

Obituary Notice – Prof. Ing. Antonín Stratil, DrSc. (1941–2025)

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With the passing of Prof. Ing. Antonín Stratil, DrSc., the scientific community has lost a distinguished researcher and teacher who devoted more than six decades of his life to the advancement of animal genetics.

Prof. Stratil spent his entire professional career at the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Liběchov, which he joined in the early 1960s and to which he remained deeply connected throughout his life, including serving for a period as deputy director. He belonged to a generation of scientists who successfully bridged classical biochemical genetics with the emerging molecular and genomic approaches that now define the field. His early work on protein polymorphisms provided an important basis for parentage verification and practical breeding applications in farm animals. In later years, his research focused on candidate genes, gene expression and genomic regions affecting muscle development, carcass composition and meat quality in pigs.

For a large part of his career, he led the Laboratory of Animal Genomics, which under his guidance became a widely sought-after source of expertise in the field. Later, he continued his scientific work within the Laboratory of Molecular Ecology, building on his extensive experience in molecular genetics. Throughout his professional life, Prof. Stratil placed exceptional emphasis on careful experimental work, which he regarded as the cornerstone of scientific knowledge and to which he remained firmly committed.

Over the course of his career, Prof. Stratil published a substantial body of work in international scientific journals that made a lasting contribu-



tion to the field. He also co-authored university textbooks and teaching materials that played an important role in education in animal genetics in the Czech Republic. His research was supported by numerous national and international grants, including major projects supported by the Czech Science Foundation and collaborative European programmes, and involved broad international cooperation with research institutions across Europe.

Teaching and mentorship were central to Prof. Stratil's professional life. He supervised a number of doctoral students and served for many years as a lecturer at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, where he was responsible for the full-semester course Molecular Genetics of Animals. Many of his former students went on to successful careers in academia and applied research, a legacy of which he was quietly proud.

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Prof. Stratil also devoted a substantial part of his career to service to the scientific community. He served on numerous doctoral and habilitation bodies, grant and accreditation committees, and advisory boards; was active in international scientific societies; and for many years was a member of the editorial boards of several international journals.

Of particular importance was his long-standing association with the Czech Journal of Animal Science. He was a member of its editorial board from 1995 and, from 2007 onwards, served as co-editor for molecular genetics of animals, a role to which he remained devoted until the last days of his life. He approached his editorial responsibilities with great care and was widely respected for his high standards, fairness and constructive attitude towards authors and reviewers. Through this work, he played an important role in maintaining and further developing the scientific quality and international standing of the journal.

His scientific achievements were recognised by numerous awards and honours, including na-

tional scientific prizes, medals for outstanding contributions to biological and agricultural sciences, and honorary membership in a professional society.

Beyond his professional achievements, colleagues remember Prof. Stratil as a principled scientist, a generous mentor and a thoughtful collaborator. His integrity, modesty and unwavering dedication to science left a strong impression on those who worked with him. At the Institute in Liběchov, he will be remembered not only as a respected scientist and teacher, but also as a colleague who remained deeply loyal to the institution throughout his life. His wife, Ing. Anežka Stratilová, who worked for many years as head of the Institute's economic department, was his lifelong partner and a constant source of support.

With his passing, the scientific community has lost an exceptional expert in the genetics of farm animals and a scientist through and through. His legacy lives on in his scientific contributions and, perhaps most importantly, in the students and colleagues he inspired.