

## Salvatore A. Alfieri, Jr., 1922-1992

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The death of Emeritus Plant Pathologist Salvatore A. Alfieri, Jr. on 7 September 1992 in Gainesville, FL, was a great loss to the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and to the Division of Plant Industry (DPI) he loved and served so long and devotedly.

Salvatore "Sal" A. Alfieri, Jr. was born on 8 March 1922, in Newark, NJ, where he attended elementary and secondary schools. He served in the U. S. Army from August 1943 to June 1946, 2 yr of which he spent in the

European theater of operations. He graduated from the University of Miami (1950-1954) with a B.S. degree in Botany and Chemistry. From 1954 to 1959, he attended Cornell University, where he earned a Ph.D. degree in Plant Pathology. He then took the position of research plant pathologist and superintendent of the USDA/ARS 80-acre experimental field station in Greeley, CO (1959-1965). His work there included developing disease-resistant and horticulturally superior Irish potato cultivars. On 3 January 1966, he joined the Division of Plant Industry in Florida as a plant pathologist specializing in fungal pathogens. On 9 April 1971, Dr. Alfieri was appointed assistant director of the division and remained at that post until 1 October 1983, when he was appointed director of DPI, a position he held until his retirement on 30 April 1988.

Dr. Alfieri was instrumental in establishing a plant disease-quarantine greenhouse and laboratory facility, which is considered one of the best in the country. As director, he guided the regulatory strategies against some of the most serious plant pests and diseases, including the Mediterranean fruit fly, citrus canker, honeybee tracheal mite, Varroa mite, and Africanized bee. During his tenure, he oversaw the first use of sterile release programs for Mediterranean and Caribbean fruit flies, the development and completion of the sterile fruit fly-rearing facility at DPI headquarters in

Gainesville, and the development of the Caribfly-free area protocol, which allows for the certification and shipment of citrus fruit to domestic and foreign markets without fumigation treatments that were previously required. He guided DPI through some of its toughest, most challenging moments, while maintaining his pleasant attitude and sense of humor.

As director, Dr. Alfieri did not allow his administrative duties to replace his scientific investigations. In addition to his normal work week, he was in the laboratory at his microscope several nights a week and weekends as well. Dr. Alfieri often stated that "Plant pathology is my vocation and my avocation." As chairman of the DPI's Publications Committee, he assumed a meticulous, scholarly approach to reviewing manuscripts and enjoyed such tasks. He produced more than 135 publications and was a recipient of the Florida State Horticultural Society's prestigious Outstanding Scientific Paper Award.

In 1989, Dr. Alfieri returned to work in the division's Plant Pathology Section as emeritus plant pathologist and worked diligently to complete the publication "Diseases and Disorders of Plants in Florida." This publication, completed shortly before his death, is the most comprehensive compilation (spanning a period of 116 years) of plant diseases and disorders affecting the diverse Florida flora. This compendium serves as a reference source for plant pathology and its related disciplines. Dr. Alfieri would have been very proud to have this publication dedicated as a fitting memorial to his career.

Dr. Alfieri helped many growers solve plant disease problems and graciously shared his knowledge with others. He was a kind, sensible man who enjoyed lasting friendships. He was an enthusiastic ambassador of good will and was sensitive to human needs. Dr. Alfieri will be missed by many plant pathologists and colleagues who have prepared the epitaph that appears in his book: "In Memory of Our Good Friend, Steadfast Coworker, and Masterful Plant Pathologist."

Survivors include his wife, Anna Alfieri; a daughter, Gail Miller; and two sons, Mark Alfieri and Salvatore Alfieri, III.