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Scientific way of Professor Tadeusz M. Wijaszka, Poland



Tadeusz M. Wijaszka was born on 15 June 1940 at Klementowice, near Pulawy, in a farmer's family. After leaving Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski's High School in Pulawy he attended the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW) and received his veterinary medicine degree in 1963. He began his professional job as an assistant in 1963 in the Department of Swine Diseases in the National Veterinary Research Institute in Pulawy (PIWet). Since the beginning of his scientific activity he was involved in viral diseases of animals and in this field he published the majority of his reports. His first unassisted task was to elaborate new methods for recognition of hog cholera and Aujeszky's disease. He also participated in research of the team on obtaining a new vaccine against hog cholera in swine. In the next years his scientific work focused mainly on Aujeszky's disease. Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka is an author of instruction for a laboratory recognition of this disease and as first in Poland he introduced a monitoring system for the disease risk to swine breeding by routine serological examinations. At the same time he carried out investigations into attenuated strains of Aujeszky's disease virus to obtain a vaccine. Based on the studies included in the doctoral dissertation, the manufacture of Bioveterinary Industry in Pulawy introduced the vaccine against Aujeszky's disease into production in 1971. In 1970 he began investigations into transmissible gastroenteritis (TGE) in swine which occurred at that time in Europe and was a serious threat for Poland. As a result of these studies several laboratory instructions for recognition of these diseases and attempts to obtain effective vaccines were prepared. In 1972 he obtained his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of the SGGW in Warsaw. His doctoral dissertation was "Immunobiological properties of selected strains of Aujeszky's disease virus". After preparation of post doctoral thesis and its defense the Scientific Council of the National Veterinary Research Institute appointed him a doctor habilitated and the Ministry of Agriculture nominated him an assistant professor.

In 1973 Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka received a scholarship at the British Council and worked for 4 months in the Laboratory of Molecular Biology in the Institute for Research on Animal Diseases, Compton, Great Britain. During his stay in the Institute he enriched his knowledge in the field of virology and carried out studies on TGE virus. Results of these studies were published in prestigious journals including Nature. These scientific reports were the basis of his post doctoral dissertation. Further 5 months of his scientific stay in Great Britain Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka spent in the Animal Virus Research Institute in Pirbright considered one of the most prestigious scientific centers in the world. During his stay, he performed studies on typing foot-and-mouth disease virus and participated in preparation of new methods for recognition of foot-and-mouth disease and foot-and-mouth like diseases.

After his return to Poland he continued studies on obtaining an inactive vaccine against swine vesicular disease and methods of inactivation of other animal viruses. In May 1976 he was appointed head in a laboratory of the Department of Food-and-Mouth Disease at Zdunska Wola, and in 1976



was appointed to the position of head of this Department. While running the Department he was involved in numerous scientific tasks connected with FMD diagnosis, and FMD-like diseases, and also seeking new methods of prevention and eradication. Among these tasks, the studies to obtain inactivated vaccine against FMD in swine with the use of new methods for adjuvant preparation were the most important. Together with his team he elaborated new methods for the propagation of the virus used in vaccine production. He contributed to the expansion of the Department of Foot-and-Mouth Disease at Zdunska Wola and participated in the work of a team designing the new Department of Virology in Pulawy. As head of the Department of Foot-and-Mouth Disease he represented Poland at numerous congresses and scientific conventions. He was a member of the European Commission at the FAO for FMD eradication and regular Commission for FMD at the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance.

In the years 1982 to 1987 he was in Rangoon (Burma) as an expert of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and ran a project as the Team Leader. The project was intended to create a diagnostic laboratory of foot-and-mouth disease and elaborate the production of vaccines against foot-and-mouth disease and hog cholera. A high estimation of the project by a team of experts brought about an extension of the project from two years planned to five years and expanded with the assumption that the expansion of the station of foot-and-mouth disease vaccine production would be continued.

On return he was at first head of the Laboratory of Virus Diagnostics and then acted on behalf of the director running the National Veterinary Research Institute (NVRI) in Pulawy. Together with a group of veterinary surgeons was involved in various activities including drafting of an act on the profession of a veterinary surgeon and medical-veterinary chamber. In 1992 the director of the National Veterinary Research Institute appointed Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka to the position of head of the Postgraduate Training Centre, renamed then to the Veterinary Centre for Postgradual Training. This was in the time of the total collapse of previous programs of veterinary surgeons training resulting from the separation between veterinarians performing private practice and those employed in state services. The Centre became an important hub of veterinary knowledge enrichment. It established contacts with numerous foreign contacts and was cooperating with many scientific and university centers in Great Britain, Germany, France, the USA and the countries of Central-Eastern Europe. New methods for training including training offered by world famous scientific workers (dermatologists, neurosurgeons) have been introduced. Seeing a clear perspective on approaching membership of Poland into the EU he established close relationships with the TAIEX, which organized numerous training courses including food supervision and introduction of the HACCP system. In collaboration with the Institute of Veterinary Medicine and Protection of Consumers in Berlin he organized training for veterinary service workers from Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, he also established a close cooperation with the National School of Veterinary Service in Lyon (France) and owing to that fact he utilized in Poland programs elaborated by French experts and invited them to give specialist lectures in Pulawy.

After passing a bill on the profession of a veterinary surgeon and establishing the National Medical-Veterinary Chamber by the Parliament (Sejm) he was elected vice-chairman of the Regional Chamber in Lublin, and was appointed to be head of its advisers by the president of the National Medical Veterinary Chamber. In 1991 after taking over monthly *Zycie Weterynaryjne* by this Chamber he was appointed as vice-chairman of the editor-in-chief by the National Veterinary Medical Chamber. He served in this post till 1999.

According to the requirements of the bill on the profession of a veterinary surgeon which imposed an obligation on the Ministry of Agriculture to organize specialization of veterinary surgeons he was appointed in 1992 to a team of experts which focused on preparation of a project of a directive on the specialization of veterinary surgeons. The directive issued in 1994 opened the way to establish the Commission for Specialization of Veterinary Surgeons and began acting on the elaboration of specialized programs. In 1995 he was appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture to the composition of the Commission for Specialization of Veterinary Surgeons and elected to a post of vice-chairman. The Commission entrusted him with the post of the manager of the national specialization No 17 "Veterinary epizootiology and administration". In cooperation with Chairman Prof. Zbigniew Pomorski the grounds for specialization functioning were formed and programs of 17 specializations elaborated



along with the setting up of the system of postgraduate specialization. From 1996 to 2000 he was the head of Specialized Postgraduate School in the scope of epizootiology and veterinary administration in the National Veterinary Research Institute. In 2000 after finishing his 4-year term as a member of the Commission he was appointed to its composition for a consecutive four-year term. In 1996 he was elected a member of the Council at the reporting and election convention of the National Medical Veterinary Council and then a vice-chairman after its establishment. He served in this post till 1999. According to the National Medical Veterinary Council he was a member – observer of the Commission of Drug Registration acting at the Ministry of Health from 1992 to 1998.

On 1st October 1998 Prof. Wijaszka was appointed to the position of a counselor–head of the Department for Agriculture by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Agriculture and Food Economy (now the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development) to act as Representative of the Polish Republic at the European Union in Brussels. His duties as a Representative included negotiations in the field of veterinary, plant protection, food and feeding, and coordination of the work of the Department. Apart from numerous obligations connected with the post of a counselor of the Representatives Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka published reports on problems involving European integration and participated in many seminars and scientific conventions.

Within the scope of promotion of Poland in the EU, along with the Main Negotiator Office he prepared a chapter in a publication considering the negotiation of Poland with the EU. He gave a lot of lectures both in Poland and Belgium on the tasks imposed on Poland by the EU in the pre-accession period along with reports promoting Polish veterinary services. Minister Artur Balazs nominated Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka Director-General of the National Veterinary Research Institute in Pulawy. He began putting forward the conception of functioning of the Institute presented to the judging commission right after his appointment.

Scientific activities on the basis of the research plan passed by the Scientific Council did not require any corrections but only supervision, realization in due time, and fiscal discipline. Preparation of Poland to membership of the EU needed to extend the range of research involving the control of feeding stuffs, which were carried out in various Departments of the NVRI. After taking advice in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Veterinary Inspection and Scientific Council, Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka formed the Department of Hygiene of Animal Feeding stuffs which took over and developed a wide spectrum of research both microbiological and chemical. After a 6-year activity the Department may boast both numerous scientific achievements and those involving mastering diagnostics methods. According to the conception mentioned earlier he established Doctoral Studies in the NVRI in 2002 at which 22 persons studied.

Scientific workers of and Doctoral Studies participants were involved in a training system to increase their qualifications. This training was provided both in Polish and external research centers. During a 5 year term scientific workers of the NVRI went 750 times to external conferences, training and symposia. Aside from external trips of the scientific personnel he tried to invite to the Institute persons with an international reputation who gave scientific lectures at the meetings with the research workers of the Institute.

Since his appointment to the post of director he encouraged scientific units of the Institute to participate in the 5th and 6th Frame Program of the European Union and other research programs to win grants for realization of modern subjects and establish cooperation with the most prestigious centers in the world performing veterinary studies. This resulted in the participation of the Institute in the 7th Research Program of the European Union. Thanks to the efforts of Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka, the first and the only reference laboratory of the analysis of dioxins in feed and feeding stuffs in Poland was established in the Institute. From 2002 to 2005 the NVRI carried out an intentional reserved program granted by the Ministry of Science and Information. As a result of scientific research in the frame of the program the Institute worked out modern diagnosis methods which proved their usefulness during the last influenza epizootics.

During his 8-year term he employed 74 workers with university degrees. Moreover, eight workers were awarded a professorship, eight workers received a habilitated doctor title, and 25 workers obtained a doctoral degree. Apart from his care on the development of scientific personnel he attempted to



purchase modern equipment for scientific research and resources from various sources (PHARE, Tweening). In the years 2001 to 2006 the Institute bought equipment for 36 million PLN.

Concomitantly with the studies carried out he began intensive attempts to introduce the quality system in the Institute. In order to do this, the Office of Plenipotentiary for Quality System was established. As a result of systematic work indispensable documents were prepared and all research and diagnostic procedures validated. The first accreditation certificates received the Department of Hygiene of Food and Feeding stuffs along with the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology in 2004. The next certificates of the PCA were awarded in 2005 to the Laboratory of Serological Diagnosis, Department of Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Department of Hygiene of Food of Animal Origin. At present, the quality system is introduced to all departments and units of the NVRI.

To guarantee the possibilities of exporting Polish foodstuffs the Institute prepared multi-year projects on the basis of which the Council of Ministers awarded the Institute the Status of the State Veterinary Research Institute in 2003. It should be emphasized that the National Veterinary Research Institute was the first Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and the second one in Poland which obtained such a honorable name.

Since holding the directorial position he together with the scientific personnel of the Institute has supported the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to adapt Polish veterinary legislation to the EU regulations. All the recent binding laws and directives were elaborated with the involvement of the Institute workers. The membership in the EU changed the tasks of the National Veterinary Research Institute. Both the treaty of declaration and the act on veterinary inspection imposed on the Institute responsibility to carry out reference activities. Under Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka management the rules of functioning the reference laboratories were elaborated. The directive of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development enabled definitely execution of these tasks and transfer of adequate resources from the Budget. The most important achievements of the Institute during Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka term was working out the plans of expansion of the Institute and beginning new laboratory buildings. The complete commission of the new buildings to the SVRI/NVRI took place in November 2008. The total sum allotted for this investment was about 50 million euro.

As the director of the Institute he is a member of numerous councils, commissions, and committees. Among others, he is advisor to the National Security Bureau, a member of the Commission for Veterinary Therapeutic Products at the Ministry of Health, a member of the advisory team for veterinary therapeutic products at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, a member of the Commission of Food Safety at the Chief Veterinary Surgeon, a member of the Scientific Committee of the World Congress of Nutritional Infection and Intoxication, and a member of the programme council of this Congress, a regular member of the Lublin Scientific Association, member of the working group for reference laboratories of the EU, a regular member of the delegation to the OIE in Paris, a member of the Editorial Staff of the scientific journal "Przemysł Spożywczy", vice-chairman of the Council for Feed Monitoring, a member of the Committee for Pandemic Influenza at the Ministry of Health, a member of the Sanitary-Epizootic Council at the Chief Veterinary Surgeon's Office, and a member of the Consultant Council at the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural development. At the beginning of his professional carrier Prof. Tadeusz Wijaszka cooperated closely with the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences In 1964 he spent two weeks on scientific placement in the Department of Epizootiology of this Faculty. Working in Brussels he helped Wrocław University of Environmental and Life Sciences in organizing and awarding EU Commissioner Gunter Verheugen an honorary Doctor.

From 2002 to 2004 he lectured in Specialization Studies in a School conducted by the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine of WUELS. He organized training of workers of Wrocław Veterinary Medicine Departments in the NVRI in Pulawy.

For his scientific and social achievements to date he was decorated with a high national decoration – the Officer's Cross of the Order of the Rebirth of Poland and various departmental and union departmental distinctions.



The Ministry of Agriculture of Republic of France decorated Prof. Wijaszka with the – du Merite Agricole - France Commandeur

We are impressed with Professor Wijaszka's life achievements and we wish him a very happy retirement.

22 July 2011

National Veterinary Research Institute Pulawy documents:

[photogallery](#)

[video presentation](#)