

Nazim Gruda, Elected as a Foreign Member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences

Prof. Dr. Nazim S. Gruda, Vice President of the Union of European Academies for Science Applied to Agriculture, Food, and Nature (UEAA), was elected as a foreign member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences during its Assembly Meeting on April 8, 2025. During the ceremonial meeting on June 17, 2025, he received the official membership certificate and delivered a keynote lecture titled *"Horticulture in the Era of Climate Change."* Also honored in this category were Prof. Barbara Elisabeth Lothenbach, professor of construction, chemistry, and thermodynamics from Switzerland, and Mait Metspalu, professor of human population genetics from Estonia.



During the ceremony at the Lithuanian Academy of Science on June 17, 2025.

Prof. Gruda is an Albanian-German scientist and Professor at the Department of Horticultural Sciences, University of Bonn, Germany. He earned his MSc in Agriculture (Plant Science/Plant Breeding) from the Agricultural University of Tirana in 1982, followed by a Doctorate in Agricultural Sciences from the Technical University of Munich (1999), and his Habilitation at the Humboldt University of Berlin (2006). He is one of the world's foremost scientists in sustainable agricultural production, soilless culture systems, and vegetable and fruit product quality.

His impressive academic output includes nearly 400 scientific and technical publications, along with 36 books and book chapters. His work has been cited over 5,000 times, with an h-index of 35 (Scopus). He is recognized among the leading researchers by Stanford University, Elsevier, and Research.com. Prof. Gruda serves as editor or editorial board member of top-tier horticultural journals (*International Journal of Vegetable Science*, *Horticulturae*, *Scientia Horticulturae*, *Agronomy*, and others), and he has edited multiple volumes of *Acta Horticulturae* (ISHS). He is a frequent keynote and invited speaker, contributing to over 30 international scientific conferences.

Under the Erasmus+ program, he has served as a guest lecturer at the University of Zagreb, Croatia (2016), the Agricultural University of Athens, Greece (2018, 2019, 2023), and the University of Cartagena, Spain (2021), where he was later honored as "Distinguished Researcher—Investigador Distinguido" (2024). He was also a "Courtesy Associate Professor" at the University of Florida in 2004, a visiting "Research Scholar" at Virginia Tech in the USA in 2007, and was recognized as a "Distinguished Scientist" by the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 2020 and 2025.

Prof. Gruda plays a leading role in numerous scientific bodies. In addition to his role as Vice President of UEAA, he is Vice-Chair of the Vegetable, Root, and Tuber Section of the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS), Chair of the FAO Working Group on Greenhouse Crop Production in Southeast Europe, and a member of the FAO's Regional Technical Platform on Green Agriculture in Europe and Central Asia. He is also a member of ALLEA's Working Group on the European Research Area. Additionally, he is a full member of the Academy of Sciences of Albania, a corresponding foreign member of the Accademia dei Georgofili (Italy), and an honorary member of the Romanian Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences "Gheorghe Ionescu-Șișești."

Strengthening Lithuanian Science

Prof. Gruda has made exceptional contributions to Lithuanian science and its international visibility. He maintains close research ties with Lithuanian scientists and has worked to strengthen academic cooperation between Lithuania and Albania. He co-led the Lithuanian-Latvian-German trilateral project *"New Natural Sources of Bioactive Molecules for Human and Animal Nutrition"*. He helped launch a bilateral exchange programme between the Albanian and Lithuanian Academies of Sciences.

He has fostered scientific exchanges, facilitated impactful joint publications, and conducted thorough doctoral evaluations. He contributed his expertise as a valued PhD dissertation committee member at the esteemed Lithuanian Research Center for Agriculture and Forestry. Prof. Gruda was a member of the scientific committee for the international "Scientific Actualities and Innovations in Horticulture" (SAIH) conferences held in Lithuania in 2022 and 2024, and he facilitates internships for Lithuanian scientists at the Agricultural University of Tirana. Through these initiatives, he has promoted Lithuanian research internationally and helped integrate Lithuanian scientists more actively into the global scientific community.

We warmly congratulate Prof. Dr. Nazim S. Gruda on this election to the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences and wish him continued success in his academic and international endeavors.

Zenonas Dabkevičius, Vice President; Vidmantas Stanys, Chairman of the Division of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences; and Giedrė Samuolienė, Member — all from the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences.