

## Jubilee of Professor Ján Plesník

Significant Slovak scientist, teacher and humanist Prof. Ján Plesník, DSc., Dr.h.c., important representative of the Czech-Slovak and Slovak science, founder and long-time director of the Research Institute for Animal Production (RIAP) in Nitra and pedagogue at the Slovak University of Agriculture in Nitra, celebrates his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2015.

Professor Plesník was born in Krajné, in a family of farmers. As it was a family with traditional respect for the heritage of fathers and the culture of the nation, which esteemed education, so it allowed education also to the son. After finishing the two-year Agricultural School in Martin he went on to study at the four year Higher Economic School in Košice, where he passed the school-leaving exams. During the years 1945–1950 he studied at the University for Agriculture and Forest Engineering in Brno aimed at scientific-research work.

The first place of work of Prof. Plesník was the Research Institute for Animal Production in Víglaš. The institute was replaced to Nitra in 1961. Prof. Plesník performed the function of director from 1959 to 1991. I take the liberty to cite the esteemed toastee: *“The goal of my life and working sense of my life was to create a modern reputable scientific institution, create a material and personal democratic atmosphere and conditions for free research work as well as realization of the workers’ abilities.”* He motivated and involved the whole personnel of the institute to fulfil this grandiose goal by his hard work, respect for the truth and personal enthusiasm. During this period defended more than 70 workers the title CSc. or PhD. and 12 workers the title DSc. in RIAP.



The bibliography of the toastee is also rich. It contains nearly two dozen of books and some hundred scientific, specialist and popular-professional publications, which draw from the results of his own scientific work. Ján Plesník devoted much time also to the Slovak Academy of Sciences; he was its member, correspondent and academician during the years 1969–1980. He was also member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences and other European scientific societies. After 1990 he became initiator of the foundation and in 1993 the first chairman of the Slovak Academy of Agricultural Sciences. Professor Plesník remains spiritual father of this learned society till nowadays.

Ján Plesník is a many-sided personality. As an art lover he gained recognition for creation of an exhibition hall in the Research

Institute for Animal Production, in which are regularly presented works of outstanding Slovak and foreign artists. He was also at the origin of the International Film Festival Agrofilm, which represents successfully Slovakia and our agro-sector in the world for 30 years.

The toastee is laureate of high state national and foreign distinctions. The personal qualities and performance results of Prof. Plesník evaluated a number of universities by awarding him the academic degree honorary doctor. He is honorary citizen of the town Nitra.

Multidimensional personality of Ján Plesník is expressed in his life and work, based on a deep, honest and humble analysis of phenomena that results in a characteristic

philosophical manuscript. These values led him to a special and very exceptional position among the representatives of animal sciences. If there is anything typical for Prof. Plesník, it is his effort to hand out himself to colleagues without the need to retain something of his wealth for himself. Here are the roots of Plesník's school, which today represent dozens of scientific workers and teachers who express gratitude and respect for his lifework.

Ad multos annos Profesor Plesník

Jaroslav Slamečka  
Director of the Research Institute  
for Animal Production