



Hannu Saloniemi

* 11.10.1944 † 25.9.2022

Professor, veterinarian, dean Hannu Saloniemi died of a sudden attack of illness at the age of 78 on 25 September 2022 in Helsinki. He was born on 11 October 1944 at the Anseppä dairy farm in Nummi. While his brother Tuomo took over the old family farm, Hannu pursued an academic career in veterinary medicine. His background growing up on a dairy farm with cows and horses also influenced Hannu's scientific orientation.

Saloniemi earned his licentiate degree in veterinary medicine in 1970 and defended his doctoral dissertation in 1980. He received an honorary doctorate from both the Estonian University of Life Sciences and the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies. He was selected as a member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters in 2004.

Saloniemi spent most of his career at the College of Veterinary Medicine and the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Helsinki. He was appointed Professor in Animal Hygiene in 1987. Saloniemi served as Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine for nine years.

Saloniemi's career was coloured by repeated political disputes as to whether the independent college should be moved from

Helsinki to the University of Kuopio. The college understood the political realities of the situation and the University of Helsinki understood the importance of veterinary medicine – the college eventually became a faculty under the University of Helsinki in 1995. During the negotiations, Saloniemi's calm and amicable manner combined with a firm belief in the requirements of successful education inspired confidence in the future among staff. As dean, Hannu Saloniemi steered the faculty through the construction of its current facilities on the Viikki Campus.

Saloniemi had a strong ability to anticipate the future: he was a pioneer in the health, welfare and behavioural research of farmed animals and helped establish a disease register for farmed animals in Finland, which was unique in the world at the time. Thanks to Hannu Saloniemi, animal welfare research in Finland developed to high international standards. He would also take bold stands on social issues. Saloniemi's work is continued by the Research Centre for Animal Welfare at the University of Helsinki and the Finnish Centre for Animal Welfare EHK at the Natural Resources Institute Finland.

Saloniemi's passion for addressing common issues was evident in his numerous

roles in organizations. Saloniemi was active in the Finnish Veterinary Association, the Finnish Union of University Professors and the International Society for Animal Hygiene, among others. He valued patriotism and was a member of the heritage guild for young boys and girls from the capital region who volunteered in the war (Pääkaupungin sotilaspoikien ja pikkulotien perinnekilta).

Family was the most important thing to Hannu. He started work early in the morning, but also left work on time, dedicating the rest of the day to his family. Hannu found dentist Elina Inkinen as his life partner, and they had three children: Timo, Tiina and Mikko. His children and grand-

children were important to Hannu and brought joy and meaning to his days in retirement. Hannu renovated and extended a summer cottage built near his childhood home in Nummi to create a much-loved place to come together with the whole extended family.

Even when he was busy, Hannu Saloniemi had the ability to stop, be genuinely present and listen. Saloniemi was a modern, coaching leader. He considered looking after the research and teaching environments of the faculty as his main responsibility. Hannu spread warmth and confidence around him in good times and in bad. We will continue to cherish the memory of Hannu's smile and calm presence.

*Antti Sukura, Olli Peltoniemi,
Anna Valros and Laura Hänninen*