



OPINION

regarding the competition for the academic position of *Professor* in the field of higher education 6. Agrarian Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, professional area 6.1. Crop Science, scientific specialty *Crop Science*, announced in the State Gazette issue 99/28.11.2023 including the candidate Assoc. Prof. Vanya Atanasova Delibaltova, PhD

written by prof. Tanko Peev Kolev, PhD, professional area 6.1. Crop Science, scientific specialty *Crop Science*, assigned a chairman of the scientific jury according Order № ПД 16-145/30.01.2024 of the Rector of the Agricultural University – Plovdiv (AU Plovdiv).

1. Brief introduction of the candidate

Vanya Atanasova Delibaltova was born on January 16, 1969, in the town of Elhovo. In 1992 she graduated from *Vasil Kolarov* Higher Agricultural Institute - Plovdiv and obtained a Master's degree in Agricultural Engineering and Agronomy /Crop Production/. From 1994 to 1998 she worked as a teacher at the Private Agricultural College - Plovdiv. The candidate was a regular doctoral student at the Department of Crop Science at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv from 1998 to 2001. In 2001 she successfully defended her dissertation work entitled *Study of the Reaction of Cotton Varieties Grown on Soils Contaminated with Heavy Metals* and obtained a Ph.D. From 2002 to 2011 she successively held the academic positions of an assistant professor - 2002, senior assistant professor - 2003, and chief assistant professor - 2005. Since 2011 to the present she has been working as an associate professor in the Department of Crop Science at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova delivers lectures and practical classes in crop science disciplines to full-time and part-time students in bachelor's and master's programs, supervises graduates and doctoral students, conducts field experiments and publishes the results in reputable scientific journals.

2. General description of the scientific production

In the competition for the academic position of *Professor* Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova participated with a total of 97 scientific publications in the relevant field (specialty), categorized as follows:

- Scientific publications related to the doctoral dissertation: 6 publications, which are not subject to review;
- Publications related to obtaining the academic position of *Associate Professor*: 50 publications, which are not subject to review;
- Publications that do not duplicate those submitted for obtaining the Ph.D. and the position of *Associate Professor*, covering the national minimum scientometric requirements for obtaining the academic position of *Professor*: 41 publications;

Among them:

- 10 publications with impact factor. Total impact factor (IF): 8.8;
- 17 publications printed in refereed and indexed scientific journals;
- 14 publications printed in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in editing collective volumes of conference collections.

According to the reference regarding the fulfillment of national scientometric indicators in conformity with Art. 2b of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ADASRB), the following points are noted:

Group "B" - indicator 4: 10 research papers published in Quartil and Sjr and/or Impact factor journals. The total number of points in this category is 135.14 (required 100 points), which exceeds the minimum required points for the position of *Professor*.

Group "Г" - indicators 7 and 8: 247.5 points (required 200 points).

Group "Д": 815 points, significantly exceeding the required scientometrics.

Group indicators "E": 169.2 points (required 100 points).

Assoc. Prof. Vanya Atanasova Delibaltova's personal contribution to the mentioned 41 scientific works is illustrated by the fact that she is the leading author in 13 of them, the second author in 13, the third author in 9, and the fourth author in 6.

- Textbooks – 2;

- Training handbooks – 2.

The scientific publications of Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova, PhD, have been printed in the following journals: Bulgarian Journal of Agricultural Science – 2, Journal of Agricultural Sciences (Yuzuncu Yil University) – 2, Romanian Agricultural Research – 1, Universal Journal of Agricultural Research – 1, Industrial Crops and Products – 1, European Journal of Horticultural Science – 1, Research Journal of Agricultural Science – 1, Journal of Agricultural Science and Technology – 1, *Agronomy Research* – 1, Journal of Mountain Agriculture on the Balkans – 5, Scientific works – Agricultural University – Plovdiv – 2, Agricultural Sciences, AU – Plovdiv – 6, Scientific Papers Series A. Agronomy – 8, Journal for Research in Agricultural and Food Science – 2. Research papers published in conference collections are 7: 6 of them - in national scientific conferences with international participation, 1 – in a collection of an international scientific conference.

3. Teaching work

Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova has over 21 years of teaching experience, all of which have been spent in the Department of Crop Science at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv. During this period, she has delivered lectures and practical classes to full-time and part-time students on the following disciplines: "Crop Science", "Cereal and Leguminous Crops", "Medicinal, Aromatic, and Culinary Plants", "Fundamentals of Crop Science". She teaches disciplines in the following bachelor's programs at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv: Agronomy – Crop Production, Viticulture and Horticulture, Agrarian Engineering, Ornamental Horticulture, Ecology and Environmental Protection, Plant Protection. In the master's program Agribusiness she delivers lectures and classes on the discipline "Crop Science", while in the master's courses at the Faculty of Agronomy she teaches "Fundamentals of Crop Science" in the introductory module for students from other professional areas.

Teaching workload of the candidate

Over the last five years (2018-2023) the candidate has conducted a total of 2558.25 academic hours (average annual classroom workload - 511.65 ac. hours). Under the scientific supervision of Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova 25 graduates have successfully defended their diploma theses, with 19 Bachelor's degree graduates and 6 Master's degree graduates. Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova has been an academic supervisor of two successfully defended doctoral students at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv, acting as an individual supervisor for one and as the first co-author for the other.

Developed syllabuses

Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova has developed a total of 10 syllabuses, 8 of which are for students in the Bachelor's degree programs. These programs cover mandatory disciplines such as "Crop Science" and "Medicinal, Aromatic, and Culinary Plants", as well as elective disciplines, including "Introduction to Crop Science", "Medicinal, Aromatic, and Culinary Plants" and "Medicinal, Essential Oil and Culinary Plants" for full-time and part-time students enrolled in various study programs. Additionally, the candidate has designed 2 syllabuses for training in Master's degree programs, covering mandatory disciplines: "Biological Crop Science" and "Fundamentals of Crop Science".

4. Scientific work

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vanya Delibaltova's research work represents the result of experimental work conducted in three main directions:

1. Research on the influence of environmental conditions on quantitative and qualitative indicators in cereal, aromatic, and oilseed crops.
2. Agrobiological research on various genotypes of aromatic plants (lavender and coriander), industrial crops (sunflower and tobacco), cereal and leguminous crops (wheat, triticale, maize, and soybeans).
3. Research on specific technological aspects in the cultivation of major field crops, including:
 - Studies related to the influence of crop rotation, fertilization, seeding time, and density on productivity elements, yield, and quality indicators in wheat, barley, triticale, maize, and coriander.
 - Studies related to weed control and their impact on productivity in coriander, wheat, and lavender.
 - Studies related to the influence of periodic water deficit on the content and yield of major chemical components in soybeans and maize.
 - Studies related to the influence of foliar treatment products on quantitative and qualitative indicators in coriander and lavender.
 - Studies on the accumulation of Pb, Cu, Zn, and Cd in sorghum and their potential for cultivation in heavy metal-contaminated soils, as well as their application for phytoremediation purposes.

The studies are set and conducted with proper methodological tools, with the obtained results being deeply analyzed and discussed at a high scientific level.

Five scientific-theoretical and eleven scientific-applied contributions have been formulated. They accurately reflect the results of the conducted research, and I accept the report prepared by the candidate.

Citation and referencing of scientific production

A total of 63 citations (excluding self-citations) of the publications have been presented. Among them, 50 citations are in scientific journals referenced and indexed in world databases such as Scopus and Web of Science (26 citations in journals with impact factors (total IF - 98.2; h-index - 4) and 13 citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review). Based on this indicator, the required points are 100, and Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova has 815 points.

Participation in scientific projects

Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova, PhD, has participated in one national scientific program - "Intelligent Crop Science," two national educational projects under the Human Resources Development Operational Program and two scientific research projects funded by the Scientific Research Fund. She has also served as the leader of one infrastructural project at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv.

Participation in councils, governing bodies, committees, and scientific juries:

Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova has served as a member of the Attestation Commission from 2016 to 2019, a member of the Faculty Council at the Faculty of Agronomy since 2011 and since 2020 she has been a member of the Academic Council (scientific secretary), a member of the Management Board of the Center for Scientific Research Technology Transfer and Intellectual Property Protection, a member of the Committee Checking the Compliance Verification between Procedures and Rules for Academic Staff Development, a coordinator of the Verification Commission on Scientometric Indicators in the professional area: 6.1. Crop Science, and a chairperson of the commission preparing the *Report - Self-Assessment for the Program Accreditation of the Crop Science Doctoral Program*.

Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova has participated with 15 opinions in scientific juries, including 12 for the academic position of "associate professor", 2 for the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" and 1 for the scientific degree of "Doctor of Sciences."

5. Conclusion

Taking into account the present analysis of the candidate's teaching, scientific and scientific-applied work, I consider that Assoc. Prof. Vanya Delibaltova, PhD, meets the requirements of ADASRB, the Regulations for Application of ADASRB and the Regulations for Application of ADAS at AU Plovdiv. The submitted materials are sufficient in amount and completely meet the science-metric requirements for the academic position of *Professor*. The candidate's research studies are relevant and modern, and the obtained results represent a significant number of scientific-theoretic and scientific-applied contributions in the field of plant science.

All the above mentioned gives me grounds to evaluate **POSITIVELY** the candidate's whole work.

Based on the above mentioned, I allow myself to propose to the honorable scientific jury to vote positively, and the faculty council of the Faculty of Agronomy at AU Plovdiv to elect **Assoc. Prof. Vanya Atanasova Delibaltova, PhD**, for the position of *Professor* in the scientific specialty **Crop Science**.

Date: 19.02.2024
Plovdiv

OPINION WORKED OUT BY:
(Prof. Tanko Kolev, PhD)

