

学会員の皆様

フロリダ大学前植物病理学科長 前教授 Dr. George N. Agrios 先生は
2010年3月8日亡くなられましたことをお知らせ致します。

It with sincerest sympathy that I note that Dr. George N. Agrios, former Plant Pathology Department Chairman at UF, died this morning, March 8, 2010.

Dr. George N. Agrios

In 2002, after over 12 years of service, Dr. George N. Agrios stepped down from the chairmanship of our department. Dr. Agrios was born in Galarinos, Halldikidiki, Greece, and received his Ph.D. degree from Iowa State University in 1960 under the auspices of a Fulbright Travel Grant. After serving for 2 years in the Engineering Corps of the Greek Army as a demolition expert, he moved to the United States, where he assumed a faculty position at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. His main duties there involved teaching several courses in plant pathology and conducting research on viruses of pepper, squash, corn, and pome fruits. In 1980, he proposed and spearheaded the creation of a biotechnology program at the University of Massachusetts and received a state wide "Award of Excellence" for his services. In 1988, he came to Florida.

Dr. Agrios was elected Fellow of the American Phytopathological Society in 1983 and assumed the highest administrative offices of the Society as Vice-President (1988-89), President Elect (1989-90), and President (1990-91). He also served as Secretary, Vice-President, and Chairman of both the Northeast Division of APS and the Technical Committee on Viruses and Virus-Like Diseases of Deciduous Fruit Trees and Vines.

Although Dr. Agrios has had an illustrative career as a researcher, classroom teacher, and administrator, none of his many achievements has had a greater global impact than his text, "Plant Pathology," which was first published in 1969 and, in 2005, appeared in its fifth edition. It is, without question, the most widely used plant pathology text in the world and has been for more than 30 years. The original English version has been translated into 11 languages, including Spanish, Arabic, Farsi, Chinese, Indonesian, and Korean, thus making this encyclopedic work readily available in the native tongues of 75 per cent of the world's population. It is impossible to know just how many plant scientists have used this book, but it is probably safe to say that most plant pathologists alive today gained their first formal classroom exposure to plant pathology, directly or indirectly, from it.

Dr. Agrios has made other important contributions to spreading the word about plant pathology as well. As Editor-in-Chief of the APS Editorial Board, he conceived, organized, and implemented the APS Press, which continuously publishes and sells an extensive body of plant pathological literature. Today, and as a direct result of his efforts, more than 1.3 million dollars worth of books, periodicals, and various visual aids and computer software are now being published and made available to plant pathologists and growers annually throughout the world. In addition, shortly after coming to Florida, Dr. Agrios founded the Florida Phytopathological Society, which brings together over 100 plant pathologists working for IFAS in Gainesville and its Research and Education Centers, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the USDA, and various industry groups.

The many contributions made by Dr. Agrios on behalf of our graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, and career service employees need no elaboration. What may be less apparent, however, are some of the innovative programs Dr.

Agrios put into motion for our students. One such innovation was the work-study program for undergraduates, which provided them with hands-on experience in individual laboratories where they interacted with the other members of our department on a first-hand basis. Several of the students, who took advantage of this opportunity, eventually became graduate students here.

Also, recognizing the eclectic nature of our discipline, Dr. Agrios was instrumental in establishing two, now popular, lower division courses in plant pathology. These courses ("Molds, Mushrooms, Mildews, and Men" taught by Dr. J. W. Kimbrough and "Plants, Plagues, and People" taught by Dr. F. William Zettler) have increased in enrollment each semester and now together reach over 1,000 students annually. No other department of plant pathology in the US has such high enrollments in college courses at that level.

Perhaps the most innovative of all of Dr. Agrios' accomplishments at UF, however, is his creation of the University of Florida's multidisciplinary Doctor of Plant Medicine program, now headed by Dr. Robert J. McGovern. Formalized in August 2000, it is approved as an official professional doctoral degree program, for which students earn 120 credits and graduate having an unprecedented background in plant health. Unlike conventional Ph.D. programs, Doctor of Plant Medicine students are not obliged to conduct research on a narrow, clearly restricted project within a specialized discipline, such as entomology, plant pathology, or weed science, etc. Instead, these students receive extensive instruction in a broad range of topics covering the gamut of all disciplines that deal with plant health. Thus, people who have the Doctor of Plant Medicine degree will have a broader educational base to solve plant production problems. In retrospect, the concept of a "general practitioner" for plants seems only logical. But it

was Dr. Agrios, with help Drs. John L. Capinera (Entomology/Nematology) and Jerry M. Bennett (Agronomy), who first realized the potential value of this concept for the plant sciences and fought for its approval and, now, implementation.

Arrangements are under the care of the Williams-Thomas Funeral Home. Calling hours will be between 6:30 and 8:00 PM, Tuesday, March 9, in the West Area Chapel located at 823 NW 143rd St., Jonesville/Newberry (376-7556). Funeral services will be held on Wednesday, March 10 at 11:00 AM in the St. Elizabeth Greek Orthodox Church located at 5129 NW 53rd Ave. Gainesville (332-9900).

All the best

Gene McAvoy
County Extension Director

Regional Vegetable Agent IV
UF/IFAS Hendry County Extension
PO Box 68
LaBelle, Florida 33975

863-674-4092 office
863-673-5939 cell
159*11449*2 Nextel DC

gmavoy@ifas.ufl.edu