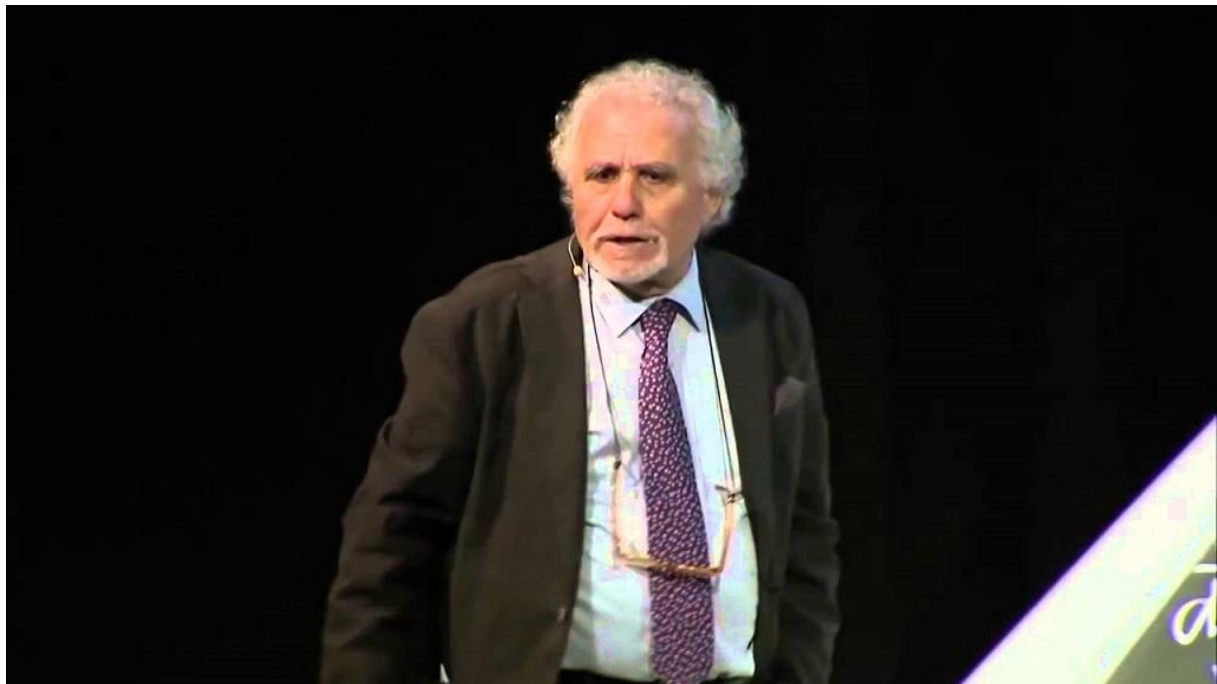




OBITUARY

Professor Michele Stanca

Professor Michele Stanca, President of the U E A A, Vice President of the Accademia dei Georgofili (Italy) passed away on Thursday 19th March 2020, victim of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak



Professor Antonio Michele Stanca, an illustrious scientist who contributed significantly to the growth of agriculture in Italy and worldwide, died on 19 March. He had been in hospital for several weeks, after being diagnosed positive for coronavirus.

Vice President of the Georgofili Academy (Florence, Italy) he was the coordinator of the "Organic Agriculture" Committee of the Academy and also member of the Academic Council.,

He was also President of the Italian Union of Academies for Sciences Applied to the Development of Agriculture, Food Safety and Environmental Protection (UNASA) and President of Union of European Academies for Science Applied to Agriculture, Food and Nature – UEAA (2018-2020), as well as Emeritus Member of the Italian Society of Agricultural Genetics and Emeritus President of the Italian Association of Agricultural Scientific Societies (AISSA)

A native of the Pouilles region of southern Italy, he graduated in Bari and then became involved in the genetic improvement of cereals – a life-long professional commitment.

He directed the research center for animal and plant genomics and postgenomics in Fiorenzuola d'Arda; he was coordinator of the national network "ORZO Variety" (1976-2009), studying the qualitative aspects of barley at a genetic and physiological level and promoting research on genetics, physiology and molecular biology on the adaptation of plants to environment.

He developed conventional and molecular genetic improvement programs (MAS) and was a breeder of successful barley varieties nationally (in 2011 21% of the certified seed originated in the Center of Fiorenzuola) and internationally.

In the 1990s, 'Arda' was first variety of Barley to be certified in Italy (representing 30% of the total seed certified in Italy) and is still very popular in Italy and Greece today.

Professor in many prestigious universities around the world, Stanca was also Coordinator of the Project "Wheat Genome Sequencing: Chromosome 5A Physical Map" within the International Wheat Genome Sequencing Consortium, member of the Committee of Guarantors for Agricultural Sciences, Food Technologies and Veterinary Sciences of the National Research Council (CNR) and President of the Cereals Section of the European Association of Plant Breeding Research - EUCARPIA.

Tireless scholar, passionate and enthusiastic about his work, excellent scientific popularizer: Michele Stanca was one of the most brilliant personalities in the field of agricultural genetics, who had still much to contribute to the progress of agricultural research.

All members of steering committee will remember him as both a very bright and very friendly colleague. He had led the last General Assembly of UEAA in Florence in 2018 and the steering committee meeting in Prague in 2019 with commitment and dedication. The Steering Committee will miss him very much.

The steering committee expresses the most sincere and heartfelt condolences to his wife Myriam and family.

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