
UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB
FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE
*80th Anniversary of the Department
of Microbiology*

Founded by Prof.dr. Ljudevit Gutschy, Department of Microbiology exists since 1922. Within the frame of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry, university lectures concerning Microbiology started in 1919. The esteemed professors leading this Department since 1922 up to now were as follows:

1. Prof.dr. Ljudevit Gutschy – founder of the Department; 1922–1941
2. Prof.dr. Vladimir Škorić – 1941–1947
3. Prof.dr. Franjo Mlinac – 1947–1959
4. Prof.dr. Mara Prša – 1959–1983
5. Prof.dr. Sulejman Redžepović – 1983 – presently Head of the Department

In 1922, the Department of Microbiology was mainly concerned with symbiotic nitrogen fixation as well as with introduction of new microbiological methods for analysis of the soil plant nutrients. During the middle of the last century, the Department developed an ecological approach. Scientists were concerned with microorganisms of natural habitats as well as with the influence of agrotechnical and land reclamation on soil microorganisms. During the sixties and seventies, cattle rumen microorganisms were investigated together with the influence of different forage on cellulolytic bacteria, *Lactobacillus* and total number of microorganisms. From 1979–1983 the Department is engaged in microbiological studies of different pedosystematic units in order to develop the projects of land reclamation systems for the most of agricultural subjects in Croatia together with investigations of free asymbiotic nitrogen fixators (*Azotobacter chroococcum*). In 1983, philosophy of the approach to the scientific and professional work was changed. It was the time of fundamental and applied investigations. The Department was mainly concerned with symbiotic nitrogen fixation and during 1987 the Department developed a concept of submerged growth of microbial *Bradyrhizobium japonicum* biomass for soybean seed inoculation. In 1993, the Department of Microbiology established its own laboratory for molecular identification of microorganisms. All the equipment was obtained through its own funds. During 1996, the Department of Microbiology started the investigations concerned with indigenous wine yeasts of Croatian wine regions. Such investigations resulted in the establishment of its own collections of microorganisms: collection of *Bradyrhizobium japonicum* and *Sinorhizobium meliloti* isolated from different soil types in Croatia; and a collection of wine yeasts isolated from the most important wine regions in Croatia.

Today, the Department of Microbiology is a modern and well equipped scientific and teaching unit of the Faculty of Agriculture. Our philosophy is to follow contemporary scientific trends through cooperation with the majority of the departments within the Faculty as well as with leading domestic and foreign researchers and scientific institutions.

Department of Microbiology
Sulejman Redžepović
