



# Tropical News

“Newsletter for  
FTA Friends”

**JUNE 2021**

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

## Welcome the New Dean

Dear Colleagues, Students, Alumni and  
FTA Friends,

**Prof. Patrick Van Damme was appointed as the second dean of the Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTA) but the first dean ever as a foreign national in the history of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague.**



A professor in tropical agronomy, a polyglot (fluent in 6 languages) and a renowned expert involved in research

projects all over the world: Great Green Wall (reforestation and fighting desertification in Africa) or his 10-year cannabis research providing a reference in modelling yield potential of illicitly grown cannabis, is retiring later this year from his home university in Belgium, but has a lot of energy and plans to consolidate FTA’s international ranking and further develop its international mandate.

He promises to bring in a shift towards more emphasis on contribution to society as an alternative to the current focus on number of published peer-reviewed articles in impact-factor, scientific journals.

**“We are rather unique even in the world – TROPICAL AGRISCIENCES FACULTY: at best people have laboratories or departments of tropical agriculture - it is another way of presenting ourselves to the world – solely devoted to tropical**

**agriculture sensu lato. New building equals new enthusiasm,” says Prof. Patrick Van Damme.**

The new dean intends to build further upon the good work started during the 8-year tenure of the **outgoing dean Prof. Jan Banout “founding father” of the faculty** whose vision was to create an institution that would produce global experts in the field of tropical agriculture. Headquartered in Prague, Prof. Banout saw the potential for Prague to become the centre of Europe for education and research in this field. The construction of the new Pavilion of Tropical AgriSciences can be considered as the material proof of his vision. All departments are now united under one roof for the first time, whereas the Union of Agroforestry (IUAF) is a first international institution to find its home in the building, and these can be considered to be further steps on this path.

# Our Successes

## Very Own Botanical Garden



The Faculty of Tropical AgriSciences (FTA) has its own [Botanical Garden](#) (BG) with a long-standing tradition since 1968. It is situated just next to the new faculty premises. **The FTA would like to thank Ing. Zdeněk Hlaváč, the head of the Botanical Garden, for contributing to the development and modernization over the last 36 years.**

Nowadays, the Botanical Garden has a unique and comprehensive collection of crop plants from the tropics and subtropics. The collection includes plants used for direct consumption, medicinal, aromatic and textile plants, as well as stimulatory food and spices.

The Botanical Garden serves the entire CZU for promotion, research, study, teaching purposes and is also open to the public. The Botanical Garden cooperates with more than 200 botanical gardens and research institutions worldwide in the form of Index Seminum, a free seed exchange between botanical gardens, and also in the form of ERASMUS exchanges.

## International Union for Agroforestry at FTA

The head office of the International Union for Agroforestry (IUAF) has been established at our faculty. IUAF was formally launched at the 4th World Congress on Agroforestry in Montpellier, France. Its main mission is to bring together individuals, associations and companies interested in researching and promoting agroforestry around the world. Agroforestry is an effective land-use system that can enhance agricultural productivity, boost ecological functionality, and support environmental sustainability.



101 IF publications  
at FTA in 2020

14 research teams/  
8 laboratories

## Wildlife Research

The Wildlife Management and Conservation Team (WMC) led by Assoc. Prof. Karolína Brandlová aims to conduct a broad scale of field surveys and studies mostly in Africa. With special attention paid to antelope, giraffe and Western Derby eland conservation, mitigation of human-wildlife and wildlife-livestock conflict, protected areas management, and environmental education. WMC is also involved in the ex-situ conservation and research realized in European zoos.



## Student Ambassadors

**Innovative Student Ambassadors at the FTA! Despite the various obstacles that students have had to overcome through distance learning, the Student Ambassadors have remained diligent in their support for their fellow FTA peers.** The Student Ambassadors have organized and hosted several interactive online events to boost the FTA morale. In addition, they have put together an alumni series to demonstrate real life examples of career opportunities after

FTA graduation. They are currently working on content to share the 'ins' and 'outs' of online student life at CZU, with an on-going social media takeover called, [International Fridays](#) and they are supporting the [Welcome course](#) for incoming students. Stay tuned to see what the Student Ambassadors come up with next, find info about the team [here!](#)



# International Cooperation



Cooperation  
in >20 countries

## YPARD Global coordinator unit at FTA

Tropentag Conference  
Sept 2021

### Vicepresidency in Agrinatura



We are proud to announce the appointment of vice-dean for international relations **Dr. Petra Chaloupková, dr.h.c.** as the new vice-president of **Agrinatura**, an international association bringing together prestigious European universities and research organizations with extensive research experience in tropical and subtropical agriculture, forestry, food safety and human nutrition, veterinary medicine, fisheries and environmental scientists.

The FTA has been hosting the European Coordination unit of **YPARD** - global platform for young professionals in agriculture since 2016. We are happy to announce that FTA has extended its hosting arrangement and also YPARD Global Coordination Unit - including Genna Tesdall, YPARD Director, and Glindys Virginia Luciano, YPARD Network Engagement Coordinator who is also FTA Alumni. We cannot wait for further collaboration with YPARD and new colleagues!

Find research stories of the FTA PhD students: [Charles Amarachi Ogbu](#), [Okafor Uche Cyprian](#), [Dita Mervartová](#)

19 international projects in 2020

## Two projects in Ukraine

Two projects, AgriSciences Platform for Scientific Enhancement of HEIs in Ukraine coordinated by Dr. Hynek Roubík and Interuniversity Cooperation as a Tool for Enhancement of Quality of Selected Universities in Ukraine coordinated by Dr. Jana Hvozdovičová successfully aimed to strengthen scientific capacity and cooperation with young researchers at five partner universities in Ukraine – Sumy State University, Sumy National Agrarian University, Bila Tserkva National Agrarian University, Dnipro State Agrarian and Economic University and Kharkiv National Agrarian University.

## Cooperation in Thailand

Fruitful PISAI project funded by the Erasmus+ programme has been successfully completed. The FTA as an active partner in the PISAI project joined the final meeting in March 2021 to discuss the project outcomes which aimed to create double degrees at the master's degree level between the key agricultural institutes in Thailand and establishment of cooperation with the private sector. Find more info about the project [here](#).



# Academic issues / Meet our Alumni



## Congratulations to:

- > COVID-19 research ([e4](#)), virologist Dr. Jiří Černý
- > Mobile laboratories ([CZU mobiLAB](#)), Dr. Hynek Roubířk
- > Rector's Award pedagogical activity, Dr. Petra Chaloupková, dr.h.c.
- > Josef Hlávka Award, Ing. Anna Maňourová

We are proud of our alumni and would like to cooperate in the future! Join us by clicking [here](#)!

## Meet our Alumni

**Ing. Lukáš Tůma**  
Inspiring agricultural professional

Lukáš Tůma, an agricultural analyst in Big Terra, a startup which "graduated" from The European Space Agency (ESA) Business Incubation Centre (BIC) Prague.

Recently, Lukáš Tůma has been mostly focused on development projects with

Caritas Czech Republic, People in Need, UNDP or ESA in several developing countries.

The startup, however, cooperates with quite a varied stratum of companies and institutions to strengthen value chains in agriculture and promote sustainable development. Find more information [here](#).

48% of students at FTA come from abroad

## Student Initiative

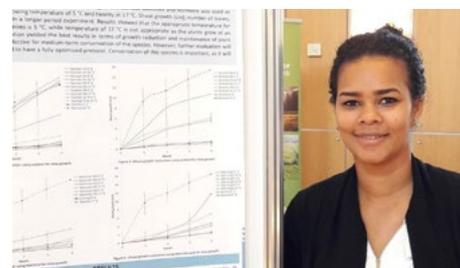


**Jan Korba, creating green lifestyle**

FTA acknowledges the environmentally friendly approach of our bachelor student Jan Korba, who is very active in improving his local community. Jan Korba has focused on promoting innovations in urban greenery, such as starting community gardens with fruit and vegetables or collective cultivation of crops on the roofs of panel houses. He looks for inspiration abroad, where similar gardens are created on skyscrapers and their production is used by restaurants.

Photo source:  
[Mostecky.denik.cz](#)

## Fresh Graduate



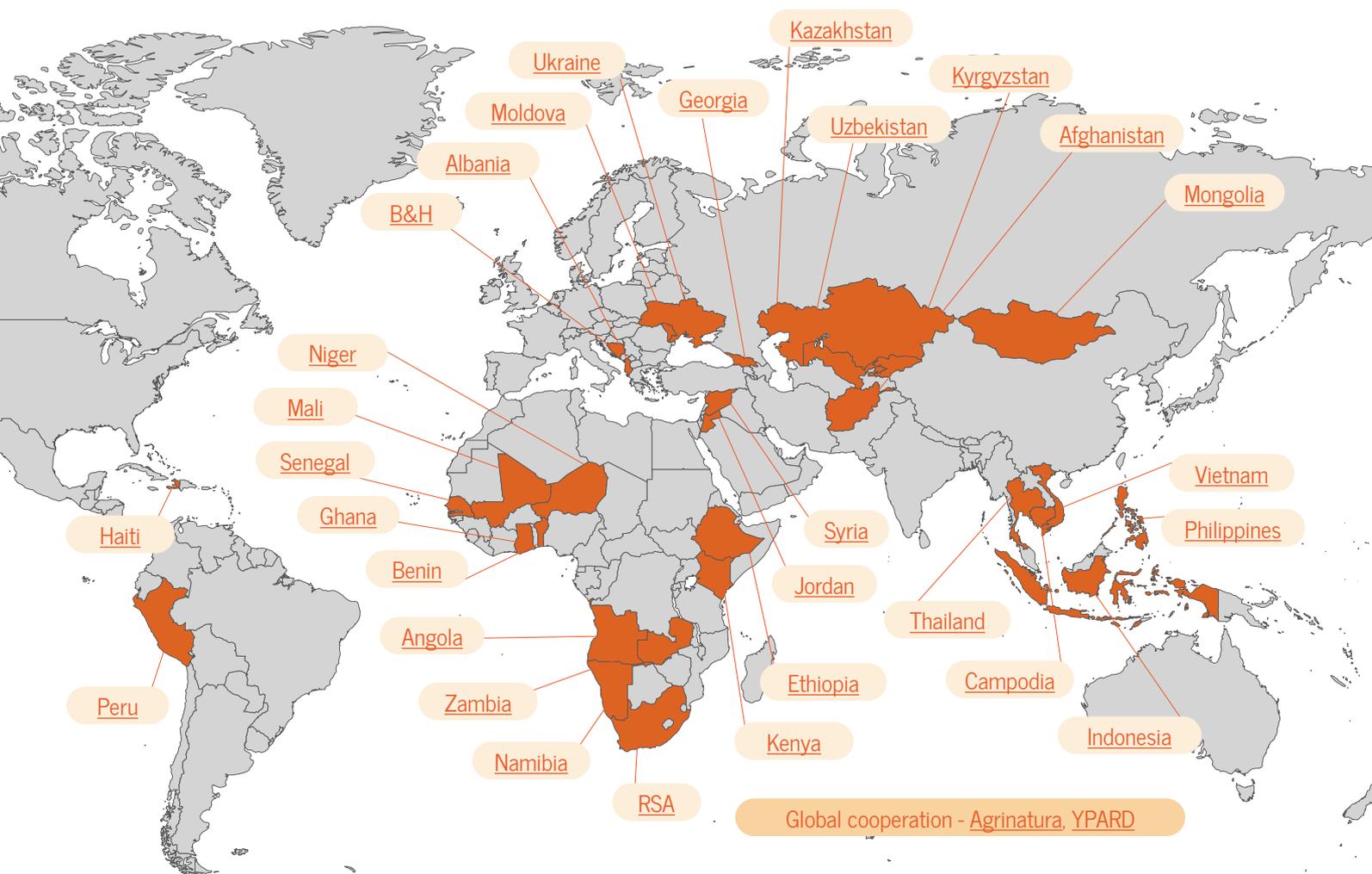
**Dr. Stacy Hammond**  
Scientist - saving plant biodiversity

Scientist Dr. Stacy Hammond graduated with a PhD degree from the Faculty of Tropical Agriculture (FTA) in 2021, she currently works as a researcher at the division of Plant Physiology and Cryobiology, Crop Research Institute (CRI), Prague, saving plant biodiversity for present and future generations through the cryobanking of endangered species. She also works as the communications officer for the European division of the international platform YPARD (Young Professionals for Agricultural Development) an international movement with the mission to enabled and empowered young agricultural leaders shaping sustainable food systems. Find the interview [here](#).

76 nationalities at FTA

# 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

We look forward to hearing from you!



## Contact

- > Please visit <https://www.ftz.czu.cz/en/>
- > Follow us     
- > Contact us! Newsletter and FTA Alumni contact person:  
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EUROPEAN UNION  
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