



Louis-Marie Houdebine (1942–2022)

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It is with great sadness that we inform our community of the death of Louis-Marie Houdebine (1942–2022).

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Louis-Marie passed away a few days ago, overcome by Parkinson's disease.

Trained as a chemist, he converted to molecular biology. He was at the forefront of research into mammary gland function in rabbits, and was a pioneer in utilising this species for the production of recombinant proteins. He developed and refined this technology in our laboratory at INRA, investigating the potential of the mammary gland to function as a bioreactor. In 1998 he founded Bioprotein Technologies SA, and remained a director of this company until he retired in 2008. He contributed to diverse research projects, including genetically modified rabbits as graft donors or as model animals for the study of genes and diseases. In 2003 he became a member of the French Academy of Agriculture. During an illustrious career he published over 300 articles, including in *Transgenic Research*. Even after retirement he remained enthralled by the new opportunities that genome editing technologies afforded researchers. He was particularly well known for his enthusiastic and convincing participation in public debates to promote positive science, in innovation and progress, and to push back all forms of obscurantism.

For those who knew him, Louis-Marie will remain a brilliant researcher who was passionate, enthusiastic, approachable and always keen to participate in scientific discourse. He was an inspiration for many young scientists, encouraging them to pursue in this field.

He was a great lover of baroque music, a virtuoso organist, and let us not forget the harpsichord... it was JS Bach who accompanied him to the end.

We will deeply miss him.

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