



# Tropical News

“Newsletter for FTA Friends”

## Welcome

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*Dear Reader,*

*Welcome to the first issue of Tropical News. Our Newsletter will give you a brief insight into the latest updates about activities and international cooperation at the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences, the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague.*

*This Newsletter will be distributed twice a year and we would like to make all our present and future partners aware of news from the Faculty so we can easily find opportunities for cooperation.*

*We will be honoured to involve you in FTA activities, just don't hesitate to [contact us](#). Thank you for your continued support!*

*The FTA team*

## Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences

The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTA), the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (CZU) is a unique institution in our country with over fifty years of tradition in tropical agriculture, rural development and the sustainable management of natural resources in the tropics.

The FTA offers wide research and education opportunities in five departments:

Crop Sciences and Agroforestry; Animal Science and Food Processing; Sustainable Technologies; Economics and Development, and in the Botanical Garden.

Please find more information on the Faculty [web page](#) and we are looking forward to your visit at our new faculty building.

## JUNE 2020

Find in this issue news and opportunities for further cooperation with the Faculty

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# Our Successes — FTA Fight against COVID-19 —

The CZU Prague was placed first in the Czech Republic in the [THE Impact Ranking 2020!](#)

The FTA won the Best Faculty in the CR (according to the magazine Týden)

## We had 77 IF & SRJ publications in 2019

The new FTA Building, a new state-of-the-art facility called "the green building" will be the latest addition to the campus of the Czech Life Science University (CZU). Prospective students of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences interested in the fields of tropical agriculture and developing countries can enjoy the new premises as of this fall/autumn semester. The facility will offer top-notch technology and space for scientific research.

## 14 research teams

We would like to proudly introduce 2 representatives from the FTA research group and laboratories who worked even during the Covid-19 pandemic in this Newsletter (please find all our teams [here](#))

The Laboratory of Ethnobotany and Ethnopharmacology (LEE) team, led by Prof. Ladislav Kokoška, is helping to protect doctors and the elderly.

The focus of the laboratory is on the study of the chemistry and bioactivity of underutilized crops of tropical and subtropical origin. Plants of special interest are species used by native peoples in traditional folk medicinal systems.



The Covid-19 pandemic temporarily stopped the main research work of LEE, it caused the cancellation of several expeditions, e.g. to Ghana, Laos, the Philippines, and Thailand. But at least the LEE team helped prevent the spread of coronavirus infection!

## Disinfection

The laboratory space was changed into "a factory" for the production of hand sanitizer according to the WHO guidelines with the registered name "Bez-infekce". A group of Ph.D. students initiated its preparation and distribution in hospitals and the care homes for the elderly, where the prevention of infection is so important at this time.

The Ecology, Evolution, Emergence & Epidemiology of Zoonoses (e4) Research Group, led by Dr. Jiří Černý, is focusing to SARS-CoV-2 virus research.

The group is focused on three main lines of research, to: 1) analyze mutations in the viral genomes which are available in data depositories. 2) work on a project focused on the development of a simplified method for virus detection which is supported by a TAČR Gama2 grant. 3) test which animal species are susceptible to virus infection.

## We are testing

Our SARS-CoV-2 virus testing is focussed on all animals in intensive contact with humans. We are collaborating for example with the Dvůr Kralové ZOO, which is providing us with samples from monkeys kept there. The virus can pose a threat to all primates, in the wild or in captivity.

As to pets we are using social and traditional media to start a citizen science project the goal of which is to collect samples from pets belonging to owners who were diagnosed SARS-CoV-2 positive. We want to test which animal species can be open to infection.

If you know any veterinarians, please ask them if he/she can join in this research and inform their clients about it.



# International Cooperation



## We are proud to announce

An Honorary Doctorate degree in Tropical Agricultural Resources Management at Prince of Songkla University granted to Petra Chaloupková, PhD., dr. h.c.



## We are cooperating with international associations

The European Alliance on Agricultural Knowledge for Development ([Agrinatura](#))

Young Professionals for Agricultural Development ([YPARD](#))



## Our Successful Projects

The **SIMPLE project** coordinated by the FTA within Erasmus+ was officially finished in 2019 and made a real change in 6 universities in Asia! Thanks to our project, new alumni and career centres were created, 16 career days organised, staff and students were trained and we managed to encourage cooperation between the academic sector and the professional sector in the area of agriculture and life sciences in Cambodia, Indonesia and Thailand.

## >20 Projects

**Enhancement of livelihoods in the Kenyan Coastal Region** - by supporting Organic and Fairtrade certification of smallholder cashew farmers.

**Derbianus Conservation** - in close cooperation with the Wildlife Management and Conservation Research Team, is making the best of the connection of academia and the non-profit sector in biodiversity conservation. We offer extensive expertise in ecological studies, breeding management, technical support, environmental education and awareness across Western Africa.

**ICRAF and the FTA** have been recently jointly involved in domestication efforts on two indigenous African species – *Adansonia digitata* (the baobab) and *Garcinia kola* (the bitter kola).

## Tropentag Conference

**Food and nutrition security and its resilience to global crises; September 9 - 11, 2020**

Due to the current Corona pandemic [Tropentag 2020](#) will be organised as a virtual conference by ATSAF e.V., Germany.

The annual interdisciplinary conference TROPENTAG is jointly organised by the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, the universities of Berlin, Bonn, Göttingen, Hohenheim, Kassel-Witzenhausen, ZALF e.V., Ghent University (Belgium), BOKU Vienna (Austria) and the Council for Tropical and Subtropical Research (ATSAF e.V) in co-operation with the GIZ Advisory Service on Agricultural Research for Development (BEAF).



# Congratulations



For your:

- > **Successful Professorship** to our Dean doc. Ing. Jan Banout, Ph.D.,
- > **Associate professor title** to doc. Ing., Dr. sc. agr., Dr. sc. habil. Miroslava Bavorová,
- > „Special Issue Editor” in the [journal](#) **Molecules IF 3.060** to our Professor Ladislav Kokoška.

## Academic issues

### New Ambassadors and Student Advisors at the FTA

Twelve international students were admitted to the positions of Ambassadors and Student Advisors – we would like to welcome them into our FTA team and thank them for their cooperation!

### Students' Life during Covid-19

The University was locked down from 11 March 2020 due to Covid-19. Within one week we all had to adjust to profound changes in our lives. How was it for FTA international students? Here are some personal experiences:

**What was the biggest issue?** Not having enough time to do everything, as strange as it sounds, because there was just so much to do. / We would need to have more time to do things and even complete exams as university was not a priority at a moment where everyone was thinking about their loved ones.

**Were there any benefits?** Suddenly my agenda became full of online talks from some very interesting people on some very interesting topics, and I signed up to 4 or 5 online courses that will be a great benefit for my future career. / I was able to learn much on my own and manage each day well, as I had to keep a schedule to guide me through the period so I could make the most out of each day.

**How did the FTA CZU manage Covid-19?** The faculty responded quickly by setting up the online class in no time. We were well informed throughout. It was still very difficult as we had so much work to do and so much was happening at the same time. The information emails were very useful, keeping us informed at all times. The FTA acted quickly and correctly when everything started. I think we all managed it the best we could.

### New on-line opportunities for students

We are proud to share news about a successful online spring semester for the Wildlife Management and Conservation (WMC) study programme during the challenging times of this Covid-19 crisis which required a great degree of flexibility. While missing the face to face contact with you in the classroom, our Dpt. Head **doc. Karolína Brandlová** decided to create the best possible **online environment and secured a range of renowned foreign guest speakers**. We hope that all students benefited from the series of online classes before returning to the standard brick and mortar face to face teaching in the brand-new facility – the Pavilion of Tropical AgriSciences - that will welcome you in the fall/ autumn semester.

## Meet our New Alumni



**Doctor Markéta Grůňová**

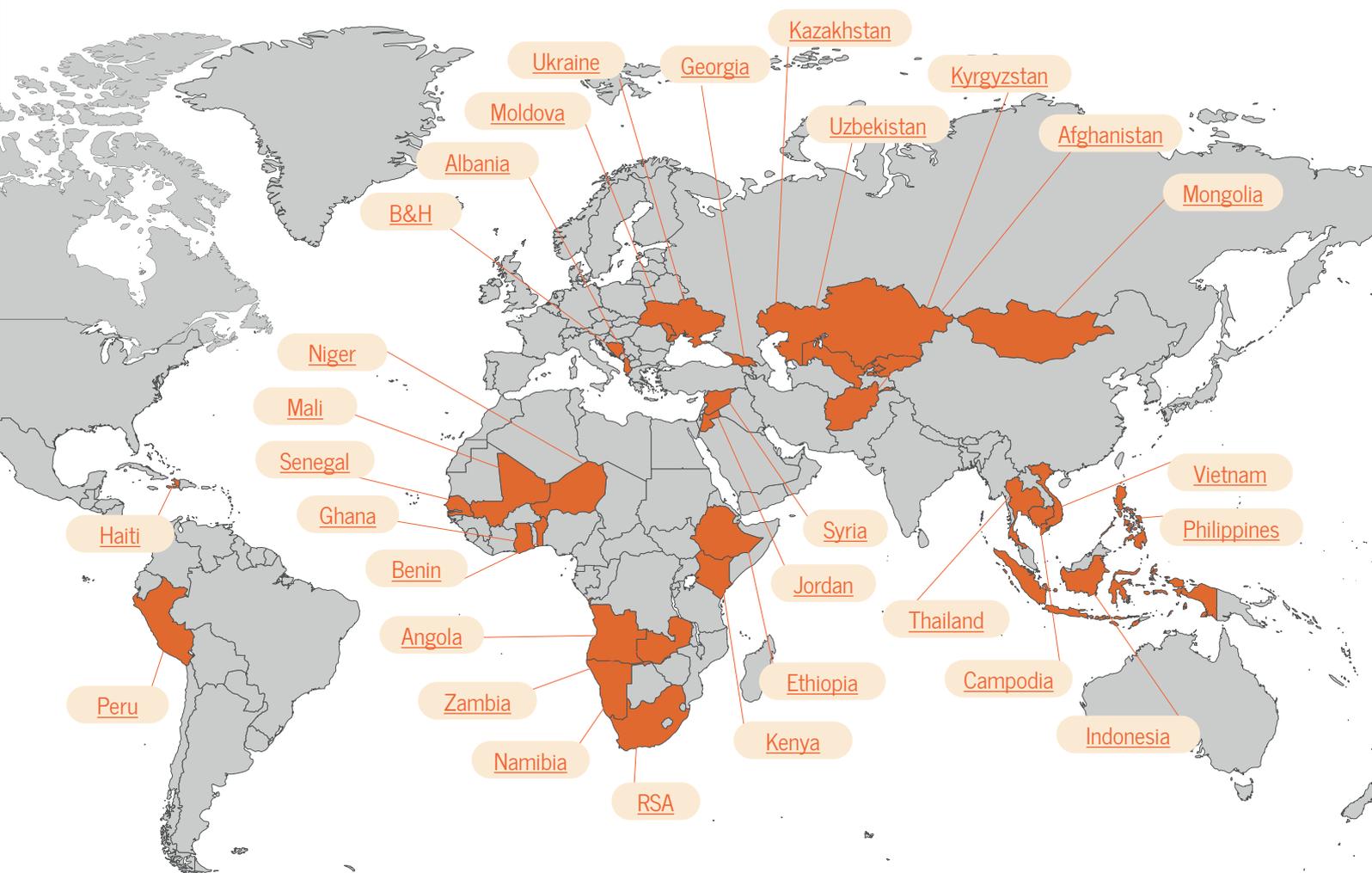
responsible for education and public relations at Safari Park Dvůr Králové.

FTA Alumni register [here](#)

We are proud of our alumni! We want to cooperate! Join our team and contact us at [alumniFTZ@ftz.czu.cz](mailto:alumniFTZ@ftz.czu.cz) !

# FTA Projects and Partnerships

As a Fair Trade Faculty, we support responsible consumption and sustainable development.



## Do you want to cooperate with the FTA?

We are interested in cooperation on

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

Let us know about you! Keep in touch!



## Contact

- > Please visit <https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/>
- > Follow us   
- > Contact us! Newsletter and FTA Alumni contact person: Jana Mandíková [mandikova@ftz.czu.cz](mailto:mandikova@ftz.czu.cz)



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