

Foreword

After decades of peaceful and prosperous development in many parts of the world, the coronavirus pandemic and other current crises have shown how fragile our daily lives can be. Of particular note is the ongoing climate change and with it the question of the sustainability of our actions. Today's grapevine breeders and geneticists are committed to these questions and are working on solutions building on the achievements of their predecessors. It is about nothing less than the preservation of our wine-growing cultural landscape, which is only possible through change. This change also includes adapted grapevine varieties. The symposium is therefore held under the motto "Pioneering Wines (PIWIs) - Innovation and Tradition". It is intended to be a forum for discussion, scientific exchange and getting to know PIWI wines as well as top wines from traditional cultivars.

Since COVID-19, digital communication has brought the world together again and has found its way into our everyday lives as a new tool. However, the experience of digital communication also shows its limits, as people also like to experience personal contact and exchange. We are therefore very pleased that the "XIII. Symposium for Grapevine Breeding and Genetics" under the auspices of the *Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture* and the *International Organisation of Vine and Wine* takes place as a conference in attendance. Exchange and networking is easily possible in addition to the participation in lectures and poster sessions or workshops! A special feature of viticulture is not only theoretical consideration but also the sensory experience with a discourse about the product wine. This dimension is only possible in presence and is a cornerstone on the way from science to viticulture practice. We therefore very much regret the absence of colleagues who unfortunately cannot take part in the conference due to existing travel restrictions in some countries. However, they will at least be able to see the theoretical side of the coin by accessing the abstracts and proceedings of the conference that will be published later in "*Vitis Journal of Grapevine Research*".

Prof. Dr. Reinhard Töpfer

Head of the Institute for Grapevine Breeding Geilweilerhof, Siebeldingen, Germany