



On January 26, 2020 we lost a great scientist and a wonderful person, J. Antoni Rafalski, to acute myelogenous leukemia.

Antoni joined the Central Research Department at the Dupont Experimental Station in Wilmington, DE in 1984 and retired as a Senior Research Fellow from DuPont Pioneer in May 2013, after 29 years of remarkable contributions.

Throughout his career at DuPont and DuPont Pioneer Antoni had a tremendous impact on the organization and was a pioneer in the field of plant genetics and genomics. Antoni worked together with Scott Tingey on a number of seminal programs, including the discovery of the widely employed RAPD genetic marker system, the first genetic-physical map of soybean, the first high throughput platform for plant cDNA sequencing and the first maize high throughput marker platform in which thousands of Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms were identified in a diverse set of Pioneer maize germplasm. Through Antoni's leadership and his foundational knowledge and comprehension of genetic diversity, great understanding of the roles of structural variation, gene expression and the identification of causal genes was provided to the scientific community both within and outside DuPont Pioneer. The impact of his many publications is reflected by over 47000 citations to date. Antoni's contributions led to significant advances in the understanding of the maize genome and its diversity and were key in the development of genetic and genomic tools at DuPont Pioneer.

Antoni was not only a brilliant scientist; he also was a great teacher and mentor and instilled an enthusiasm for science and for adopting an inquisitive mindset in the people he worked with. Antoni had an enormous impact on the career of many young scientists, and he is leaving a great legacy for the global scientific community through his contributions.

After his retirement Antoni continued to be active in the scientific world. He was an advisor and mentor of graduate students as an adjunct faculty member in the Plant and Soil Sciences Department at the University of Delaware. He served on science advisory boards and on editorial boards of several journals and continued to consult for different research groups.

Antoni was a wonderful person and a great mentor to many of us. His dedication to science, his infectious enthusiasm, his great sense of humor and his huge energy will be missed. He leaves his wife Maria, and his two daughters, Anna and Victoria, and friends around the world.