



Dear readers and colleagues,
This issue contains reviews and experimental works on human genetics, molecular, physiological, and biochemical plant genetics, and plant and animal selective breeding. A special section is about nonchromosomal heredity.

A series of articles written by Belarusian geneticists is special, for their publication coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Institute of Genetics and Cytology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus (NASB).

The earliest times of genetic studies in Belarus are associated with Anton Zhebrak, President of the Academy of Sciences of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR Academy of Sciences). He was a prominent geneticist, an expert in wide hybridization in wheat and experimental polyploidy. He started out when genetics was suppressed in the Soviet Union. In 1955, Nikolay Turbin, a brilliant scientist and science manager, established a genetic department at the Institute of Biology of the BSSR Academy of Sciences. In 1965, the department was reorganized into the Institute of Genetics and Cytology. Later in the same year the Vavilov Society of Geneticists and Breeders (VOGiS) was founded, of which he was elected president in 1972.

One of the first units at the Institute was the Laboratory of Theoretical Genetics headed by Full Member of the BSSR Academy of Sciences Petr Rokitskiy, who has made an enormous contribution to mathematical genetics and created a large

school of thought. Once the Institute was established, studies on heterosis were conducted under the supervision of Lubov Khotyleva, now Full Member of the NASB. Later, she became involved with the development and use of aneuploid wheats and a new cereal, triticale. Studies in plant molecular genetics and plant genetic engineering were initiated under the supervision of Nikolai Kartel, now Full Member of the NASB. Corresponding Member of the NASB Alexander Kilchevsky spearheaded studies in biotechnology and molecular-genetic plant selection. Various achievements of the Institute's researchers have awarded numerous Soviet, national, and international prizes and decorations.

We wish the Institute of Genetics and Cytology of the NASB new great achievements, every success and prosperity.

Three bits of news about the Vavilov Journal of Genetics and Breeding. First, articles can now be submitted in electronic form. Secondly, the journal has now obtained a DOI name from CrossRef.

Finally, a new electronic periodical, the *Letters to the Vavilov Journal*, has been launched. Because the *Vavilov Journal of Genetics and Breeding* has now mainly focused on experimental results and reviews, publications about important stages in the history of genetics, outstanding geneticists' and breeders' biographies and the summaries of major genetic conferences have moved to the *Letters...*, the main features of which are free access to publications, rapid publication, the capability to handle ample illustrative material, and a reader-friendly design.

The opening title in the *Letters...* is "Antilycenkoist with pre-war experience" by Eduard Kolchinsky and Sergey Inge-Vechtomov, who commemorate the centenary of distinguished historian and bibliographer of genetics Daniil Lebedev, and the next is "Some paradoxes of conceptual history of genetics: essay" by Mikhail Golubovsky. Another

contribution is “Timofeev-Ressovsky and Modern Problems of Genetics, Radiobiology, Radioecology, and Evolution”, Olga Tarantina’s overview of the 4th International Conference on Modern Problems of Genetics, Radiobiology, Radioecology and Evolution, which was held in June 2015 in Saint Petersburg and coincided with the 115th anniversary of Timofeev-Ressovsky’s birth. The paper contains interviews with conference participants and photos.

Also, we remember our dearly departed colleagues. In 2015, Dmitry Matishov, Corresponding Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Director of the Institute of Arid Zones of the Southern Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, passed away. In 2014, Dmitry Matishov became

member of the Central Council of the Vavilov Society of Geneticists and Breeders. In 2013–2014, he worked hard to make the upcoming 6th Congress of VOGiS a success and he made it happen: this great scientific event held in June 2014 in Rostov-on-Don received excellent feedback from participants. We will always remember Dmitry Matishov as a talented scientist, a brilliant organizer, a generous, sincere and compassionate person.

All articles in the *Letters to the Vavilov Journal* are accessible online. Materials for publication are accepted in electronic form. Send your manuscripts to vavilov_journal@bionet.nsc.ru with “*Letters to the Vavilov Journal*” as the subject line

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