

Academician Veronika Vasiliauskienė – a resourceful researcher, active organizer of science

Professor Dr. Habil Veronika Vasiliauskienė, Full Member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, on 15 December 2005 will celebrate her 70th birthday.

Veronika Jurgaitytė-Vasiliauskienė was born in Aukōtelkai village, Radvilōkis District, Lithuania. In 1954–1959 she studied at the Lithuanian Academy of Agriculture (presently Lithuanian University of Agriculture). On graduating as agriculturist, in 1959–1961 she worked as an agronomist in Ūlutė District. In 1962–1970 she was a lecturer at the Ūlutė Agricultural School, and in 1971–1974 she was on doctoral studies at the Lithuanian Institute of Agriculture. These studies paved the way to her future career as a scientific researcher in agriculture. In 1975–1985 V. Vasiliauskienė served for the Lithuanian Institute of Agriculture in Dotnuva as a research fellow and at the Vokė Branch of this institute. In 1986–2000 she was Deputy Director for Science and the chief researcher (part-time) of the Vokė Branch.

A gifted and persistent scientific toiler, V. Vasiliauskienė soon showed important results. Her doctoral thesis “Changes of the botanical and chemical composition of cultured pasture crops depending on NPK fertilization in non-acid loamy soils” was defended in 1974 at the Lithuanian Academy of Agriculture. In 1988, at the Latvian Research Institute of Land Cultivation and Agriculture, V. Vasiliauskienė defended her habilitation thesis “Scientific substantiation of mineral nutrition in various grasslands in an intensively used pasture system on mineral soils”.

Academician V. Vasiliauskienė is one of the leading Lithuanian specialists in agriculture. Her scientific interests are focused on glassland cultivation and agrochemistry. She headed numerous programmes, themes and works accomplished by the Lithuanian Institute of Agriculture and elaborated the scientific background of the fertilization of Lithuanian cultured glasslands. This background served as the basis for optimizing the norms and ratios of nitrogenous, phosphorous and potassium mineral fertilizers.

Of great importance for grassland cultivation and agrochemical sciences were the multifactorial trial da-

ta obtained in 1971–1991 in Dotnuva and in 1982–1996 at the Vokė Branch on a long-term effect of fertilizers on soil biological, physical and agrochemical properties and on the quality of plants. These many-year studies on loam and sandy soils of various districts of Lithuania are of a high theoretical, ecological and practical significance. V. Vasiliauskienė promoted and implemented complicated and highly informative schemes of agrochemical field trials, employing mathematical models for processing the abundant material gathered in field and laboratory trials.

In appreciation of V. Vasiliauskienė’s scientific, practical and organizational activities, in 1990 she was elected Corresponding Member, in 1994 Member and in 1998 Full Member (Academician) of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. In 1995–2004 she was Head of the Board of Agriculture and Forestry, a member of the Presidium of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. In 2001–2005 she was Scientific Secretary and since early 2005 has been Vice-President of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences.

Academician V. Vasiliauskienė reported the results of her studies in more than 270 scientific and popular-scientific papers, recommendations. At the Lithuanian Institute of Agriculture there are 15 scientific reports prepared by her, which contain concrete research data. Results of researches, also in co-authorship, have been reported at European congresses and conferences held in German, Norway, Czech Republic, Finland, Russia.

In 1985, as a recognition of her merits as a researcher, V. Vasiliauskienė was awarded the title of a Hanoured Agronomist. Also, for a creative contribution, in 1988 her work (in co-authorship) “Scientific fundamentals of an agronomically rational and ecologically safe system of crop fertilization” was awarded a National Prize.

Academician V. Vasiliauskienė collaborates with higher schools in training scientific researchers in doctoral and master studies. In 1993–1997 she was delivering lectures at Vilnius University and Lithuanian

University of Agriculture. She supervised eight doctoral theses. She was head or member of 20 doctoral dissertation committees and 10 habilitation committees.

For a significant contribution to the monograph "Lithuanian Soils" Academician V. Vasiliauskienė and Prof. M. Eidukevičienė from Klaipėda University were awarded the Agronomist Vytautas Vazalinskas Foundation Prize–2004. The monograph presents the summarized results of investigations carried out in Lithuania for a period of 50 years. The voluminous monograph (82 printer's sheets) was published in 2001 (Vilnius: "Lietuvos mokslas", 2001. Book 32).

Scientists from the Lithuanian agricultural institutions elected Academician V. Vasiliauskienė member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences Council

(biomedical sciences), and she was successful in representing her electorate in the period 1999–2002.

As a specialist of broad specialization, in 1996 V. Vasiliauskienė was appointed member of the Lithuanian National Committee for Scientific Awards; since 1999, on appointment of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, she has been Scientific Secretary of the Lithuanian National Committee for Scientific Awards.

The Board of Agriculture and Forestry of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences cordially congratulates the Hero of the Anniversary and wishes her good health, bright moods, the best of luck in all her undertakings.

Academician Juozas Lazauskas