



Prof. Dr. Achim Dobermann receives the Justus von Liebig Award for World Nutrition 2019 endowed with 25,000 Euro.

Ulm, October 16, 2019 – The Foundation fiat panis awards for the sixth time the Justus von Liebig Award for World Nutrition for outstanding performance in the fight against hunger and rural poverty. Prof. Dr. Achim Dobermann received the award on the occasion of the World Food Day Colloquium at the University of Hohenheim in Stuttgart.

Professor Achim Dobermann is currently Director and Chief Executive of Rothamsted Research in England, the oldest agricultural research institute in the world. In this role, he leads a variety of research programs aimed at developing new solutions for the sustainability of agricultural systems. He has more than 30 years of professional experience as an expert in this field. Prior to joining Rothamsted Research in 2014, he was Deputy General Director of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in the Philippines. As a member of the Leadership Council and co-chair of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Thematic Group on Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems, he made an important contribution to setting the goals and indicators of the Sustainable Development Agenda. The SDSN was launched by former United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon as an action network to harness the expertise of science, the private sector and civil society to solve sustainable development issues.

In his own research, Dobermann linked two main topics that are of particular relevance to the Justus von Liebig Award: 1. Quantitative understanding and modeling of soil, climate and crop variability at different scales and 2. innovative concepts and tools for ecological intensification of important cropping systems through more precise management with special consideration of plant nutrition. He is a strong advocate of high-quality, interdisciplinary, field-oriented research that deals with issues of concrete management of agricultural systems, but places a strong focus on innovation approaches with high impact. Developing practical recommendations and decision support for farmers, consultants, experts and other researchers has always been an essential part of his research.

The development of a new, crop-specific approach to site-specific nutrient management, which can be tailored to the needs of smallholders and agriculture on a commercial scale, was probably Dobermann's most important scientific contribution to international agriculture. It was at the heart of his research in Asia and North America in the 1990s and 2000s, and has led to many much cited and influential publications. In many on-farm studies, he and his colleagues have shown that high food production, profitability, high nutritional efficiency and minimal environmental impact are not mutually exclusive in agriculture.

Achim Dobermann studied tropical agriculture at the University of Leipzig in the 1980s and received there his Ph.D. in 1991. Already at that time he was engaged in his field research with the complex spatial interactions of soil, fertilizer nitrogen, micro-topography and weeds, which lead to a variability of rice yield. From 1992 to 2000, he was researcher at the International Rice Research Center in the Philippines, then from 2000 to 2007 professor at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. From 2007 to 2014 he returned to the International Rice Research Center but now as Deputy Director-General. Since 2014 he is leading as director the highly respected research institute Rothamsted Research in England.

The independent council of the Foundation unanimously awarded this prize to Prof. Dr. Achim Dobermann for his outstanding achievements in the field of sustainable agricultural development, which contribute to improving world nutrition. His life's work up to now has been in the service of a world free from hunger.

The award ceremony was one of the highlights of this years' World Food Day Colloquium on October 16, 2019 organized by the Food Security Center at the University of Hohenheim.

Up until 2006 the Justus von Liebig Award for World Nutrition was awarded to European agricultural researchers and practitioners for special contributions. This award being taken over by the Foundation fiat panis has gained in recognition and importance. The now internationally awarded prize promotes engagement for securing food and nutrition for all people worldwide.

Dr. Hermann Eiselen (1926 - 2009) founded the non-profit Foundation fiat panis in 2000, which took over the research promotion activities of the Eiselen Foundation in January 2010. Dr. Eiselen appointed the Foundation fiat panis as his sole heir with the desire that the Eiselen Foundation's successful promotion of research will be strengthened and continued.