

Recent Challenges in Agrometeorology in Hungary

Climate of Hungary is favorable for agricultural production. Any kind of agricultural productions (intensive, extensive, ecological, horticulture, etc.) needs detailed climatological, meteorological, especially agrometeorological information. Hungary had a high level agrometeorology, both theoretically and experimentally, before the change around 1990. In the first half of 90s, the strong decrease in the agriculture affected the development of the agrometeorology as well. Experimental polygons and departments were closed and experts left the branch. Recognizing the changing internal and external conditions, agriculture has an upwings in Hungary recently, both small and medium enterprises and large companies. Unfortunately, the lost expertise, information, and data bases cannot be reproduced as fast, as the production increases and it would be required. Feeling the demands of the users, the Meteorological Scientific Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MSC HAS) decided to dedicate the annually organized Meteorological Scientific Days to agrometeorology in 2011. The disadvantageous situation of agrometeorology urged the organisers to invite more than usual foreigner lecturer to the connected conference. During the organizational work, a good picture has been evolved on the status of the present agrometeorology in Hungary. Benefits and gaps were detected the research level at individual topics according to the international results became more clear. The picture has positive features: many results have been archived despite of the individual, project-by-project development. Experts and/or research groups follow the main international directions on their field of interest. From the other side, there are many gaps, and some investigations are far from the international level, mostly because of the low level of resources both personally and financially. This volume contents only a small part of the presentations, but could give a first guess on some developments in the country. Many lessons have been learned. First, despite of the mosaic development of the discipline, a lot of results have been archived. This is because of the external requests, the needs of users for agrometeorological information. This leads to the second point: agrometeorology needs more support, not only from the users, but on state level, where higher level coordination is possible, and this necessity is the third lesson. Unfortunately, neither of the research groups have enough resources for a continuously high-level, wide range research production. This would be possible only by more stable supporting systems and better organization structures.

We strongly believe, that by the common efforts of the stakeholder groups, especially the groups of scientific and policy decision makers will lead the development of the Hungarian agrometeorology to get international position similarly to the past, and this publication is a small, but substantial step in this direction.

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Guest Editors