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REVIEW AND OPINION

Regarding the competition for the academic position of *Associate Professor* in the scientific speciality of *Sheep Breeding and Goat Breeding*, announced in State Gazette, edition 98 from 17.11.2020, with a candidate: chief assistant Atanas Spasov Vuchkov

By prof. Dimitar Ferdinandov Grekov, doctor of sciences at the Agricultural University of Plovdiv, field of higher education: 6. Agrarian Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, professional area: 6.3. Animal Breeding, scientific speciality: 04.02.01. Farm Animals' Breeding, Biology and Biotechnics of Animal Breeding, who has been defined for a chairperson of the scientific panel in accordance with a Rector's Order № ПД -16-49/22.01.2021

1. Short review of the candidate

A candidate for the competition is chief assistant Atanas Spasov Vuchkov, PhD. He obtained his higher education diploma in 2000 in the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the Thracian University of Stara Zagora with the professional qualification *Master of Veterinary Medicine*. From 2002 to 2005 he was a full-time doctoral student in the scientific speciality: *Sheep Breeding and Goat Breeding* at the Department of Animal Breeding Sciences, Agricultural University of Plovdiv. In March 2005, after winning a competition, he was assigned as a full-time professor assistant of Animal Breeding at the same department. From March 2007 to October 2009 he was a senior assistant, and since October 2009 to the present he has been working as a chief assistant. In 2009 he successfully defended a dissertation work entitled: *Research Studies of the Mother Ability and Some Characteristics of the Meat Productivity in White and Splotch-faced Sheep* and he was awarded the scientific and educational degree *Doctor* in the scientific speciality: *Sheep Breeding and Goat Breeding*.

My personal opinion on the scientific and career development of chief assistant Atanas Spasov Vuchkov, PhD, is that the latter is a well-organized, ambitious and strict scientist possessing thorough knowledge in the field of animal breeding, a respected lecturer and an honest colleague.

Taking into account all these qualities of chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov, as well as his academic development from the initial stage to the present, he is a worthy candidate for the competition of associate professor in the scientific speciality: *Sheep Breeding and Goat Breeding*.

2. General Description of the Research Production

In the present competition for holding the academic position of *Associate Professor* chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov participates with research production of 33 research papers grouped as follows:

- A dissertation work for awarding the scientific and educational degree of *Doctor* - 1;
- Research papers related to the topic of the dissertation work – 4;
- A published book on the topic of the dissertation work – 1;
- Publications in prestige scientific journals – 17;
- Publications in collections from scientific conferences – 10;

The listed **33 research papers** have been analysed in order to work out the present position.

The personal participation of chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov in these 33 research papers is obvious from the fact that he is an independent author in 6 papers /18.8%/, a first author in 12 papers /36.37%/, a second author in 13 papers /39.39%/, a third or fourth author in 2 papers /6.06%/.

Chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov has taken part with 2 scientific reports at world and European congresses abroad, with 12 scientific reports and 1 poster at scientific forums with international participation in Bulgaria.

3. Teaching activities

The present candidate for acquiring the academic position of *Associate Professor*, chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov, PhD, has significant teaching experience in the field of sheep and goat breeding, farm animal and mountain animal breeding. He has been teaching practical seminars for 15 years. He is the leading lecturer in the following disciplines: *Bases of Biological Animal Breeding*, *Application of the Shepherd and Pasture Dogs*, and *Cynology*. Chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov has been conducting research and experimental studies, which are closely related to the sheep and goat breeding in Bulgaria. Being a specialist in this area, he is highly valued by the corresponding businesses. Colleagues and students at the University respect him as a highly-qualified lecturer. Despite of the fact that some of his leading disciplines are elective or optional, students always prefer them and attend his classes with great interest. In the same time, chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov is a good organizer of numerous exhibitions and events of national and regional level.

Teaching Work of the Candidate

For the period of his teaching career the candidate has realized and over-realized the University norms for curricular and extra-curricular work load. Only for the last 5 years his work load has been 2808.8 hours and over the years it has varied from 441.6 to 698.2 hours.

A significant element of his teaching activities is the supervision of graduates. He has supervised 11 graduate students, who have successfully defended their diploma theses with the highest grades. Currently, he is a supervisor of 4 graduates.

Published teaching materials

Chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov is a co-author of 1 textbook: "A Handbook for Practical Seminars in Sheep Breeding and Goat Breeding"

I am fully convinced in the highly-competent scientific production, teaching and social activities of the candidate. In my opinion, I consider the candidate completely prepared to hold the academic position of *Associate Professor*.

Developing curriculum syllabuses

Chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov has developed 4 syllabuses of disciplines in the Bachelor program curricula at the Agricultural University: "Cynology", "Application of Shepherd and Pasture Dogs", "Bases of the Biological Animal Breeding", and "Pastoralism".

4. Scientific Research

On the basis of all research studies and scientific production of chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov, which he presents in the competition, as well as the check-up verifying the completion of the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of *Associate Professor* in the field of higher education 6. *Agrarian Sciences and Veterinary Medicine* and the professional area 6.3. *Animal Breeding*, and in accordance with Article 26 from ADASRB and the rules in RAADSRB of the Agricultural University, they could be grouped as follows:

1. Indicators by group A – a successfully defended dissertation work for acquiring the educational and scientific degree of *Doctor* in 2009 – **50 points**.

2. Indicators by group B – a habilitation work - monography or scientific publications (not less than 10) in journals indexed in world famous data bases of scientific information. The candidate has presented 10 scientific works, which form **216 points** out of **100 points** minimum.

3. Indicators by group Γ

- a published book on the basis of the defended dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree of *Doctor* – **40 points**;

- 6 research papers and reports published in scientific journals indexed in world famous data bases of scientific information – **150 points**;

- 10 research papers and reports published in non-indexed journals with scientific reviews - **36,32 points**.

The total number of points by group Γ is **226,32** at minimum requirements of **200 points**.

4. Indicators by group Δ – 4 citations (of 4 research works) in scientific editions indexed in world famous data bases of scientific information – **50 points** at minimum requirements of **50 points**.

5. Indicators by group E - 2 participations in international projects and 2 participations in national educational projects, which form **70 points**, as well as 1 handbook for practical seminars of sheep and goat breeding, which forms **10 points**. The total number of points in group E is **80 points**.

The total point number of scientific metric indicators for *Associate Professor* of the candidate is **632,32** out of minimum requirements of **400 points**.

Fields of publications

The research works of chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov, which he uses for participation in the present competition, include conclusions, summaries and results having their contribution in the field of sheep and goat breeding.

Citations and references of the scientific production

There have been presented 4 citations of research works.

Participation in scientific projects

In the period from 2005 to the present the candidate leaded and participated in 8 projects, 4 of which were research projects at the Agricultural University, 2 national projects and 2 international projects.

5. Notes and recommendations

The presented materials lack the candidate's activities in practice. In my opinion, he is active in the practical spheres and has contributed to the development of animal breeding. It is to be proven with the corresponding approving documents issued by the animal breeding associations and business structures.

6. Conclusion

On the basis of the analysis of the teaching, scientific and application activities, as well as my personal impressions of the candidate, I consider that **chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov, PhD** meets the requirements of ADASRB, RAADSRB and the Regulations of the Agricultural University for its application.

He has gained experience and knowledge to conduct experiments, to analyze and to apply the received scientific results. He is a respected lecturer, an ethical and tolerant colleague. He is also a well-known specialist in practice.

On the grounds of the whole information, I evaluate **POSITIVELY** the candidate's overall activity.

I allow myself to propose to the honorable scientific panel to vote **positively**, and the faculty council of the Faculty of Agronomy at the Agricultural University – Plovdiv to elect **chief assistant Atanas Vuchkov, PhD**, for the academic position of *Associate Professor* in the scientific specialty *Sheep Breeding and Goat Breeding*.

Date: 20.03.2021

Town: Plovdiv

**REVIEW AND OPINION
WORKED OUT BY:**

/prof. D. Grekov, doctor of sciences/