

Marc Van Montagu

Position: EFB President

Organisation: Ghent University - IPBO

Location: Gent, Belgium

Email: mamon@psb.UGent.be



Biography:

Marc Van Montagu was full Professor and director of the Laboratory of Genetics at the faculty of Sciences, Ghent University and scientific director of the Genetics Department of the Flanders Interuniversity Institute for Biotechnology (VIB). He was a part-time professor at the biology, nucleic acid chemistry, and virology. He was Scientific Director and member of the board of Directors of plant Genetic systems Inc. (Belgium).

Together with his colleague Prof. Jeff Schell, Marc Van Montagu discovered the gene transfer mechanism between *Agrobacterium* and plants, which resulted in the development of methods to alter *Agrobacterium* into an efficient delivery system for gene engineering in plants. He developed plant molecular genetics, in particular molecular mechanisms for cell proliferation and differentiation and response to abiotic stresses (high light, ozone, cold, salt and drought) and constructed transgenic crops (tobacco, rape seed, corn) resistant to insect pest and tolerant to novel herbicides. His work with poplar trees resulted in engineering of trees with improved pulping qualities.

He has received numerous outstanding awards for his pioneering work, including the prestigious "Japan Prize". He has been a foreign associate of the National Academy of Science (USA) since 1986 and the agricultural Academy of Russia and France. He holds 6 Doctor Honoris Causa Degrees. In 1990 he was granted the title of "Baron" by Baudouin 1, King of the Belgians.