

29 December 2020

From: Thomas (Tom) Warkentin, Professor, Crop Development Centre/Department of Plant Sciences, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada

To: Dean of Faculty of Sciences, UP Olomouc - Doc. RN Dr. Martin Kubala, Ph.D.

Re: Recommendation letter for Dr. Petr Smýkal

Dear Dr. Kubala,

I am writing this letter in support of Dr. Petr Smýkal's application for full professorship in the Department of Botany, Faculty of Science, Palacky University in Olomouc. I am a plant breeder and professor at the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Canada. My appointment is research related, not teaching, but I have been supervising graduate students throughout my career, and have been serving as the chair of graduate students for our department over the past four years.

I have known Dr. Smýkal for about 15 years when we began to meet at various European legume-related conferences, particularly the European Association for Grain Legume Research (AEP, now called International Legume Society) and the Grain Legumes Technology Transfer Program. Dr. Smýkal was very active in these meetings often giving keynote addresses. He also served on the planning committees of these conferences. When I first met Dr. Smýkal, it was during his time in the agricultural/biotechnology industry (AgriTec) and we had a natural connection as some of his work involved pea, and this has been my primary crop for over 25 years.

As is evident in his Curriculum Vitae, Dr. Smýkal and I have several joint publications. The most recent (Gali et al., 2019) arose in our group in Saskatoon from an international genome wide association study project on pea. Dr. Smýkal contributed to the research strategy, and along with several other international collaborators, provided representative pea germplasm from his region. Dr. Smýkal and I co-authored several more publications related to pea genetics, genomics, and breeding, typically where he was the lead author. In these papers, he provided valuable input on domestication of pea and international genetic resources of pea and their utilization.

Dr. Smýkal has made tremendous contributions to teaching and research during his career. He is teaching a diverse set of classes covering his key areas of expertise, particularly related to plant variation and evolution, applied biotechnology, and conservation botany. He has a strong publication record with many papers in high impact factor journals. His publication record has been very strong in the years since his appointment as Associate Professor. Additionally, I am very impressed by his strong contributions to the editorial boards of several key journals in our field.

Dr. Smýkal is a productive teacher and scholar. He is a respected member of the international legume research community. Dr. Smýkal is personable and collaborative. I am strongly supportive of Dr. Smýkal's application for Full Professor status in the Department of Botany, Faculty of Science, Palacky University in Olomouc.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions on this topic.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Warkentin
Professor, P.Ag.

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