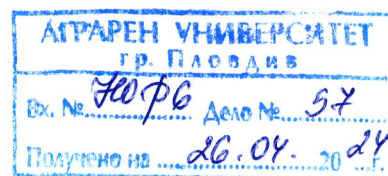


OPINION



regarding the competition for "associate professor" in the scientific specialty Soil Science, announced in SG no. 7 of 23.01.2024 with candidate Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Mladen Pavlov Almaliev by Prof. Dr. Maria Grozeva Sokolovska, Forest Research Institute - BAS appointed according to Order No. RD-16-407/20.03.2024 of the Rector of the Agricultural University - Plovdiv as a member of the scientific jury

1. Brief introduction of the candidate

Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Mladen Pavlov Almaliev was born on March 18, 1976 in the city of Plovdiv. In the period 2000-2004, he studied at the Higher School "Agricultural College" - Plovdiv, and received an educational and qualification degree (EQD) "Bachelor", specialty "Farming". In 2008, he graduated from the Viticulture and Horticulture Faculty of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv and received a bachelor's degree, specialty "Agronomy (viticulture and horticulture)" and professional qualification "agronomist". In 2010, he received a master's degree from the Faculty of Economics of AU - Plovdiv, majoring in "Tourism Management" and professional qualification "manager". After a defended dissertation on the topic: "Agrochemical evaluation of some genotypes of durum wheat" at the Faculty of Agronomy, in September 2014 he obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" (diploma No. DP 61/12.09.2014). Since 2014, the candidate has been appointed as an assistant, and in 2016, after a successful competition, he was selected as chief assistant professor in the department of "Agrochemistry and Soil Science" at the same faculty, where he has been working until now. Dr. Almaliev has two completed professional qualifications in "Economics and Foreign Trade in Agricultural Products" (2006-2008) and in "Computer Systems and Technologies" (2008-2010) at the Centre of Continuing Education of AU - Plovdiv. He began his professional career in 1996 as an associate at the company "STAR"84 in the city of Plovdiv, engaged in import and trade, and from 2003 to 2010 he worked as an agronomist, responsible for the sector "Agrotechnics of ecological crops".

2. General description of the scientific production.

Chief assistant professor Dr. Almaliev presented a general list of 79 works, grouped as follows:

- Publications related to the doctoral dissertation – 8, which are not subject to consideration;
- Publications in publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information - 10, of which 3 are in journals with an impact factor;
- Published book based on protected dissertation work for the award of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" – 1;
- Publications in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information – 8;
- Publications in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or in edited collective volumes – 19;
- Reports in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings – 33;

In the general list, the candidate has included reports at world and European congresses and international symposia, poster reports, reports at scientific forums in Bulgaria.

To prepare the opinion, **38 scientific publications on the nomenclature specialty**, divided into group B (indicator B3) and group G (indicators G6, G7, G8) are subject to analysis. The publications are well-formed, include an appropriate literary background, an in-depth analytical part and conclusions. The materials for the competition have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of LDASRB (Art. 19) and the Regulations of the Agricultural University for its application. According to the minimum national requirements

for occupying the academic position "docent" and the presented table of scientometric indicators, the candidate exceeds the required points. The total sum of Dr. Almaliev's points is 502.04 with a minimum requirement of 400 points.

The personal participation of Chief assistant professor Almaliev in the mentioned works is illustrated by the fact that 6 articles (16%) are independent, in 8 (21%) it is first, in 4 (11%) it is second, and in the remaining 20 (52%) he is third and subsequent author. The scientific production presented, as well as the formulated conclusions, recommendations and contributions, are the personal work of the candidate. All presented scientific works, 13 in Bulgarian and 25 in English, are on the subject of the competition. The review of the materials provided to me for evaluation gives me reason to assert that there has been no proven plagiarism of scientific data in the works of Dr. Almaliev (Article 24, Paragraph 1, Item 5 of the LDASRB).

3. Teaching activity.

Chief assistant professor Dr. Almaliev was appointed to work at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv as an "assistant" on 15.09.2014, and since 2016 he has been the chief assistant professor (Certificate LS-11/24.01.2024). The teaching experience of the candidate for the academic degree "associate professor" is nine years and four months (as of February 1, 2024).

Academic employment of the candidate. For the period from 2018 to 2023 Chief assistant professor Dr. Almaliev had direct classroom employment of a total of 2889.45 hours: lectures 48 hours; exercises 2270 hours; extracurricular classes 571.45 hours (Certificate NOR5-05/30.01.2024). Dr. Almaliev's teaching activity is complemented by the guidance of 9 successfully defended graduates and six students preparing their diploma theses. This shows his commitment to the preparation of students during the training, as well as the presence of pedagogical maturity in terms of his further successful development.

4. Scientific research activity.

Areas of publication. The scientific output of Dr. Almaliev is classified in the following several directions:

- Studies related to determining the suitability of land for the creation and cultivation of perennial crops (fruits, berries, vineyards, medical);
- Studies related to the study of the influence of soil acidity in wine grape varieties (Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon);
- Studies related to monitoring the changes in indicators characterizing the acid-alkaline balance in the soil after the introduction of chemical meliorants (micronized limestone and other calcium-containing meliorants).

All scientific developments are closely related to the nomenclature specialty and scientific activity of the candidate. The main contributions are indicated, which describe the specific original scientific and scientific-applied contributions with which Dr. Almaliev participated in the competition for the academic position of "associate professor". The presented contributions are the result of the conducted research and the results obtained from them and are related to enriching the existing scientific knowledge and obtaining confirmatory data. I accept the author reference for the applicant's contributions. An important positive aspect of Dr. Almaliev's scientific research is the desire and ability, along with purely scientific contributions, to search for results with applied value for agriculture.

Citation and referencing of the scientific production. According to the presented general list of citations on the scientific production of Dr. Almaliev, a total of 47 positive

citations of his publications were noticed. To cover the minimum requirements in group "D", 6 of them, published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information (*Scopus*, *Web of science*) are sufficient. The mentioned characteristic confirms the relevance and significance of the research carried out by the candidate in the field of soil science, as well as that the scientific output of Dr. Almaliev is well known by the scientific community at home and abroad.

Participation in scientific projects. Dr. Almaliev has submitted evidence for participation in the collectives of 11 projects. Two of the scientific projects were developed at the Faculty of Agriculture at Thrace University - Stara Zagora; one is funded by the scientific research fund of the Ministry of Education and Science; another scientific-research project was implemented in AU-Plovdiv, and the remaining 7 implementation projects were financed by various private companies.

5. Notes and recommendations.


I have no critical remarks or questions regarding the candidate's scientific works. Some inaccuracies of a stylistic, editorial or technical nature have been found, which do not diminish my positive assessment of his scientific output. I recommend Dr. Almaliev to increase the number of independent publications in renowned scientific journals, so that they find wider recognition in the academic circles at home and abroad, to prepare (independently or in co-authorship) teaching aids for the disciplines he teaches.

6. Conclusion.

Based on the analysis of the pedagogical, scientific and scientific-applied activity of the candidate, I believe that chief assistant professor Dr. Almaliev meets the requirements of the LDASRB, RALDASRB and the Regulations of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv for its application. At the announced competition for the academic position of "associate professor", he presents himself with a scientific production sufficient in terms of volume and quality, which meets the national scientometric requirements. His active teaching activity and the guidance of graduates are proof of his professionalism, as well as the ability to combine scientific and teaching work. All this gives me reason to positively evaluate his overall activity.

I take the liberty of proposing to the honorable Scientific Jury to also vote positively, and the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Agronomy at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv to elect **chief assistant professor Dr. Mladen Pavlov Almaliev**, as "associate professor" in the scientific specialty **Soil Science**.

Date: 24/04/2024
Sofia

PREPARED THE OPINION:.....
(Prof. Dr. M. Sokolovska)