

Pierre Paul Ferdinand Mourier de Neergaard, 1907–1987

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Pierre Paul Ferdinand Mourier de Neergaard (Paul), a pioneer in the field of seed pathology, died in his sleep on November 13, 1987.

Paul received his education at the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University, Copenhagen, Denmark (B.Sc., 1932; Ph.D., 1935; and Sc.D., 1945). He was resident doctor at Cornell University, New York, 1946–1947; seed pathologist of the world renowned seed company, J. E. Ohlsens Enke of Denmark, 1935–1951; head of the Plant Quarantine Section, Plant Protection Service of Denmark, 1952–1966; professor of Plant Pathology and Seed Technology, American University of Beirut in Lebanon, 1959–1960 and, finally, the first Director of the Danish Government Institute of Seed Pathology for Developing Countries, where he served from 1966–1982.

Paul's death terminated half a century of outstanding work in the field of plant pathology. The world had lost a man who first studied how to raise plants from seeds and who later emphasized, in all parts of the world, how vital it is that the seeds sown are healthy. Paul was not only one of the outstanding plant pathologists of this century, a great researcher, a teacher, and a linguist, but he was also well known for his humanitarian qualities.

Paul became internationally known when his book "Danish Species of *Alternaria* and *Stemphylium*", a mycological masterpiece, was published in 1945, and since then he was often called the *Alternaria* Man. His monumental work in the field of seed pathology is well known, particularly the contributions he made as Chairman of the Plant Disease Committee of the



International Seed Testing Association (1956–1974) and as Director of the Danish Government Institute of Seed Pathology for Developing Countries. He was the major force in organizing international comparative testing schemes that led to standardization of seed health testing procedures. Many plant pathologists and seed technologists received their training in seed pathology, including seed health testing under him, and he was responsible for setting up seed health testing facilities in many laboratories around the world. His famous and comprehensive book "Seed Pathology" is a gift to the world. This voluminous book has recently been translated into Chinese.

Paul received many distinctions, such as the Rasch's prize for research in botany; the Japanese UMEA prize for his outstanding work in plant pathology and the Honorary Plaquette of the International Seed Testing Association for life-long contribution made in the field of seed pathology. He was a fellow of the Indian National Science Academy (New Delhi), National Academy of Sciences, India (Allahabad), L'Academie d'Agriculture de France (Paris), and a member of the Explorers Club of New York, a distinction given to outstanding personalities of the world. As a consultant and adviser he visited many agricultural organizations, teaching and research institutions in many third world countries. As Sir M. Visveswaraya visiting professor at the University of Mysore, India, Dr. Neergaard delivered lectures that were published by the university in the book "Seed—A Horse of Hunger or a Source of Life." His philosophies are incorporated in this very enjoyable book.

Paul, a great Danish scientist, will be remembered for his work as a mycologist, seed pathologist, and an agriculturist. He dedicated his life to the spirit of the Green Revolution.

He is survived by two sons, two daughters and seven grandchildren.