

In memoriam Professor Zoltán Király

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Professor Zoltán Király, an internationally outstanding researcher of plant pathophysiology, ordinary member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, professor emeritus at the Plant Protection Institute of the Centre for Agricultural Research, former Head of the Plant Protection Institute at Budapest, unexpectedly passed away at the 19th of May 2021.

He was born in November 15th, 1925 in Óbecse, and got his degree at the Agricultural University Budapest. After the university he worked for 2 years at the Plant Protection Institute in Budapest, than for 5 years at the Agricultural Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences at Martonvásár. After this period he returned to the Plant Protection Institute, where after various researcher ranks he became the chairman of the Plant Pathophysiology Department, and in 1980 he was appointed as the director of the institute, and he directed it until 1993.

He defended his thesis for Candidate of Biological Sciences in 1958, and his thesis

for Doctor of Agricultural Sciences (DSc) in 1967. He was elected as corresponding member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS) in 1973 and as ordinary member of HAS in 1982.

Professor Király was one of the first researchers in the world who investigated the diseased plants and plant disease resistance with biochemical and physiological methods. The main object of his early works was the wheat rust disease, which had severe epidemics at that time. Afterwards he worked on the hormonal changes (cytokinins, ethylene and abscisic acid) of diseased plants. With his colleagues they reconsidered the role of the hypersensitive response (HR) in disease resistance, which work had a great international echo. Later on with his team he carried out pioneer work on the role of reactive oxygen species (ROS) and antioxidants in disease development and in disease resistance.

For almost 40 years he was the editor in chief of this journal, the Acta Phytopathologica et Entomologica Hungarica, and I had the honor to follow him. Since this was my last issue to edit,



Professor Zoltán Király (1925-2021)
(photo: Dr. Lóránt Király)

and Dr. Jenő Kotschán will be the next editor in chief, I thank all the authors and everybody who helped in editing this journal!

Professor Király had courses at practically all Hungarian agricultural and science universities, and had not only many Hungarian and foreign PhD students, but he established a new “plant pathophysiology” school of young scientists in the Plant Protection Institute. However, not only the members of this school, but everybody in the Plant Protection Institute, and many scientists in Hungary learned a lot from Professor Király.

We shall never forget him!

Balázs Barna

