Obituary
Antonio Fernández Tiburcio

Professor of Plant Physiology
Faculty of Pharmacy and Food Sciences
University of Barcelona

Antonio Fernández Tiburcio. Professor of the Section of Plant Physiology at the Faculty of Pharmacy (University of Barcelona), and member of the Spanish Society of Plant Physiology since 1977, passed away on April 1 after a long illness. With this writing we want to pay the well-deserved tribute to whom has been one of the pioneers, at national and international level, in the study of polyamine metabolism and its effects on plant development and stress.

Antonio was born in Terrassa (Barcelona) on December 9, 1952. Son of Pura and Antonio, he was the eldest of two brothers. His childhood and adolescence took place in the same birth town, showing interest for science very early. In 1970 he began the studies of Pharmacy at the University of Barcelona (UB), where he graduated in 1975. In 1976, as an assistant professor, he initiated his doctoral Thesis, entitled "Influence of distant UV irradiation on growth, soluble proteins and nicotine in *Nicotiana rustica* L" in the Section of Plant Physiology at the Faculty of Pharmacy (UB). He defended his Thesis on October 25, 1980, obtaining the highest qualification.

In 1982 he was promoted to associate professor at the Faculty of Pharmacy of the UB. In 1983, he was awarded with a postdoctoral fellowship which let him joining the Department of Biology at Yale University, under the supervision of Professor Arthur W. Galston. During his stay at Yale, Antonio studied various aspects of the metabolism and function of polyamines in plants, including their involvement in floral development, and their possible role as a florigen. His stay at Yale would influence his professional future. In 1986, as associate Professor at the University of Barcelona, he established his own line of research and founded the polyamine's laboratory, in clear continuity with the studies carried out in Yale. In 1994, Professor Teresa Altabella joined the Polyamine's laboratory, with whom she collaborated for more than 25 years. From 1998 to 2003, Antonio took several sabbaticals at the Max Planck Institute for Plant Breeding Research, in close collaboration with Professor Csaba Koncz. As a result of this stage of collaboration, one of the first plant metabolomes, which involved enzymes of polyamine metabolism, was identified together with the group of Dr. Juan Carbonell (IBMCP,

Valencia). In 2002 he obtained the chair of Plant Physiology, a position that he held until his death in 2021. Several dozen doctoral students have passed through the polyamine's laboratory, including two of the signers of this document (Antoni Borrell, 1995; Rubén Alcázar, 2004), in addition to a large number of national and international collaborators that constitute the community of the 'Polyamigos'.

Principal investigator of 25 national and international projects, coordinator of several COST actions, speaker at numerous prestigious scientific conferences, author of more than 120 scientific publications in journals and books, and co-author of several patents, his passion was studying the mechanisms of action of polyamines and their applications in resistance to abiotic stress. His interest in science spread to all his collaborators. He had a great vision of the future, understanding that, in order to move forward in an unexplored field, it was necessary to collaborate beyond one's own borders.

All of us who have known Antonio remember him as an affable person, close, honest, sociable and with a great hunger for life. A great friend, mentor, researcher and university professor who has left too soon, but from whom we take a great professional and personal legacy.

The Polyamine's Laboratory at the University of Barcelona

Contributed by: Rubén Alcázar, Antoni Borrell and Teresa Altabella

Special thanks to Alba Fernández Mollet for her collaboration in the drafting of the document.