

## In memoriam



**Professor Dr Jos Mortelmans**

On 19 February 2005, Professor Jos Mortelmans passed away in Antwerp (Belgium) at the age of 81 years. The one which have known him well are aware of the fact that his career was multifaceted, but emphasized mainly the development of tropical veterinary medicine. He was also the inspirer of Tropicultura and its first President.

In 1949, Jos Mortelmans graduated as Doctor in Veterinary Medicine at the then Veterinary School in Ghent. In 1950, he obtained the diploma of Colonial Veterinary Surgeon at the Prince Leopold Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. The tropical career of Jos Mortelmans started in 1952 when he went to the former Belgian Congo. During 6 years, he led the veterinary laboratories of Kisenyi, Elisabethville, Stanleyville and Astrida. In 1959, Jos Mortelmans returned to Belgium where he was appointed to the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp as professor and head of the Veterinary Department. At the same time he became the responsible of the veterinary laboratory of the Zoo of Antwerp and, from 1970 onwards, he was also appointed as professor at the Faculty of Agriculture of the Catholic University of Leuven where he was in charge of the course on infectious and parasitic animal diseases. He retired in 1989.

One of the large merits of Jos Mortelmans is that he developed the Veterinary Department of the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp to an internationally recognized laboratory. Beside research, education was also one of the important tasks of Jos Mortelmans. So, since 1958, 615 students were trained by him. In the period 1970 up to 1990, it was impossible to find an organization linked to the world of tropical animal medicine where Jos Mortelmans was not active. For example, he carried out as an international consultant, uncountable and often delicate assignments for FAO, UNDP, ABOS (Belgian Development Cooperation), for the Dutch, German and French development cooperation, and for the European Union. Jos Mortelmans was very appreciated due to his abilities as consultant, his encyclopaedic knowledge, his field experience and his practical and realistic attitude. How he was able to attain this, I don't know, but he succeeded always to solve effortlessly scientific and often delicate political and social problems.

Jos Mortelmans was member of a large number of organisations, out of which the two most important were the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the CGIAR (Consultative Group of the International Agricultural Research, Washington), and the International Trypanotolerance Centre (ITC), Banjul, The Gambia. He was also Chairman of Evaluation Committees for the International Laboratory for Research on Animal Diseases (ILRAD) in Nairobi (Kenya) and for the Institut d'Élevage et de Médecine Vétérinaire des Pays Tropicaux, Maisons-Alfort (France). He is first author and co-author of 262 scientific publications. The large variety of subjects gives evidence of the wide interests of Jos Mortelmans. His direct natural contact, his large honesty, and especially his never ceasing motivation made from Jos Mortelmans an exceptional person.



**Professor Dr Pasteur Kageruka**

Pasteur Kageruka was a veterinarian originating from Rwanda, who worked most of his life together with Prof. J. Mortelmans. They knew already each other in the fifties, when J. Mortelmans was director of the Veterinary Laboratory at Astrida (Butare) and P. Kageruka was at the Veterinary School in the same place. When J. Mortelmans returned to Belgium to start the Veterinary Department at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp, P. Kageruka followed very soon. Together with J. Mortelmans he was one of the pioneers of the Veterinary Department, which was first located at the Zoo, later in the main buildings of the Nationalestraat/Rochusstraat, Antwerp. Although in the beginning of his career P. Kageruka did a lot of research on various diseases in zoo animals later on he focused on animal trypanosomiasis, particularly *Trypanosoma evansi* and *T. brucei gambiense*. He provided a major contribution to the discovery of the animal reservoir of sleeping sickness in Central Africa. He was a very active and highly appreciated member of the International Scientific Council for Trypanosomiasis Research and Control. P. Kageruka was teaching protozoology at the Veterinary Department and as such has trained hundreds of veterinarians and veterinary technicians, who attended the course in tropical

animal health and production. He retired in January 1998 after 33 years of service at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. He passed away in October 2004 at the age of 68 years.

Prof. Dr J. Vercruysse  
Chairman of Agri-Overseas