barley” within the European project COST 817 and organised international conferences such as the Cereal Rusts Conference in 1972 in Prague and “Approaches to improving disease resistance to meet future needs: airborne pathogens of wheat and barley” in 1997.

Being active in academia, he has lectured at agricultural universities in Prague, Brno, and České Budějovice, was a member of various scientific and editorial committees, a consultant of numerous post-graduation students, and an innovator in the research of cereal crops disease resistance. However, Pavel’s professional life is closely connected to his personal life, as was described by his daughter: “Dad’s job has always been part of our family life. He and mum worked in the same research institute, their colleagues were family friends. Wherever he took us on a trip around the Czech Republic or Slovakia, there was always a wheat field where he would disappear to study some “rusty” leaves. Together with his love for work there was always the love for languages. Self-study language textbooks have been integral in his preparations for



trips abroad. His passion for work and languages has opened many doors for him and subsequently also for us. A year-long stay in Winnipeg, a wheat growing centre, influenced my career path as well. I also like to reminisce about the short term “trips” around conferences in Europe. Dad’s workaholicism was transferred to his son, his love for languages can be best seen in his granddaughter, who is very passionate about Japanese. He handed over his love for science and genetics to another granddaughter. Even nowadays the father, grandfather of five, and soon to be great-grandfather of six, divides his time between work, culture, walks in nature, family, and friends. I believe that as long as he has his work, even after 90, he will still chase his grandchildren around the National Gallery, he’ll play with them on a trampoline in the summer, and he will guide us in which exposition is worth visiting.”

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