

Obituary for Professor Jingfan Gu (1927-2022)



Professor Jingfan Gu, an outstanding nutritionist, died on February 22, 2022, at the age of 95. The death of Professor Jingfan Gu deeply grieves us! His death is a great loss in nutrition circles.

Gu Jingfan was born in Wuxi, China in 1927. He graduated from Yanjing University in 1948 and Peking Union Medical College in 1952. He became the director of the *Institute of Hygiene and Environmental Medicine of the Academy of Military Medical Sciences (based in Tianjin)*, the director of the Military Nutrition and Food Hygiene Inspection and Research Center, a member of the Medical Science and Technology Committee of the Ministry of Health of the General Logistics Department, and leader of the Military Health Professional Group.

His contributions to *nutrition science institutions* at home and abroad were impressive. Professor Gu was a founder of the re-established *Chinese Nutrition Society*. From 1979, he served, in turn, as a member of the preparatory group, secretary general, vice president and president of the Chinese Nutrition Society. In 1985, he led the delegation which successfully bid for membership of the *International Union of Nutritional Sciences (IUNS)* at its Brighton, UK, conference, and played a role in its Expert Committees. He was Executive Director and Secretary General of the 7th *Asian Federation of Nutritional Societies (FANS)*. Professor Gu was a founder of the *Tianjin Nutrition Society*, for which he successively served as chair of its first and second councils and honorary chair of its third Council.

Despite his age and extensive responsibilities, Professor Gu always maintained his enthusiasm and investment in the activities of the *Chinese Nutrition Society*, with silent and dedicated effort and wisdom, making outstanding contributions to the development and growth of nutrition science and policy in China. He received the *Asia Pacific Society of Clinical Nutrition Award* for 1995; and in 2005 rated an "*Internationally Renowned Scholar*" at the 18th ICN-IUNS in South Africa; He was bestowed the honorary title as one of "A Generation of Famous Science and Technology Teachers" of the General Logistics Department of the PLA; the Outstanding Achievement Award of the China Nutrition Society in 2010 and the Lifetime Contribution Award of the Chinese Nutrition Society in 2010; and named "National Outstanding Scientific and Technological Worker" of the Chinese Association for Science and Technology.

Professor Gu always attached great importance to both *basic and applied nutrition research*, which prospered nutrition evaluation, nutritional requirements, prevention and treatment of nutritional deficiency diseases and *nutritional support for war trauma*. During 1956 to 1959, he evaluated nutrient requirements of the infantry and cavalry in Tonghua and Sanshengong (now Dengkou County, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, China) of relevance to residents and soldiers. In 1974, he introduced the glutathione reducing activity coefficient method to evaluate riboflavin status with minimal whole blood in China. In 1979, he pursued the need to address *metabolic changes after burns*. For this, he was awarded the first Academic Prize of the Hou Xiangchuan Foundation of the Chinese Nutrition Society in 1988. In 1978 and 1981, he developed a general-purpose and trauma-specific crystalline amino acid intravenous injection, the first *parenteral nutrition* preparation in China. The study was recognised by prizes in Military Scientific and Technological Achievement and Scientific and Technological Progress. He studied *nutritional metabolism in tropical environments*, focusing on the role of vitamins in improving heat resistance, developing, for example, long-acting vitamin B1 and B2 oil suspension injections, and heat-resistant vitamin C derivatives. He compiled and published the first Atlas of *Wild Vegetables in China*.

From 1981, with the Institute of Hygiene and Environmental Medicine of the Academy of Military Medical Sciences, Professor Gu resumed publication of *Acta Nutrimenta Sinica*. He served, in turn, its associate editor, editor-in-chief and honorary editor-in-chief. Professor Gu, together with the Chinese Nutrition Society, revised the "*Chinese Dietary Reference Intakes*" and "*Dietary Guidelines for Chinese Residents*", and published a *History of Chinese Nutrition* and Biography of the Previous Generation of Nutritionists.

Even beyond the age of 80, he reviewed manuscripts and often worked late into the night. He was careful and meticulous in his reviews, and helpful to authors. His *academic rigour* has left a deep impression on many authors.

Under his leadership, *Acta Nutrimenta Sinica* won national journal awards, and was rated among "One Hundred Chinese Outstanding Academic Journals" and considered a "Chinese High-Quality Scientific and Technological Journal".

Professor Gu published more than 180 papers both in China and abroad. In 1990, he published *Clinical Nutrition* with Professor Hou Xiangchuan, based on the WHO-IUNS Manual developed by Wahlqvist and Vobecky, and jointly written with nutritionists and physicians in China. It triggered the wide development of Clinical Nutrition across China, and became an important guide to nutrition practice. He edited 11 monographs, including Intravenous Nutrition, Enteral Nutrition, Modern Clinical Nutrition, and a Special Nutrition and Nutritional Recipe Series. He was a co-founder of the

Asia Pacific Journal of Clinical Nutrition in 1992, encouraging its provision of Abstracts in Chinese during the first 2 decades of its history, and its presence in Chinese University hospital libraries nationwide.

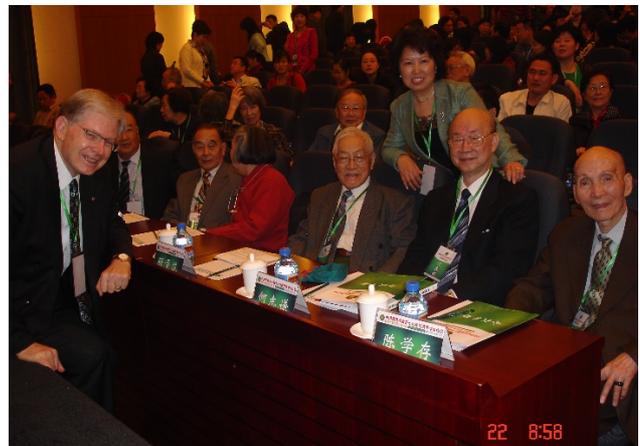
Professor Gu displayed rigorous scholarship, modesty, simplicity, and approachability. He was kind and patient with his younger peers, for whom he gave careful guidance, allowing opportunity for discussion of ideas, hypotheses, study design, interpretation, ethical considerations, written reports, and communication. Being busy was no barrier. He was an exemplary role model, as leader, teacher, researcher, practitioner, and link to a wider world of nutrition science and scientists. He played a pivotal role in the re-emergence of nutrition in public health, clinical practice, and policy in China and beyond. His inspiring spirit, intelligence, wisdom, professionalism, supportive personality and longevity allowed his dedication to nutrition science to be a transformative factor in China's journey towards better health and wellbeing.

Citation by

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10th China Nutrition Conference (10th CNC), 22-10-2008, Beijing, China. From left: Mark L Wahlqvist, Qiwei Liu, Faji Zhao, Juesheng Li, Xiaoshu Chen, Jingfan Gu



10th China Nutrition Conference (10th CNC), 22-10-2008, Beijing, China. From left: Mark L Wahlqvist, Faji Zhao, Juesheng Li, Xiaoshu Chen, Jingfan Gu, Zhiqian He, Xuecun Chen



First IUNS-CNS Chinese Nutrition Leadership Training Workshop, 06-06-2008, Hangzhou, China. From left, front row: Duo Li, Mark L Wahlqvist, Jingfan Gu, Keyou Ge, Yiyong Cheng