



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIST ASSOCIATION EUROPEENNE DES ECONOMISTES AGRICOLES

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Michel Petit

Michel Petit has been associated with the work of the European Association of Agricultural Economists from its very beginning, at the meeting in Uppsala in 1975, from which the Association was launched. In 1978 he was elected President of the Association. As President, one of his most important initiatives has been the introduction of EAAE Seminars, that has become a big success. Michel was amongst those who fought hard to ensure that the EAAE included colleagues from Central and Eastern Europe. Due to the efforts of Michel and his colleagues, our Association has made an important contribution to the emergence of a more unified Europe.



Michel was a co-founder of the European Review of Agricultural Economics in 1972, and co-editor until 1975. Having obtained his first degree as Ingénieur Agronome in Paris, he went on to achieve a PhD at Michigan State University. Returning to France in 1968, he became researcher at INRA, the national agronomic research institute, and Professor at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Sciences Agronomiques (ENSSAA) at Dijon. During this period, he created a completely new programme in Economics for "Ingénieurs d'Agronomie". In addition, he spent a year as visiting Fellow at IFPRI, Washington (1983-84) and two years as Programme Advisor for Agriculture and Rural Development in India, Nepal and Sri Lanka with the Ford Foundation (1975-77). Between 1985 and 1988 he was elected President of the International Association of Agricultural Economists. In 1988 he became Director of the Agricultural and Rural Development Department of the World Bank in Washington, and subsequently the Director of the Agricultural Research and Extension Group at the Bank. He returned to France in 1999, resuming his career as professor first at the Institut National Agronomique (INA) in Paris and, more recently, as part-time professor and advisor at the Institut Agronomique Méditerranéen (IAMM) in Montpellier. For more than ten years he has served as one of the few academic members of the International Food and Agricultural Trade Policy Council. His research interests and publications have covered a wide range of subjects, often leading new developments in the field of study of agricultural economists. They include his early work on production economics, farmers' decision making, the adoption of new technologies and their consequences for research and education policies. Later his attention turned to the political economy of agricultural policies. During his period of office at the World Bank, he was responsible for the preparation of two major policy papers: on forests and on water resource management, themes which have later commanded widespread interest and debate.