

### SCIENTIFIC OPINION

On the materials for participation in a competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, professional field 6.1. Plant growing, scientific specialty "Fruit growing" in the discipline "Fruit growing" announced by the University of Forestry in DV no. 32 of 03.04.2020

Procedure code: AGR-AsP-0320-37.

**Candidate for participation in the competition:** Assistant Dr. Denitsa Dimitrova Serbezova

**Reviewer:** Prof. Dr. Valentina Boncheva Bozhkova - professional field 6.1. Plant breeding, scientific specialty "Breeding and seed production of cultivated plants", Institute of Fruit Growing, Plovdiv, appointed a member of the Scientific Jury by ordinance № ZPS-235 from 09.06.2020 of the Rector of UF, Sofia.

#### Short biographical notes

Denitsa Dimitrova Serbezova was born in 1980 in the city of Varna. He graduated in 2002 from the Agricultural University of Plovdiv, specialty Agronomy Viticulture - Horticulture. In 2007 she acquired Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty 04.01.05 "Selection and seed production of cultivated plants", awarded by the Higher Attestation Commission for the dissertation: "Selection of raspberries - economic and biological evaluation of elites". From October 2008 to May 2010 she was an assistant at the Faculty of Astronomy, Department of Agronomy at UF, Sofia, and since 2010 she has been Chief Assistant at the same department.

#### Description of the materials for participation in the competition

According to the Rules of UF for the development of the academic staff, the candidate in this competition submits a complete set of documents with the necessary signatures, stamps and certifications and arranged in the required order. From the review of documents it is evident that Dr. Denitsa Serbezova has met the criteria for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor" defined by the Minimum National Requirements and specified in the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at the University of Forestry. In the table. 1 presents the points according to the respective indicators. Indicators A and B are 100% fulfilled. Indicator D is overfulfilled by 26% and indicator E by 90%, respectively. An additional 226 points are presented according to indicator E, although there are no required minimum requirements for it. The data are correctly presented and calculated and the points obtained, as indicated, significantly exceed those required for the academic position of "Associate Professor".

Table 1. Minimum national required points by groups of indicators for holding the academic position in a scientific field 6. Agricultural sciences and veterinary medicine, professional field 6.1. Plant growing

Indicator group	Contents	Minimum national requirements (EIA) and points by groups of indicators for academic	Points submitted by the candidate in the competition



		position "Associate Professor"	
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	-	
B	Indicator 3 or 4	100	100
Г	Sum of indicators from 5 до 12	200	252.49
Д	Sum of indicators from 13 до 15	50	95
E	Sum of indicators from 16 to the end	-	226.33
All points on indicators A+B+B+Г+Д+E		400	723.82

### **Evaluation of the educational and teaching activities**

From the submitted documents for the competition it is evident that Chief Assistant Dr. Denitsa Serbezova has 11 years and 6 months of experience at the University of Forestry. During this period she led classes (lectures and exercises) in various disciplines. At the moment these are:

- ✓ Fruit growing - exercises;
- ✓ Pomology and selection of fruit crops - seminars;
- ✓ Rare fruit crops - lectures and seminars;
- ✓ Technologies in fruit growing - exercises;
- ✓ Shaped and decorative fruit growing - lectures and seminars;
- ✓ Berry crops - lectures and seminars.

Dr. Serbezova is the author of 5 and co-author of 7 work programs in compulsory disciplines studied by students for Bachelor's and Master's degrees. She trained 4 graduate thesis for a Bachelor's degree and one for a Master's degree. In the period 2016-2019 she conducted 3 educational practice with students. She has prepared reviews of diploma thesis, participated in 13 working committees at the faculty level, participated in various courses, participated with students in scientific conferences at national and international level.

### **Evaluation of the scientific, scientific-applied and publishing activity**

#### Participation in scientific, applied and educational projects

According to the information provided, Dr. Serbezova is an active participant in 13 national projects, one of which is international with China, 7 are at the Agricultural Academy, two are funded by FSI, one by UF, Sofia, other is funded by the America for Bulgaria Foundation, one is funded by the Operational Program "Human Resources Development" and one is funded by the Operational Program "Science and Education for Smart Growth". These projects treat different problems and provide an opportunity for collaboration with different specialists working on similar issues. The predominant number of them are funded by Agricultural Academy, Sofia, which makes Dr. Serbezova a recognizable active participant in research in the field of fruit growing. This gives me reason to evaluate the results of this indicator with a very good evaluation.

#### Characteristics of the published scientific results

The candidate in the competition is presented with 37 works divided as follows: An independent monograph on raspberries, of which I am one of the reviewers. This work is useful for researchers



as well as for professionals, students and amateurs. The monograph is written in a professional but accessible language and is very well illustrated. One studio and two textbooks are also presented. 7 articles have been published in foreign peer-reviewed journals and two in Bulgarian peer-reviewed journals. 13 papers have been published in non-peer-reviewed journals. One work has been published in national proceedings, and four in international proceedings. Six popular science articles have been published to promote the results of the scientific activity. Eighteen of the publications are printed in a foreign language and 19 are in Bulgarian, which shows a good balance. Six of the publications are independent, 12 with one co-author, 6 with two co-authors and 13 with three or more co-authors. From this distribution it is clear that Chief Assistant Dr. Denitsa Serbezova is able to work equally well both individually and in a team.

#### Reflection of the candidate's scientific activity in the specialized literature (citation)

From the presented information it can be seen that the total number of citations of Chief Assistant Dr. Denitsa Serbezova are 16, and the cited works are 8. One of the citations is in a referenced foreign scientific journal, one in a monograph and the others are in non-referenced Bulgarian and foreign journals. The report shows that the author is recognizable and this gives me reason to appreciate her performance on this indicator.

#### Contributions to the works of the candidate

The contributions from the scientific production are formulated in three categories.

1. *Contributions with original character - 9 are formulated.* They are mainly expressed in the genetic evaluation of Bulgarian cultivars and a large number of selection materials from raspberries. The most appropriate multifactor scheme for assessment of genetic resources in raspberries to soil fungal pathogens has been identified. A feature and core collection of raspberries has been created, as well as comprehensive information with new and original data on plant genetic resources in berries, which is in line with the European database and provides easy access and better exchange in the scientific space. A monograph with strictly methodical, fundamental and applied contributions is presented, which in practice includes a complete technology for growing raspberries.

2. *Contributions of a confirmatory nature - 9 are formulated.* They are related to some inheritances in raspberries, with the study of new cherry rootstocks, training in apple and cherry, as well as assessment of genetic resources of old local varieties of fruit species - apple, pear, cherry.

3. *Contributions with applied character - 14,* associated with the cultivation of apples, cherries, plums, walnuts, raspberries and blackcurrants. They are formulated on the basis of research results and can help fruit growers.

#### Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks. I would recommend Dr. Serbezova to continue the cooperation with researchers from different scientific units, which will be useful both for her research activity and for the students she trains.

#### Personal impressions

I have the pleasure to know Chief Assistant Dr. Denitsa Serbezova since the time of the defense of her doctoral dissertation, as I was a member of the Specialized Scientific Council at the Higher Attestation Commission before which she defended. After that I had the opportunity to attend her presentations in English at international scientific forums at home and abroad. She also took part in the editorial board of Acta Horticulturae № 1259 and did a very fruitful job. I know her as an active and searching researcher.

## Conclusion

The analysis of the materials on the competition, which fully comply with the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application of University of Forestry, for the academic position of "Associate Professor", give me reason to evaluate them POSITIVELY.

I will vote positively Chief Assistant Dr. Denitsa Dimitrova Serbezova to take the academic position of "Associate Professor" in a professional field 6.1. Plant growing, scientific specialty "Fruit growing".

I would like to suggest that the esteemed Scientific Jury also to vote in favor.

06.07.2020  
Plovdiv

Opinion prepared by:  
(Prof. V.Bozhkova)

