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INTRODUCTION

The beginning of year 2021 continues with the rapid spread of the virus SARS-CoV-2. The pandemic of COVID-19 is still a reason for a change in social life on a global level and a serious cause of the global crisis in all areas of our life.

As the world was adapting to this situation, many factories and warehouses were forced to close, the production in many industries declined, state borders were closed. As other branches of the industry were slowing down, the production and manufacturing of food and drugs continued to work with full force. Social distancing was instigated, and thus, became the new normal. This social distancing era did not affect science and education, as they continued with the help of online platforms and the commodities that today's technology has to offer.

In these times of global economic crisis and a viral pandemic, the key role of science, was once again proven. Science is in the front lines in fight against the pandemic with innovation of vaccines, created by traditional or biotechnological methods, which are used for mass global immunization against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The world will remember the beginning of 2021 for start of vaccination of humans with a positive result, followed by expected decline of infected people and control the pandemic. The fact that science is the solution to numerous important problems in human life may once again be an ultimate truth. The mid of 2021 will be a memorable one for the known decline of infected people and control over the pandemic.

The agricultural industry did not go unaffected by COVID-19. Restrictions of movement, as well as basic aversion behavior by workers, may impede farmers from farming and food processors - who handle the vast majority of agricultural products - from processing. Shortage of fertilizers, veterinary medicines and other input could affect agricultural production. Closures of restaurants and less frequent grocery shopping diminish demand for fresh produce and fisheries products, affecting producers and suppliers. However, besides all the hardships that were brought along with the crisis did not halt the agricultural industry and food production kept on developing and functioning in order to meet the demands.

Journal of Agriculture and Plant Sciences Vol. 19, No. 1 is published in the period of mass immunization of humans for the SARS-CoV-2. The continuous publication of the journal in time of the pandemic proves that science and scientific research are of profound importance to agriculture and food processing and production, and must not be held down, even when the world faces a pandemic.

JAPS Editorial board were given a great responsibility, to sustain the continuity of published volumes of the journal in these difficult times of a pandemic and an economic crisis. Therefore, with great honor and respect, we would like to present the latest scientific achievements in agriculture.

Editorial Board,

June, 2021

Editor in chief,

Prof. Liljana Koleva Gudeva, PhD