

Prof. Jaacov Katan awarded the Israel Prize in Agriculture

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Prof. Jaacov Katan has been awarded the Israel Prize for Agricultural Research and Environmental Science for 2014. It will be presented by the President of the State on Israel's Independence Day. The award committee cited Prof. Katan for his **significant contributions and especially for the important finding and development of soil solarization as an environmentally safe and friendly method to manage soilborne pests, using solar energy.**

Jaacov Katan is Professor Emeritus at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Robert Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment in Rehovot, Israel. As a teenager he excelled in the Mikve Israel agricultural school, which was a leading agricultural high school. He received his Ph. D. in plant pathology at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1969. From then and until his retirement in 2004, he was a senior teacher and researcher in the Department of Plant Pathology of the Faculty of Agriculture, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. To date, he is still active in research in the Faculty of Agriculture, and serves as co-Chief Editor of *Phytoparasitica*.

Prof. Katan's research interests included: Soilborne pathogens causing plant disease; ecology and control; soil solarization for pest control; the fate of pesticides in soil; genetic relatedness among *Fusarium* fungi; and alternatives to methyl bromide. Accordingly, his research projects have included integrated control of soilborne pathogens with emphasis on solarization; alternative means of control to avoid application of methyl bromide; modeling the use of solarization; pesticides' behavior in soil; and development of tomato lines resistant to diseases.

In addition to his research, he is an outstanding teacher. He has advised more than 70 M.Sc. and Ph.D. students, some of whom today play prominent roles in research and teaching in Israel and abroad. For more than 20 years, he was elected annually as an 'Outstanding Teacher' by the students of the Faculty of Agriculture. In appreciation of his role as a teacher, in 1994 he was awarded the M. Millikan Prize, for distinction in teaching in The Hebrew University of Jerusalem; and in 2003 he was given the Rector's Prize of The Hebrew University for excellence in research and teaching.

Prof. Katan maintains the unique role of mentor to graduate students and post-doctoral researchers, years after completing his task as a formal advisor. He is also in continuous collaboration with farmers, extension officers, and colleagues from all over the world.

Prof. Katan's work has been recognized by and received awards from different authorities:

Fellow of the American Phytopathological Society (1991); Foreign member of the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences (1991); special medal awarded by the Portuguese Society of Plant Protection (1992);

the Rothschild Prize in Agriculture, bestowed upon him by the Speaker of the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) (1994); Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1997); and the Jakob Eriksson Prize in Plant Pathology, awarded jointly by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences and the International Society of Plant Pathology (2003).

Yaakov Katan's research has yielded more than 150 articles in reviewed journals, over 60 invited chapters or reviews, nine books or manuals, and more than 250 miscellaneous publications (abstracts, local publications in Hebrew, etc.).

Prof. A. Gamliel and Prof. B. Raccach