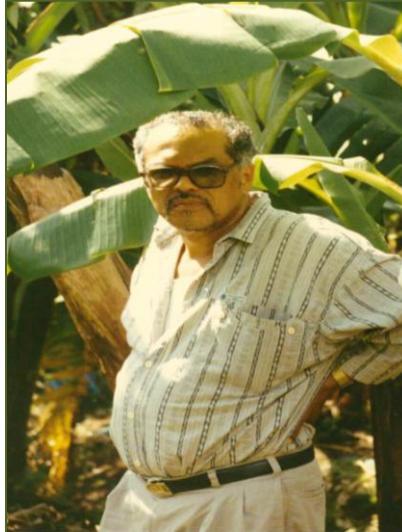




Remembering an eminent CARDI researcher

Frank Desmond McDonald

24 August 1942 - 9 June 2016



Frank Mc Donald, St Lucia 1994.

Frank Mc Donald was an exceptional plant pathologist and for the 17 years he spent at CARDI he made a huge contribution to our understanding and management of economically important agricultural pests and diseases.

One of his first assignments on joining the Institute in 1984 was the implementation of the CARDI/USAID Farming Systems Research and Development project in St Vincent and the Grenadines. The project investigated cropping systems to limit pest and disease damage on several agricultural crops. Mc Donald and his team were able to successfully prove that the Chives/Carrot and Cabbage/Carrot cropping systems were an economical and sustainable approach to managing the root knot nematode in carrot.

From 1988 to 1996, Frank was the CARDI Country Representative to Dominica. Whilst there he led research in diseases of tropical fruit crops and was also instrumental in the establishment of a Tissue Culture Laboratory. He also pioneered the micro propagation of tannia and anthurium on a semi commercial basis on the island.

In 1997, he joined the CARDI Jamaica Unit as a plant pathologist and was also appointed leader of the hot pepper commodity programme. Frank promoted the use of the tolerant West Indies Red hot pepper in Jamaica as an industrial pepper to supplement local supply for processing and strongly advocated that farmers install irrigation systems and use certified seeds in their operations. These continue to be widely adopted standards today, throughout the island in hot pepper production.

Frank was a Guyanese. He graduated with a BSc in Agriculture, Majoring in Plant Pathology in 1969 from Mc Gill University. In 1978, he obtained an MSc in in Plant Pathology from his alma mater. He was the holder of a Post Graduate Certificate in Plant Nematology from the Central University of Venezuela and also received training in tissue culture at the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT). He has authored more than 50 scientific papers which have been published in regional and international journals.

Following his retirement from CARDI in 2001, Frank remained active in the sector, working as a consultant attached to University of the West Indies, Cavehill Campus, to develop the hot pepper industry in the Caribbean.

Prior to joining CARDI Mc Donald worked at the Ministry of Agriculture in his native Guyana in several positions including Director of Crop Research.

On hearing of his passing, CARDI staff from across the Region has been sharing their sympathies and fond memories:

Frank McDonald was an excellent and fearless scientist whose contributions included management of yam anthracnose, supervision of post graduate students, mango pest and disease management protocols and management systems for nematode control. The cut and thrust of his interventions at scientific meetings in order to ensure quality research are cemented in my memory. May he rest in peace.

Barton Clarke, CARDI Executive Director

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The cut and thrust of his interventions at scientific meetings in order to ensure quality research are cemented in my memory. Despite his often tough demeanour, he insisted that we the young scientists in CARDI must develop professionally and mentored us, pushing us outside our comfort zones. I benefited greatly from his teaching in my own professional development. May his soul rest in peace.

Dionne Clarke Harris, Entomologist, CARDI Jamaica

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My deepest condolences to Joan and the children. I learned much from Frank when he served as the CARDI Plant Pathologist in Dominica.

Dorian Etienne, Officer in Charge, CARDI Dominica

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An outstanding Plant Pathologist in CARDI (working in many different country units) and NARI (Mon Repos, Guyana). May his soul rest in peace.

Dr. Cyril Roberts, CARDI Country Representative, Barbados

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Nobody who interacted with Frank will forget his fire, passion and scientific enthusiasm. He was always ready to smile and laugh with you even after he disagreed with you over something. A truly independent mind; unfortunately there are not many left like him.

Bruce Lauckner, Biometrician

The management and staff wishes to express their sincerest condolences to the family and friends of Frank McDonald. May he rest in Peace.