



January - June 2026

Tropical News

"Newsletter for
FTZ friends"

A word from the Dean

Dear colleagues, students, alumni, partners, and friends of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences,

as we reach the midpoint of 2026, I would like to take a moment to reflect on what has been an inspiring and productive first half of the year. Looking through the pages of this newsletter, I am reminded that the true strength of our faculty lies not in individual achievements, but in the collective commitment of our entire community to making a meaningful difference.

Over the past months, we have celebrated important milestones. We have introduced new department names that better reflect the interdisciplinary nature of our teaching and research. We welcomed new graduates into the FTZ alumni family, launched new outreach activities for secondary school students, strengthened our research infrastructure through the establishment of Ecocentre Loska and Ecocentre of our Botanical Garden, and continued to expand lifelong learning opportunities through our University of the Third Age. At the same time, our researchers, students, and staff have represented FTZ with distinction at international conferences, competitions, and research projects across Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

What makes me particularly proud is that these successes are not isolated events. They are part of a broader vision of what the FTZ stands for today: a modern, internationally connected institution that combines scientific excellence with practical impact.

Throughout this newsletter you will find stories from Cambodia, Ethiopia, Zambia, Moldova, Uganda, Morocco, Nigeria, and many other countries where our faculty is working side by side with local communities, universities, governments, and international organisations. Whether we are helping restore agricultural production after conflict, improving food security, conserving biodiversity, advancing digital agriculture, or supporting climate resilience, our goal remains the same: to transform knowledge into solutions that improve people's lives.

This is why our motto, "**Leading Excellence in Tropical AgriSciences**," is much more than a slogan. It reflects the way we approach research, education, and international cooperation every day.

Equally important is our investment in people. Our students continue to inspire us through their curiosity, creativity, and willingness to engage with global challenges. Our academic and professional staff demonstrate remarkable dedication in education, research, and service. Our alumni show us that an FTZ education opens doors to meaningful careers around the world, while our partners continually remind us that the greatest challenges can only be addressed through collaboration.

Looking ahead, we will continue strengthening research excellence, expanding international partnerships, supporting young scientists, and ensuring that our education equips graduates with the knowledge, skills, and values needed for an increasingly interconnected world.

I would like to sincerely thank every member of our community – students, staff, researchers, alumni, and partners - for your enthusiasm, professionalism, and trust. Everything we have achieved during the first half of this year has been possible because of your commitment.

I wish you an enjoyable summer and hope you find time to rest, recharge, and return with fresh ideas for the exciting months ahead.

Together, let us continue building a faculty that not only responds to global challenges but actively helps shape a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable future.

I wish you enjoyable reading and a nice summer.

With regards,

ASSOC. PROF. ING. HYNEK ROUBÍK, PH.D.

**FIND IN THIS ISSUE NEWS
AND OPPORTUNITIES
FOR FURTHER
COOPERATION WITH
THE FACULTY**

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Alumni Club SIGN IN

- Get up-to-date information on what's going on in your alma mater.
- Find a job, internship or personal mentor.
- Connect not only with CZU alumni and students but also with employers, employees, and supporters of the university (CZU).

Academic Issues

FTZ Graduates Receive Their Diplomas

In a festive atmosphere and in the presence of families, friends, and academic staff, graduates of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, CZU Prague, received their university diplomas. The graduation ceremonies marked the successful completion of their studies and the beginning of a new chapter in their professional lives.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAMMES



A total of 47 students sat for the State Bachelor's examinations.

45 graduates successfully completed their studies, with 17 graduating with **excellent results**, 25 with **very good**, and 3 with **good**.

For outstanding academic performance, **Kuang Danqi** was awarded the **Rector's Award for Excellent Academic Achievements**.

Dean's Commendation and Award of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences were granted to:

- Julie Červená
- Daniela Haužvicová
- Anna Mohamed Refaat Ahmed Nasreldin Fahmy
- Markéta Mílová

The **Dean's Award for the Best Bachelor's Thesis** was presented to **Jakub Vinický**.



Jakub Vinický



MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMMES



A total of 64 students took the State Master's examinations.

56 graduates successfully completed their studies, including 11 with **excellent results** (7 of them with honours), 24 with **very good**, and 21 with **good**.

The **Rector's Award for Excellent Academic Achievements** was awarded to **Martina Sihelská**.

The **Dean's Award for Excellent Academic Performance** was presented to:

- Sylvester Ayayee
- Barbora Fantová
- Denisa Stejskalová
- Vendula Žwaková
- Luisa Buss

The following awards were presented for outstanding theses:

- **Ministry of Agriculture Award** – Martina Sihelská
- **Rector's Award of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague** – Jan Sedlačík
- **Dean's Award of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences** – Sylvester Ayayee



Martina Sihelská

We warmly congratulate all graduates on successfully completing their studies and wish them every success in their future professional and personal journeys. Special congratulations go to all award recipients for their exceptional academic performance and outstanding theses. We are proud to welcome them into the FTZ alumni community and wish them all the best in their future careers.

Results of the 2026 FTZ Academic Senate Elections

The elections to the Academic Senate of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, were held on **22 and 25 May 2026**.

The Election Committee, consisting of **doc. RNDr. Jiří Černý, Ph.D., Ing. Miroslav Mulko**, and **Bc. Mikuláš Středa**, oversaw the election process.

In the **Academic Staff constituency**, **31 members** of the academic community cast their votes, representing a **77.5% voter turnout** (31 out of 40 eligible voters). In the **Student constituency**, **78 students** participated, corresponding to a **16.85% voter turnout** (78 out of 463 eligible voters). All submitted ballots were valid.

Following the vote count and, where necessary, the drawing of lots to resolve ties, the Election Committee confirmed the election of the following members of the FTZ Academic Senate:

ACADEMIC STAFF CONSTITUENCY

- Ing. Iva Kučerová, Ph.D.
- Ing. Tereza Pilařová
- Ing. Tamara Fedorová, Ph.D.
- Assoc. Prof. Ing. Tatiana Alexiou Ivanova, Ph.D., prof. h. c.
- Ing. Olga Leuner, Ph.D.
- Ing. Markéta Houdková, Ph.D.

STUDENT CONSTITUENCY

- Ing. Simona Tomanová
- Ing. Arianna Vicari
- Ing. Barbora Motýlová

Congratulations to all newly elected senators and thanks to all candidates and members of the academic community who participated in the elections.

FTZ Launches a New Outreach Programme for High Schools

In January 2026, the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), CZU Prague, launched a new collaboration with high schools by introducing a programme of lectures, workshops, and field trips designed for secondary school students.

The programme brings global topics such as tropical biodiversity, sustainable agriculture, food security, environmental protection, and bioeconomy closer to young audiences through inspiring examples from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Activities are led by FTZ academics, researchers, and students, offering participants a unique insight into current scientific research and its real-world impact.

The programme is available both at FTZ and directly at participating schools, with sessions offered in Czech or English and tailored to the needs of individual schools and classes. Through this initiative, FTZ aims to inspire future generations of scientists, broaden awareness of global sustainability challenges, and strengthen cooperation with secondary schools across the Czech Republic.

<https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/r-10623-news-home/discover-tropics-science-and-a-sustainable-world-program-for.html>

These activities are part of FTZ's long-term engagement with secondary and university students, for whom the faculty organises

field excursions and expert lectures throughout the academic year, as well as specially designed summer schools focusing on selected topical themes during the summer months.

This first Summer School for high school students will take place from 17 to 20 August 2026 at the CZU campus in Prague-Suchbát.

The programme offers an introduction to key topics such as tropical agriculture, sustainability, global development, environmental protection, and modern technologies in agriculture. Participants will take part in hands-on workshops, laboratory activities, field exercises, and discussions with researchers involved in international projects.

The Summer School will be conducted primarily in Czech, with support for motivated English-speaking participants. More information is available at: <https://www.ftz.czu.cz/cs/r-21917-letni-skola-ftz>

FTZ Research Facility and Botanical Garden Achieve Eco-Centre Status

A major milestone for the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), CZU Prague, was the recognition of both the **Research Facility for Common Eland Antelopes and Guanacos in Lány** and the **FTZ Botanical Garden** as official Czech eco-centres.

As part of this development, the faculty launched **Ecocentre Loska**, a new educational and outreach initiative that connects scientific research, environmental education, and hands-on learning. The centre offers programmes for kindergartens, primary and secondary schools, as well as the wider public, focusing on biodiversity, sustainable landscape management, animal welfare, and nature conservation.

The new eco-centres strengthen FTZ's commitment to making research accessible beyond academia, inspiring future generations and promoting environmental awareness through direct experience with nature.

<https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/r-10623-news-home/ekocentrum-loska-predstavuje-nove-vzdelavaci-programy-1.html>

In Lány, renovation works are currently underway with the aim of creating a more modern and improved environment for animals, students, researchers, and visitors alike. We also held a small team-building activity in Lány, where some staff members helped improve the site infrastructure for both animals and visitors. The activities included tree planting, installing protective measures, and general clean-up. We would like to thank everyone involved for their time, effort, and commitment!



University of the Third Age at FTZ – First Year Overview

The University of the Third Age (U3A) programme at the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, has successfully completed its first year, offering participants an engaging introduction to selected topics in tropical agriculture, biodiversity, and sustainable development.

The programme is structured into four thematic blocks delivered across two semesters.

In the **first semester (October–December 2025)**, organised by the **Department of Wildlife and Animal Sciences**, participants explored the topic:

FROM NATURE TO HUMAN CARE AND BACK: CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF ENDANGERED SPECIES

The course provided insights into conservation programmes for species on the brink of extinction, combining theoretical knowledge with practical perspectives. Participants were introduced to topics such as genetic analysis, parasitology, and modern approaches to wildlife management. A key part of the programme included practical experience at the research facility in Láň, where participants observed common eland antelopes and learned how scientific research contributes to real-world biodiversity conservation.

In the **second semester (February–April 2026)**, delivered by the **Department of Crop Science and Agroforestry**, the course focused on:

TROPICAL PLANTS – FROM TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE TO MODERN APPLICATIONS

This block introduced the diversity and importance of tropical plants from both scientific and traditional perspectives. Participants learned about crop production in tropical regions, agroforestry systems, and the role of indigenous knowledge in sustainable land use. The course also highlighted modern biotechnological approaches enabling the sustainable use of plant resources across food and pharmaceutical industries. Field excursions to the FTZ Botanical Garden and herbarium offered direct contact with tropical plant diversity and its applications.

The U3A programme reflects FTZ's commitment to lifelong learning and its efforts to connect scientific research with wider society through accessible and practice-oriented education.



Returning to Research with a Vision for Sustainable Food Production

Assoc. Prof. Tersia Kokošková, Ph.D. is returning to the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), CZU Prague, supported by the **Returns to CZU programme**. Her new three-year project, **SMART Game – Sustainable Meat Science and Technology for Game Meat**, focuses on sustainable production and processing of common eland meat as a model for future animal production systems.

The project aims to develop a comprehensive framework for assessing meat quality, processing methods, and value-added products, including innovative applications such as traditional biltong production. It also contributes to ongoing research at CZU's common eland facilities and strengthens collaboration between science and practice.

Beyond its scientific focus, the grant supports researchers returning to academic life after a career break, providing conditions for professional reintegration and work-life balance. Tersia Kokošková highlights the importance of flexible support and mentoring opportunities within the programme.



Two new podcast episodes with FTZ experts: science in practice and wildlife conservation

The latest episodes of the *Živá univerzita* podcast feature two experts from the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, CZU Prague, highlighting how research connects with real-world challenges – from international development work to wildlife conservation.

DEVELOPMENT WORK THAT MAKES A REAL IMPACT

A new episode features FTZ alumnus **Ing. Jan Staš, Ph.D.**, who shares his experience from international development projects across Africa and Southeast Asia.

From Zambia and Cambodia to Ethiopia and Vietnam, his work focuses on food security, sustainable agriculture, and rural development in challenging field conditions. In the interview, he reflects on the realities of working in remote areas, the importance of collaboration with local communities, and what motivates him to continue working in development practice.

The episode also offers insight into how he combines academic work with field missions abroad, and what his studies at FTZ contributed to his professional journey.

Listen [here](#).



RETURN OF THE PRZEWALSKI'S HORSE: HOW SCIENCE HELPS SAVE ENDANGERED SPECIES

In the second episode, ethologist **Mgr. Martina Komárková, Ph.D.** explores the return of the Przewalski's horse to the wild and the role of science in endangered species conservation.

The conversation follows her long-term research on animal behaviour, social relationships, health, and welfare — from Przewalski's horses and antelopes to domestic animals. The episode discusses what determines survival in the wild, whether animal personality can be measured, and why behavioural traits may play a key role in conservation success.

Listen [here](#).



FTZ Publishes Its 2025 Annual Report

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, has published its **2025 Annual Report**, highlighting the faculty's key achievements in research, education, international cooperation, and institutional development.

The report reflects a year of significant progress, from strengthening research excellence and modernising study programmes to expanding international partnerships and enhancing facilities. It also introduces the faculty's new motto:

LEADING EXCELLENCE IN TROPICAL AGRISCIENCES

As Dean **Hynek Roubík** states in his introduction:

"We are not observers of global challenges. We are active contributors to solutions."

The report showcases how FTZ continues to advance sustainable development through science, education, and innovation while reinforcing its role as an internationally recognised faculty addressing global challenges.

<https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/r-10623-news-home/ftz-releases-annual-report-2025-a-year-of-momentum-growth-an.html>

FTZ introduced new department names reflecting their current focus

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague has updated the names of two of its departments. The main reason for this change is to ensure that the department titles more accurately reflect their current academic focus, research activities and teaching, which have naturally evolved over time.

The departments are now officially named:

- **Department of Wildlife and Animal Sciences** (formerly: *Department of Animal Science and Food Processing*)
- **Department of Food and BioResource Technology** (formerly: *Department of Sustainable Technologies*)

"The new names of the departments better describe what the faculty is actually doing today. They reflect the shift towards an interdisciplinary approach and topics that respond to global challenges.

At the same time, they are more comprehensible for Czech and foreign students and our international partners", added Assoc. Prof. Ing. Hynek Roubík, Ph.D., Dean of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, CZU in Prague.

Our Successes

CZU Prague Strengthens Position in QS World University Rankings 2026

The Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CZU) continues to rank among the world's leading institutions in nature- and sustainability-related disciplines, according to the **QS World University Rankings by Subject 2026**.

In **Agriculture and Forestry**, CZU is ranked **58th globally**, the highest position among Czech universities this year. The university also improved year-on-year, rising from 66th place in 2025 and continuing a long-term upward trend.

In **Environmental Sciences**, CZU is ranked **first in the Czech Republic** and placed in the **251–300 global band**. The university has also been newly ranked in a subject area related to economics.

Overall, CZU Prague is placed in the **761–770 range globally** in the QS World University Rankings 2026.

The results confirm the university's strong international standing, particularly in areas related to agriculture, forestry, environmental sciences, and sustainability.

Best Presentation Award for FTZ Student at Zoologické dny 2026

We are proud to announce that **Juliana Walterová**, student of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, received the **Best Presentation Award** at *Zoologické dny 2026*.



Her presentation, **"Smuggled Meat: A Risk to Biodiversity and Biosecurity,"** focused on research into illegal imports of animal products detected in passengers' luggage at Václav Havel Airport Prague.

Using DNA-based methods, the study identified a wide range of animal products, including species not commonly found in Europe. A key finding was the detection of African swine fever (ASF) viral DNA in nearly one third of pork samples, including heat-treated products.

The results highlight that illegally transported meat poses not only a threat to biodiversity, but also a serious biosecurity risk to agriculture and public health. Congratulations to Juliana on this excellent achievement

BRT Team Wins International Sustainability Competition

A team from the BioResources & Technology Division (BRT) at the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences achieved first place at the Anthropocene Case Competition 2026, organised by the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MATE) in cooperation with Bonafarm Group.

Competing against nearly 80 teams from more than 20 countries, the FTZ team developed an innovative solution for the sustainable utilisation of poultry by-products, combining circular economy principles, applied research, and business strategy to address a real challenge faced by the agrifood industry.



Following four competitive rounds and a demanding 48-hour final case challenge in Hungary, the team impressed the international jury with a practical, science-based proposal that demonstrated the real-world impact of research and innovation.

Congratulations to Viktoriia Chubur, Antoine Bercy, AbdulAzeez Shobajo, and Paula A. Castro Martinez on this outstanding achievement.

Read the team's full story and insights from the competition on the website [here](#).

Think Global, Eat Local: FTZ Students Present Their Projects at an International Forum in Vienna



Students from the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences represented CZU Prague at the international Green Plate Forum 4.0: Think Global, Eat Local held at BOKU University in Vienna. Together with students from Austria and Sweden, they presented innovative approaches to sustainable food production and responsible consumption.

The FTZ team produced three educational videos focusing on sustainable Czech beer production, food waste management at the CZU canteen, and sustainable shrimp farming in Colombia. Organised as part of the SustainMind project under the Euroleague for Life Sciences (ELLS), the event provided students with a valuable opportunity to showcase their work in an international setting, exchange ideas, and strengthen their communication and presentation skills in the field of sustainable agri-food systems.

FTZ Students Win the Student Competition in Evaluation 2026

Students from the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences achieved first place in the Student Competition in Evaluation 2026, demonstrating their ability to design and present a comprehensive evaluation of an international development project under time pressure.



The winning team—Eke Francis Ikechukwu, Vargas Moreira Maria Victoria, Castro Martinez Paula Andrea, and Fahmy Anna Mohamed Refaat Ahmed—impressed the expert jury with an innovative evaluation proposal for the AgriConnect Cambodia project. Organised as part of the course Project Monitoring and Evaluation led by Ing. Petra Chaloupková, Ph.D., the competition provides students with valuable hands-on experience and strengthens their practical skills in project evaluation.

Events at FTZ

MCYR 2026 Opens Calls for Abstracts and Workshops

The 7th International Multidisciplinary Conference for Young Researchers (MCYR 2026) will take place on **8–9 October 2026**, bringing together early-career researchers from around the world to share research and foster interdisciplinary collaboration.

This year's theme, "**Research Innovation to Action: Pathways Toward Resilience in a Risk-Prone World**," will cover topics across technology and innovation, agriculture, ecology, climate and sustainability, as well as society and culture.

MCYR provides a long-standing platform for presenting research, building international networks, and encouraging cross-disciplinary exchange.

Two calls are currently open:

- Call for Abstracts
- Call for Workshop Proposals (deadline: **31 August 2026**)

Accepted abstracts will be published in the **MCYR Book of Abstracts (ISBN)**. Workshops may focus on networking, capacity building, or research collaboration and can be held in person or online.

MCYR 2026 is organised by the BioResources & Technology Division (BRT) with the support of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, CZU Prague, in a hybrid format.

<https://mcyr.ftz.czu.cz/en>

Next-Gen Leadership Workshop Inspires FTZ Students

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, hosted the **Next-Gen Leadership Workshop**, organised by FTZ Student Ambassadors.

The workshop focused on developing leadership skills for academic and international environments. It featured contributions from **Dr. Jiban Kumar**, Director of the Czech Agrifood Research Center and FTZ alumnus, and **H.E. Theresa Adjei-Mensah**, Ambassador of the Republic of Ghana to the Czech Republic.



The programme combined expert talks with an interactive team-based activity focused on

communication, collaboration, and decision-making under pressure.

The event offered students practical insights into leadership development and its role in today's global and multicultural context.

FTZ hosted an introductory meeting on the establishment of the World Food Forum Czech Youth Chapter

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague hosted the first introductory meeting focused on the establishment of the **World Food Forum Czech Youth Chapter**.

World Food Forum representatives **Ing. Catherine John** and **Ing. Enemona Greg Ademu** presented their vision for the initiative and outlined the next steps towards establishing the chapter in Prague. Representatives of FTZ, together with the Head of the Student Ambassadors, shared relevant experience, insights, and opportunities for engaging students and the faculty in this international platform.

The discussion focused on initial concepts, key priorities, and potential partnership opportunities, particularly in the areas of food security, sustainable development, and youth engagement in addressing global challenges. We look forward to further cooperation and the continued development of this initiative.

FTZ Hosted the Czech Evaluation Society 2026 Conference

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, hosted the 2026 conference of the Czech Evaluation Society, focused on the theme "*A Changing World, Changing Evaluation*."

The event brought together more than 80 experts from public administration, academia, NGOs, and the private sector to discuss current challenges in evaluating public policies, development projects, and education systems.

The programme included thematic panels, workshops, and interactive formats addressing complexity in evaluation and the adaptation of methodologies to changing global contexts.

FTZ was represented by Vice-Dean for International Relations **Ing. Petra Chaloupková, Ph.D., dr. h. c.**, who shared experiences from CZU development projects in Cambodia, and students who received awards for their evaluation work on the AgriConnect Cambodia project.

The conference highlighted the importance of evaluation as a key tool for improving the impact of development cooperation and research activities.

ISAE Regional Conference on Applied Ethology Held at FTZ

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, hosted the **East–West Central Europe Joint Regional Conference 2026** of the International Society for Applied Ethology (ISAE).

The conference brought together researchers, educators, and practitioners from across Europe to discuss current topics in applied ethology, including animal welfare, behaviour of domestic and wild species, animal cognition, and the use of new technologies in research.



The programme included expert lectures, thematic sessions, workshops on animal welfare education, as well as opportunities for networking and field excursions.

A strong emphasis was placed on transferring scientific knowledge into practice and fostering interdisciplinary collaboration.

The event provided an important platform for sharing the latest research findings and strengthening international cooperation in the fields of animal behaviour, welfare, and sustainable livestock and wildlife management.

International Cooperation

FTZ Celebrates 20 Years of Cooperation with Moldova

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, marked a major milestone – 20 years of cooperation with Moldova in education, research, and agricultural development.

Since 2005, FTZ has been involved in projects focused on capacity building in higher education, agriculture, and rural development, gradually developing a long-term partnership with Moldovan universities and institutions.

To commemorate the anniversary, FTZ hosted a celebratory event on 18 December 2025 at CZU Prague, bringing together academic staff, project partners, and institutional representatives.

The programme included a presentation on two decades of cooperation, a cultural and networking segment featuring Moldovan traditions, and a photo exhibition showcasing joint projects and field activities. The event also welcomed representatives of the Embassy of the Republic of Moldova in Prague.

The celebration highlighted the long-standing partnership and reaffirmed FTZ's commitment to international cooperation and sustainable development.

7 Years of Cooperation in Zambia: From Research to Real Impact

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, **hosted an exhibition** marking more than seven years of cooperation in Zambia.



The exhibition, which **opened on 12 May 2026** in the FTZ lobby, presented how research, education, and practice come together to strengthen food security and improve livelihoods in local communities. It featured photographs and field stories from a wide range of projects focused on sustainable agriculture, agrobiodiversity, value chain development (including mango and cassava), and farmer training.

Zambia represents a key region for FTZ long-term activities, where agriculture plays a crucial role but is challenged by climate change, market access, and limited value addition. The projects therefore focused not only on productivity, but also on sustainability, resilience, and adaptation.

The initiative was built on strong partnerships with Czech and international institutions, NGOs such as Caritas Czech Republic, local communities, and universities, enabling knowledge exchange and long-term impact.

The exhibition also highlighted the involvement of FTZ students and researchers, who gained practical field experience while contributing to applied research and development.

The opening event included a meeting with experts involved in the field activities.

<https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/r-10623-news-home/7-let-spoluprace-v-zambii-od-vyzkumu-k-realnemu-dopadu-1.html>

Czech Expertise Supports Agricultural Recovery in Ethiopia's Tigray Region

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, has joined a new Czech Development Agency-supported project focused on restoring livelihoods in Ethiopia's Tigray region.

Implemented by a consortium led by People in Need, the project brings together Czech and Ethiopian partners, including FTZ CZU Prague, Vše pro pŕdu, and Mekelle University. It responds to the impacts of conflict and climate change through improving access to water, supporting agricultural production, strengthening cooperatives, and developing value chains.

FTZ contributes expertise in sustainable agriculture, water management, and innovation transfer, helping adapt solutions to local conditions. The project also supports entrepreneurship and focuses on women and young farmers.

The initiative reinforces long-term cooperation between Czech and Ethiopian institutions and highlights the role of applied research in strengthening food security and rural resilience.

<https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/r-10623-news-home/czech-expertise-supports-the-recovery-of-agriculture-in-ethi.html>

AgriConnect Cambodia: Digital Skills for Sustainable Agriculture

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), namely the COBE team, has been awarded a new development project in Cambodia focused on strengthening digital skills, education, research, and collaboration in sustainable agriculture.

In partnership with Cambodian universities, the project supports the development of digital skills, open science, and research capacity in agriculture. A key activity is a summer school on digital tools and the use of artificial intelligence in agriculture, providing participants with practical training in data analysis and modern research methods.

AgriConnect Cambodia contributes to knowledge exchange, innovation, and food security, while strengthening CZU Prague's international research cooperation.

<https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/r-10623-news-home/agriconnect-cambodia-digital-skills-and-research-for-the-fut.html>



FTZ Hosts Moldovan Delegation within FAO Land Degradation Neutrality Programme

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), CZU Prague, hosted a six-member delegation from the Republic of Moldova as part of a study visit organised by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) under the Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) project.

The programme brought together representatives of key Moldovan institutions responsible for agriculture, environment, forestry, and land governance, with the aim of sharing European best practices in sustainable land management and climate resilience.

During the visit, participants engaged in expert lectures, discussions, and site visits at CZU Prague, focusing on soil conservation, landscape management, and climate adaptation.

The exchange strengthened professional cooperation between Czech and Moldovan institutions and supported capacity building in sustainable land and natural resource management.

<https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/r-10623-news-home/faculty-of-tropical-agrisciences-hosts-moldovan-delegation-w.html>



CZU Prague and CARC Strengthen Cooperation to Support Early-Career Scientists

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, and the Czech Agrifood Research Center (CARC) signed a partnership agreement on **10 June 2026**, marking a new step in strengthening cooperation in research, education, and innovation.

The agreement establishes a framework for closer collaboration in doctoral education, including joint supervision opportunities, shared research topics, access to infrastructure, and expert involvement from both institutions. It aims to support the professional development of young scientists and expand their research and career opportunities.

The partnership reflects a shared commitment to connecting research and education and to developing innovative solutions in agriculture, food systems, and sustainable development.

CARC is a research institution focused on applied research and innovation in the agrifood sector, contributing to its competitiveness and long-term sustainability.



FTZ Participated in International Training on Sustainable Agricultural Value Chains in Uganda

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, took part in an international training focused on sustainable agricultural value chains, held on 9–13 February 2026 at Uganda Christian University (UCU) in Mukono.

The five-day training, organised within the ADVALUE Erasmus+ project, brought together 31 representatives from partner institutions, including RUFORUM, the University of Nairobi, Pwani University, Makerere University, and CZU Prague.

The programme included workshops, field visits, and case studies aimed at strengthening knowledge exchange between European and African partners and supporting the development of sustainable agricultural systems.

FTZ contributed to the project through Module 4, focusing on capacity building in value chain development, and was represented on site by Ing. Petra Chaloupková, Ph.D., dr. h. c., and Ing. Jana Mazancová, Ph.D.

The training outcomes will support curriculum development, joint research activities, and community-oriented agricultural initiatives across partner countries.

FTZ Joins SmartSheep Project Focused on Livestock Protection from Large Carnivores

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, will participate in the new **SmartSheep** project, supported by the NAZV – ZEMĚ II programme. The project focuses on the scientific evaluation of measures aimed at protecting livestock from large carnivores, particularly the grey wolf (*Canis lupus*).

SmartSheep addresses the need for evidence-based solutions in areas where conflicts between livestock farming and the presence of large carnivores occur. The project combines field experiments, camera trapping, telemetry data, farmer surveys, and genetic analyses.

The MEGERA Research Team (Molecular Ecology, Genetics and Evolutionary Research of Animals), led by **Mgr. Barbora Černá Bolfíková, Ph.D.**, will be responsible for the genetic component of the research. Using non-invasive samples, the team will identify attack sources, verify species identity, and generate genetic profiles of individual animals, enabling the tracking of repeated predation events and assignment of wolves to specific packs.

The field component of the project will test the effectiveness of different preventive measures, including electric fencing and fladry systems (lines with moving strips of fabric used as a visual deterrent). The study is designed as a controlled, randomized, and replicated experiment to ensure robust evaluation of mitigation strategies.

The project aims to provide practical, evidence-based recommendations on which measures are most effective, under which conditions, and how they can be combined to reduce human–wildlife conflict and support coexistence between livestock farming and large carnivores.

Genomics Helps Trace Illegal Pangolin Trade: New Study Highlights Forensic Potential

Pangolins are among the most heavily trafficked mammals worldwide, primarily hunted for their scales used in traditional medicine and for bushmeat consumption. Despite full legal protection and an international ban on trade, illegal trafficking continues on a large scale.

A new international study published in PLOS Biology demonstrates how modern genomics can significantly improve efforts to combat this trade. Researchers analysed DNA from more than 700 pangolin samples collected from museum collections, field sites, bushmeat markets, and international seizures.

Unlike standard genetic approaches that typically identify species or broad population groups, the study applied a gene-capture method targeting selected regions of the genome. This enabled the retrieval of usable genetic data even from highly degraded material, including historical specimens and confiscated products.

The result is a genomic reference map that allows DNA from seized scales or other materials to be matched with reference populations of known geographic origin. In some cases, this approach can trace the origin of illegally traded material to within tens or even a few kilometres.

The study provides a practical forensic tool for mapping illegal wildlife trade networks, identifying poaching hotspots, and revealing links between local bushmeat markets and international trafficking routes. It also highlights that domestic and international trade often draw from the same source populations, increasing pressure on wild species.

The approach holds strong potential for application to other endangered species involved in illegal wildlife trade, provided that reference databases are expanded and international collaboration in genetic monitoring is strengthened.

<https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.3003762>

Czech Expertise Supports Food Security and Agricultural Resilience in Nigeria

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences at CZU Prague continues to contribute to strengthening food security and climate resilience in Nigeria through the Twinning Project Improving Food Security and Food Systems Using Climate Smart Technologies for Enhanced Value Chains Development in Nigeria.

At the end of May, the FTZ team, led by Assoc. Prof. Miroslava Bavorová, travelled to Abuja to participate in stakeholder meetings with representatives from Nigeria's agricultural sector. The discussions brought together key stakeholders to share practical experience, gather feedback, and identify opportunities for improving agricultural resilience policies and developing an inclusive implementation strategy.

The project is funded under the European Union's Global Gateway initiative and is coordinated by the State Plant Protection Service (Latvia), with the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, and AGES – Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety as partner institutions.

The project's impact is also gaining international recognition. During the 2026 WTO Trade and Environment Week, Dr. Mustapha Yakubu Madaki, Twinning Project Adviser, highlighted the importance of water access and sustainable water management for food security and sustainable development.



The Embassy of the Czech Republic in Nigeria also acknowledged the Czech team's contribution, underlining the value of international collaboration in building more resilient and sustainable food systems.

Antelope Conservation has been growing in Central Africa

In 2026, WildEco Lab and Antelope Conservation officially launched collaboration for the conservation of antelopes and other large mammals in the savanna region of Northern Cameroon. Complex of three national parks, Farou, Bénoué, and Bouba Ndjidda, surrounded by managed hunting zones, represents one of the last remaining strongholds of the Eastern subspecies of Vulnerable giant eland and other endangered antelope species, as korrigum. Antelope Conservation supports the local government and other stakeholders in the development of national conservation strategy and action plan for the giant eland.

In the Central African region, the conservation planning and action have been intensified also in the Central African Republic. Together with local authorities, University of Bangui, African Parks and Giraffe Conservation Foundation, Antelope Conservation contributed at the workshop in Bangui with the aim to prepare and support reintroductions of native locally extinct species to the Chinko Protected area in the Eastern CAR.

Students explored sustainable agriculture and new perspectives during traineeship in Morocco

What does agriculture look like in dryland regions? How can water resources be managed more sustainably under climate change conditions? And what can students gain from experiencing research and everyday life in a completely different cultural environment?

Students and academics from the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, explored these questions during a week-long visit to Rabat, Morocco.

The programme at the partner institution Institut Agronomique et Vétérinaire Hassan II (IAV) focused on sustainable agriculture, innovation, behavioural economics, and smart farming systems with an emphasis on water management in dryland areas. Participants attended lectures and seminars, visited greenhouse facilities, and explored practical applications of climate-resilient agricultural technologies.

An important part of the programme was also a visit to ICARDA Morocco, where students gained insight into research focused on crop improvement, genebanks, food security, and agriculture adapted to water-scarce environments.

The traineeship created valuable opportunities for academic exchange between doctoral students from both institutions. Participants presented their research projects, discussed methodological approaches, and shared fieldwork experiences and research challenges.

Beyond the academic programme, students had the opportunity to experience Moroccan culture, local traditions, and everyday life. The mobility offered not only professional development, but also personal growth, international networking, and intercultural experience.

The traineeship took place within the Erasmus+ KA171 programme and involved two academic staff members and eight PhD students from the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences.

COMUNIDAD Project Successfully Concludes



The COMUNIDAD Project has reached its successful conclusion, marking a major milestone in advancing AI-driven environmental solutions and stakeholder engagement across Latin America. Throughout the project, BRT contributed to pilot validation, training activities, and dissemination, supporting sustainable development and digital innovation in Chile and Colombia. [LINK](#).

BRT Strengthens Regional Impact through COMUNIDAD Workshops

BRT actively contributed to stakeholder engagement and capacity building through regional workshops within the COMUNIDAD Project. These activities supported knowledge exchange and practical implementation of digital tools in environmental management. [LINK](#).

New Horizon Europe Project: ADAPT-FIN

BRT joins the newly funded ADAPT-FIN, a Horizon Europe initiative focused on unlocking private investment for climate adaptation. The project addresses key barriers in adaptation finance by developing economic valuation tools, innovative financing mechanisms, and investment roadmaps, tested across real-world case studies in six European countries. By bridging data and incentive gaps, ADAPT-FIN aims to accelerate private sector engagement and support the EU Adaptation Strategy and European Green Deal.

AgriSci-UA Summer School 2025



The AgriSci-UA Summer School 2025 brought together students and experts for a dynamic programme focused on agricultural innovation, sustainability, and international collaboration. BRT contributed to knowledge exchange and interdisciplinary learning in a global context. [LINK](#).

Leadership in BIO-CAPITAL Vision

Assoc. Prof. Hynek Roubík shared insights into the strategic objectives of the BIO-CAPITAL initiative, outlining its role in advancing sustainable bioeconomy systems and international collaboration. [LINK](#).

OSIRIS Initiative: "10 Tales of Reproducibility"

The OSIRIS Project launched its "10 Tales of Reproducibility" series, highlighting real-world experiences in open science and reproducibility. The initiative promotes transparency, collaboration, and improved research practices. [LINK](#).

Building a more sustainable future for coffee

The Fairtrade Specialty Coffee Dialogue brought together Fairtrade specialty coffee producers from Latin America, coffee professionals, representatives of the entire supply chain, and the academic community in Prague. The event created a unique platform to discuss coffee quality, fair trade, and the future of sustainable coffee production.



The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CZU Prague) was represented by Jiří Hejkrlik from the Department of Economics and Development, who serves as Chair of the Board of Fairtrade Czech Republic and Slovakia. The dialogue welcomed nine coffee producers from Brazil, Honduras, and Nicaragua, fostering valuable exchanges between farmers, experts, and future professionals.

Supporting fair trade, sustainable agriculture, and collaboration between academia and practice is an integral part of our faculty's mission. We are proud to have been part of this inspiring event and thank the organizers for bringing together so many dedicated people working towards a more sustainable coffee sector.

Hunting One of Africa's Most Dangerous Killers



When someone says they have returned from hunting dangerous animals in Africa, most people think of lions, leopards, or crocodiles. Researchers from the FTZ travelled to Zambia in search of something much smaller—but equally dangerous: ticks.

Together with colleagues from The University of Zambia (UNZA), Assoc. Professor Jiří Černý and Dr. Jignesh Italiya collected tick samples at several locations, including the Chaminuka Game Reserve. Despite their tiny size, ticks transmit pathogens that threaten both human and animal health, including the Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever virus, Coxiella burnetii (Q fever), and pathogens causing serious livestock diseases.

The collected samples will be analysed directly in Zambia using the CZU mobilAB mobile laboratory, enabling rapid, on-site detection of dangerous pathogens without the need to transport samples to distant laboratories.

The research is carried out within the Erasmus+ programme as part of the long-term collaboration between CZU Prague and UNZA. It contributes to improved surveillance of zoonotic diseases and supports the One Health approach, which recognises the close connection between human, animal, and environmental health.

Botanical Garden

The FTZ Botanical Garden has joined the international IPEN network

The Botanical Garden of the Faculty of Tropical Agriculture (FTZ) has successfully met strict criteria and become a member of The International Plant Exchange Network (IPEN). Founded in 2002, this international network serves as a system for the unique identification and tracking of plant genetic material worldwide.

WHAT DOES JOINING THE IPEN NETWORK MEAN IN PRACTICE?

Joining this network requires strict adherence to standards that guarantee the legal and ethical origin of plants in accordance with international biodiversity conventions. The main criteria met include:

- Implementation of IPEN numbers: Each plant sample receives a unique identification code that accompanies it throughout its entire existence. This allows for immediate tracing of the country of origin and the legal conditions under which the material was obtained.
- Transparent documentation: The botanical garden guarantees full traceability of each plant's history, thereby actively contributing to the fight against the illegal trade in natural resources.
- Exchange for scientific purposes: Membership enables the safe and administratively streamlined transfer of plants between member gardens. This material is used exclusively for research, nature conservation, or education.

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF A GLOBAL AUTHORITY

The entire network operates under the auspices of the international organization Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), which brings together over 800 member institutions in more than 118 countries around the world. Its main goal is to coordinate the global community of botanical gardens toward the effective conservation of endangered plant species.

For the FTZ Botanical Garden, this involvement means not only prestige but, above all, a direct connection to the global scientific community. We are thus becoming part of a global network that actively collaborates to preserve our planet's plant diversity.

(Valentine's Day) Guided Tours at the Botanical Garden

On the eve of Valentine's Day, the second annual Valentine's Day guided tours of the darkened greenhouses took place at the FTZ Botanical Garden. Visitors had the opportunity to discover the secrets of spices and aromatic plants in a unique atmosphere, complemented by themed refreshments. The tours were fully booked, and we were delighted that some visitors returned to us after a year. The interest this evening confirmed that such themed events hold a special appeal for the public and have already found their place within the Botanical Garden.

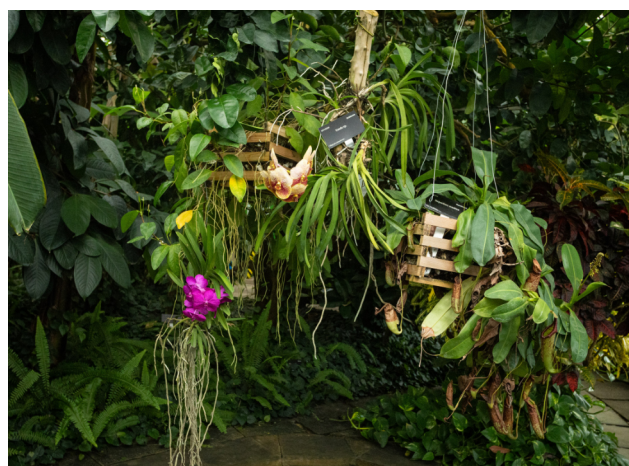
Voluntary Support for the Botanical Garden: QR Code

After overcoming all bureaucratic and technical obstacles, we have successfully launched the simplest way to voluntarily support our work. The Botanical Garden of FTZ has thus acquired a modern tool that allows visitors to appreciate the care of the collections, research activities and educational work of the botanical garden in the most technically straightforward way possible.

The system is now fully operational. By scanning the QR code, it is possible to send a voluntary financial contribution of any amount, with the interface offering a preset value that can be adjusted according to one's own discretion.

Looking Back at the Spring Sale of Student-Grown Plants

In April and May, the Botanical Garden of FTZ held a sale of seedlings that were grown by students of FTZ under the supervision of our specialists. The stock sold out completely, confirming both the quality of the produce and the value of the effort invested. For the botanical garden's staff, it was a logistically demanding period, as the sale took place simultaneously with student internships and the necessary spring maintenance of the collections. However, this form of collaboration between staff and students successfully brought together specialist teaching with a tangible outcome for the public.



Alumni

Alumni Achievement: FTZ Graduate Appointed Director of Prague Zoo



We are pleased to share that our alumna **Lenka Poliaková**, graduate of Wildlife Management at the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, has been appointed Director of **Prague Zoo**.

She brings extensive international experience in conservation, including coordination of in situ projects such as the reintroduction of Przewalski's horses in Mongolia and the "Wandering Bus" initiative supporting lowland gorilla conservation in Cameroon.

Lenka recalls her studies at FTZ as a formative experience shaped by a close-knit academic community and inspiring environment:

"We all knew each other – students and teachers alike. It was a close and inspiring environment."

Her international career began early through Erasmus mobility and practical experience with Antelope Conservation, which allowed her to apply her studies directly in the field.

We warmly congratulate her on this appointment and wish her every success in leading one of the world's most renowned zoological institutions.

<https://zivauni.cz/fajn-lidi-skvele-projekty-a-cestovani-po-svete-to-jsou-ty-prijemnejsi-vzpominky-na-zoo-praha-nyni-se-tam-lenka-poliakova-vraci-ve-zcela-jine-pozici/>

Alumni Spotlight: FTZ Graduate in Biodiversity Conservation

How does studying at the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), CZU Prague, translate into a global career in conservation? The path of **Maxine Piron** offers a clear example.

After completing her studies in Belgium, she chose FTZ's **Wildlife Management** programme for its strong practical and field-oriented focus. She particularly valued the close contact with lecturers and learning grounded in real field experience.

Following her graduation, Maxine joined **African Parks**, where she began as a data intern and gradually built her career in biodiversity conservation and wildlife reintroduction projects, including rhino conservation initiatives across Africa.

Her experience highlights how FTZ's internationally oriented, practice-based education can open doors to impactful work in global conservation.



Back at FTZ After 25 Years

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ), CZU Prague, welcomed alumnae who returned to their alma mater 25 years after completing their studies.

On **13 June 2026**, they first took part in the Silver Graduation Ceremony at CZU Prague and subsequently visited FTZ to reconnect with the faculty and discover how it has evolved over the past decades.

The programme included a presentation by Dean **Assoc. Prof. Hynek Roubík**, who introduced the current profile of the faculty, its development in education, research, and international cooperation, followed by a guided tour of modern teaching and research facilities.

The visit concluded with an informal gathering on the faculty rooftop terrace, featuring shared memories, discussions, and a celebratory toast overlooking the campus.

We warmly thank our alumnae for their visit and the inspiring atmosphere they brought back to the faculty.

We would be happy to stay in touch with our graduates and welcome any opportunities to connect or reconnect in the future. Alumni who would like to share updates or explore possible cooperation are invited to contact us at: mandikova@ftz.czu.cz.



Join the CZU Alumni Club!

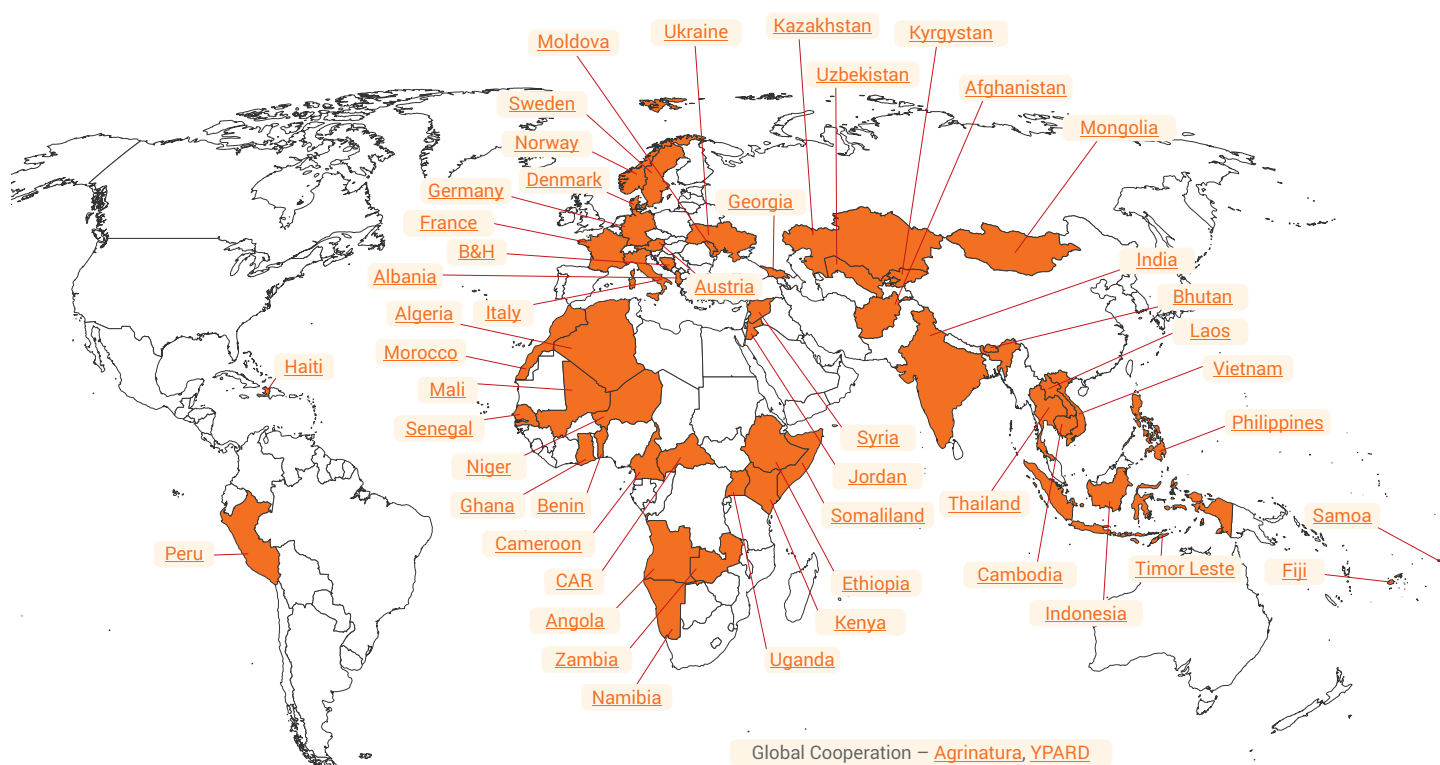
Stay updated on campus news, find job opportunities, internships, and connect with alumni, students, and professionals. Expand your network today!

Sign up now: network.czu.cz

FTZ Projects and Partnerships

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTZ) at the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CZU) is a unique institution in the Czech Republic with over fifty years of expertise in tropical agriculture, rural development, and sustainable natural resource management. FTZ is dedicated to educating Czech and international students and is actively engaged in research that addresses the specific needs of tropical and developing regions.

The faculty's mission is to transfer cutting-edge knowledge and technology between the Czech Republic, the EU, and tropical regions, while respecting local traditions and development levels. This global engagement is reflected in FTZ's numerous projects and partnerships across various countries, as shown on the accompanying map.



Do you want to cooperate with the FTZ?

We are interested in cooperation on

- Research
- Internships
- Projects
- Sharing experiences
- Guest lectures
- Other

We look forward to hearing from you!

Contact

- Please visit our [homepage](#)

- Follow us    

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