



## Press information

Ulm, August 20, 2024

### **Hermann Eiselen Science Award 2024 and Hans H. Ruthenberg-Graduate Award 2024 awarded by the Foundation fiat panis**

The Foundation fiat panis honours young academics whose research focuses on solutions to mitigate hunger in food deficit countries with the Hermann Eiselen Science Award. The research findings must be user-oriented and suitable to contribute to the improvement of the food and nutrition status and to reduce the impact of hunger (undernutrition and malnutrition). The award is endowed with 30,000 Euros and will be presented on September 11, 2024 during the Tropentag in Vienna.

The prize is awarded for outstanding scientific work which leads to an improvement of the world's food security. This year 3 outstanding works were selected. The following doctoral theses will be awarded 10,000 Euros each:

- “Evaluation of geo-physical methods to study the effects of land-use on salinity in rice production systems in the Vietnamese Mekong Delta” by **Dr. Van Hong Nguyen**, University of Hohenheim  
She evaluates the potential of novel geo-electrical techniques for detecting salinity in rice fields. Her dissertation builds on innovative, physically and intellectually demanding work. It demonstrates her ability to tackle complex research questions and publish her results in internationally recognized journals. Her novel approach has the potential to be developed into early warning systems for soil salinity in tropical river deltas, where the risk of saltwater intrusion is increasing with sea level rise due to global warming.
- “Land tenure in a changing climate” by **Dr. Lisa Murken**, University of Kassel-Witzenhausen  
She makes a significant contribution to understanding the important role of land tenure in the context of climate change and its implications for smallholder adaptation and resilience. It combines in innovative ways household panel data with high-resolution weather data, unique primary survey data and mental models. In a very short time frame, Ms. Murken has produced four excellent papers. Her results have great potential to inform the policy debate on the nexus between land, climate and food security.
- “Integrating more efficient renewable energy technologies into food systems in Central Mozambique: implications to food and nutrition security” by **Dr. Custódio Efraim Matavel**, Humboldt-University of Berlin

Dr. Matavel explores the impact of optimizing the use of processing energy for food quality and nutrition security in rural Africa. The highly interdisciplinary approach contributes significantly to a holistic understanding of the complex issues related to food security. The innovative methods and extensively published findings can inform policy makers, and play a key role for mitigating hunger in food deficit regions.

The jury of the Hermann Eiselen Science Award is composed as follows: Prof. Dr. Eva Schlecht, University of Kassel-Witzenhausen, Prof. Dr. Meike Wollini, University of Goettingen and Prof. Dr. Mathias Becker, University of Bonn. Since the first award ceremony in the year 1986 a total of 65 highly recognized science award winners received 420,000 Euro.

Since 1999 excellent diploma and master theses in the field of food security and poverty alleviation were honored with the Hans Hartwig Ruthenberg-Graduate Award. The prize is awarded annually with the amount of 7,500 Euro. It can be divided up to not more than three prize winners. The award ceremony will take place also on September 11, 2024 during the Tropentag in Vienna. This year two excellent master theses will be awarded:

- “Assessing Genotype by Environment Interactions and farmers’ preferences in participatory maize selection in eastern Zambia and implications for the breeding process” by **Ms. Anna Tabea Mengen**, University of Hohenheim  
She receives this award for her excellent research showing that participatory plant breeding is an alternative approach that involves farmers in the breeding process to ensure that their needs are considered. Her work has made an important contribution to improving participatory plant breeding using maize as an example in Zambia. Her outstanding work has contributed to a deeper understanding of smallholder farmers' selection criteria for better maize varieties and the interactions of genotype performance with the environment, including managed field trials in farmers' fields. This paves the way for an improved breeding and widespread adoption of resilient varieties that meet the needs of smallholder farmers.
- “Climate-Smart and Circular Practices for Coffee Farming in Antioquia and Caldas, Colombia” by **Ms. Paloma Acosta Rivera**, Technical University of Munich  
She receives this award for her in-depth theoretical and empirical analysis of implementing eco-friendly practices for coffee production in Colombia. Her work shows how the adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture and Circular Economy practices can have positive impacts on coffee production. The research work underscores the necessity for wider implementation and evaluation of innovative technologies and the critical need for tailored policy interventions. These measures would make it possible to overcome the barriers impeding the adoption of Climate-Smart Agriculture and Circular Economy practices among coffee growers, thus supporting the resilience of the coffee industry in the face of climate-related challenges and ensuring its long-term sustainability.

The Jury of the Hans H. Ruthenberg-Graduate Award is composed as follows: Prof. Dr. Ulrike Grote, Leibniz University of Hanover, Prof. Dr. Jochen C. Reif, Leibniz Institute of Plant Genetics and Crop Plant Research (IPK), and Prof. Dr. Johanna Jacobi, ETH Zürich.

Since the first ceremony in 1999 a total of 66 Ruthenberg winners have been awarded 165,000 Euros.

(5768 characters with spaces)