

Michele Stanca concluded his research work as Director of Genomic Research Center of Fiorenzuola d'Arda, Italy – Italian Agricultural Research Council-, on the first of June 2009. Michele was born on 22.05.1942 in Soletto, in the province of Lecce, a very nice village of Messapian origin, located in the extreme South East of Italy. He was educated in the classic lyceum “P. Colonna” and then he got the degree in Agricultural Science at the University of Bari. As visiting scientist he spent one year in the Plant Breeding Institute (PBI) of Cambridge (UK) and he attended a summer school in the Trinity College of Dublin. Breeder of many successful barley varieties. Member of many national and international scientific Societies and Academies. Lecturer at different universities and institutions. Today he is Professor of “Plant Breeding and GMO in Agriculture” at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. Author of more than 300 publications (papers and books).

**The best tribute that we can dedicate to Michele for his retirement is to design his profile through comments dedicated to him by different scientists who have met or collaborated with him in the last three decades.**

*Michele is considered first of all “a Barley Man” because he dedicated the majority of his time to barley science for 40 years (José Molina Cano)*

*Michele Stanca is one of those rare individuals who combines energy, enthusiasm, talent and humanity for the betterment of science. His publication record is excellent and perhaps even more important is his contribution to international science through his organisation of congresses and participation in symposia. It is via my association with the International Barley Genetics Symposia that I have come to know Michele. His keynote presentations are incisive and current but delivered with passion and humour, which has inspired and entertained my (and no doubt other) post graduate students and post doctoral fellows - who come away from such presentations believing science is an exciting and fulfilling career. Michele's interpersonal skills (when combined with scientific excellence) mean that he can attract and work profitably with valuable collaborators both within Italy and beyond (Andy Barr )*

*My impression of Director and scientific staff, has always been the same - quality people doing quality work. There is no question that the research being done at Fiorenzuola Lab, on breeding, genetics and genomics, is of an international standard, and is recognized as such by the international agricultural community. In particular, the work on responses and changes in plants due to environmental stress, and the identification and mapping of the genes that regulate the changes, is leading-edge science. Another lasting impression is of the camaraderie, mutual support, and good-will among the staff. They are like a close-knit ‘family’, and clearly, Dr Stanca has been responsible for fostering and cultivating this atmosphere that has led to the high productivity and continued progress the laboratory has made (Andy Tekauz)*

*Prof. Stanca and his colleagues have made numerous contributions to scientific knowledge in the fields of conventional and molecular breeding, and particularly to malting quality and functional foods, physiology and molecular biology of barley, working at CRA-GPG of Fiorenzuola. The Institution has established itself as a major player in cereal genetics and plant breeding in Europe and we have been very happy to cooperate with them over many years of great mutual benefit. The Institution also has an excellent reputation for the training and production of first-rate scientists and students (John Snape)*

*Michele Stanca has made an outstanding contribution to agricultural research and education as is evident from his publication record, translational research in the form of new varieties and mentoring student and post-doctoral researchers. He is influential internationally, has visibility and gravitas. This is reflected in his Presidency of the Eurcarpia Cereal Section and his ability to galvanise the European Cereal Genetics community. He organised a highly successful meeting in Salsomaggiore that I attended together with many international speakers. This ability to attract international interest and support is a particular strength (Wayne Powell)*

*I have known and kept in touch with the institute's most eminent scientist, Dr. A. Michele Stanca, for more than 20 years. I have also visited the institute and lectured there. Therefore, I am familiar with the scientists and research conducted at Fiorenzuola d'Arda. Dr. Stanca and the institute are well known around the world for their work on the physiology and molecular biology of abiotic and biotic stresses. It would not only benefit Italy, but far beyond to the areas with collaborating scientists around the world (Steven Ullrich)*

*Prof. Michele Stanca is an internationally well known research leader and he, together with his colleagues, have built up an institute with excellence in the field of studies of genetic resources from various aspects. I have had the pleasure to collaborate with Prof. Stanca at various occasions, both in direct research, for example, in the joint book "Diversity in barley (Hordeum vulgare)" (editor von Bothmer et al., Elsevier, 2003), where prof. Stanca took a leading role for the parts dealing with abiotic stresses. We have also collaborated in a joint EU project on barley genetic resources. I visited the Centre in Fiorenzuola at various occasions and been impressed by the mode of work, not least the application of up to date molecular methods in combination with field studies, which are so important for understanding of variation and utilization of agronomic, quantitative characters, such as abiotic and biotic stress characters (Roland von Bothmer)*

*Dr. Stanca is world -renowned and his laboratory is recognized internationally as a Center for the application of genomics tools to plant improvement. The focus of his work involves creative integration of conventional and molecular breeding, with defined outputs in terms of malting quality and functional foods. His research group is renowned for innovative research on the physiology and molecular biology of biotic and abiotic stresses. Clearly, continued and expanded support for the scientists within this group, and their equipment, is an excellent investment (Patrick Hayes)*

*I want to stress the well organized institute by its well known director Dr. A.M. Stanca with many modern equipments that require to-days different research projects. Projects on development of more advanced technologies like marker assisted selection, genomics, bio-informatics, genetic engineering and others are represented at the station. Barley genetic stocks are an unique collection to screen for many different characters. Several important morphological characters are grown and isolated at the station, also novel characters have been found and chromosome mapping performed which is a very important additional detail for the Barley Genetics Stock collection( Udda Lundqvist)*

*Under the leadership of Dr. A.M. Stanca this institution has become world-renowned institute with orientation to actual problems not only of theoretical but also of practical importance. Exemplary (unique in the world) is close cooperation of scientists with cereal breeders (under one roof). Besides development of many new cultivars it helped to verify scientific hypotheses and contributed significantly to orientation of research on practically important tasks. Research quality of the laboratory in Fiorenzuola d'Arda is gradually improving (Vaclav Sip )*

*Michele transformed a small scientific outpost into a modern International CENTRE of Plant Genetics and Genomics (Jacopo Meldolesi)*

*Valeria Terzi*

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