

## JOURNAL OF BIOLOGICAL CONTROL



### A tribute to the legend Dr. M. S. Swaminathan

**Mankombu Sambasivan Swaminathan** born on 7 August 1925 at Kumbakonam, Thanjavur dt., Tamil Nadu, India was a legendary and an exemplary Agricultural Scientist. He is known for his global leadership in Agriculture and his role in green revolution of India by developing and introducing high-yielding varieties of Rice and wheat. Though his specialization was in Genetics and Plant Breeding and focused on genus *Solanum* and potato per se at genetic level to provide resilience against cold weather, nematodes and enhance the production and productivity, he had a great vision for Indian agriculture to attain self-sufficiency. This has led to a green revolution with the introduction of Mexican dwarf varieties of wheat in collaboration with Noble laureate Dr. Norman Borlaug, and further improvement of wheat varieties suiting Indian conditions. Dr. Swaminathan was a great administrator and took Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to a greater heights as the Director General and a Secretary to the Government of India during 1972 - 1979. It is in his period, several centres were established across the country and motivated the scientists to monitor and work on weather and crop patterns to attain good productivity and sustain the production to feed people. The present day 'Agricultural Research Service', popular as ARS was his brain child which motivated several bright talented scholars to take up agricultural research as career in India. In 1979, he was elevated to a senior position in Government of India as 'Principal Secretary' and no later than a year, Dr. Swaminathan was transferred to Planning Commission, where the focus and priority to Women and Environment was given for the first time in India's five year plans. Dr. Swaminathan was the first Asian to be inducted as Director General of International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Phillipines during 1982 and served till 1988. His works and leadership at IRRI has fetched 'World Food Prize' in 1987 and his commitment and dedication made him President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Vice-president of World Wildlife Fund. With the motivation on receipt of 'World Food Prize', Dr. Swaminathan has started M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, a non-profit trust in 1988 to encourage and nurture the science and agriculture in India through use of modern science and technology towards rural development and enhancement of lives and livelihoods of communities. With this small gesture, the Foundation made a difference to the lives of over 6 lakh farm families impacting livelihood of one lakh farmers and fisherfolk every day. Above all (apart from a great researcher and administrator), he was a great human being, passionate towards poor and strived hard to eradicate hunger. We lost this great human being on September 28, 2023 at Chennai, Tamil Nadu, where he breathed last. Dr. Swaminathan's dedication, commitment, involvement, passion, determination, hard work and so on are the greatest examples to the young generation to emulate and become a productive citizens. Our heartfelt tribute to the great Visionary, legendary Scientist and noble Soul.....

*Kolla Sreedevi and team JBC*