

Cochabamba 23th june 2020.

Recognition to Dr. Mario Antonio Gandarillas Antezana



**"YOU ARE WHAT YOU LEAVE TO OTHERS, YOUR
INHERITANCE, YOUR LEGACY"**



It is difficult to write a few paragraphs about a life as intense as that of our dear friend, mentor and great professional Mario Antonio Gandarillas Antezana.

Toni, as we affectionately called him, studied at the San Calixto school in the city of La Paz in Bolivia, where he formed lifelong friends, who, until his last year of life, shared with him his passions: sports and different topics for discussions.

He was involved in agricultural research since he was a child, by accompanying his father, Don Humberto Gandarillas (meritorious quinoa researcher) to the fields of the Patacamaya Experimental Station (La Paz, Bolivia). His childhood passed between the

immense love for his mother, María Antonieta Antezana, admiration for his father, and healthy competition with his two older brothers, Humberto and Carlos.

His love for these fields led him to choose a career in Agronomic Engineering at the Universidad Mayor de San Simón in Cochabamba, Bolivia, where he not only trained, but also found the love of his life and mother of his two



daughters, Luqui Terceros de Gandarillas. Later he followed Master of Science studies in La Molina, Peru and PhD in Wisconsin, United States.

When he returned from his studies he was able to fully dedicate himself to what would be his life passion, the formation and development of the Potato Research Program (IBTA-PROINPA), which was born as a project of the Bolivian Government of that time, one more project in the mind of many, but not that of Antonio, who envisioned an institution such as the Foundation for the Promotion and Research of Andean Products (Fundación PROINPA), a full and sustainable initiative for its contribution to agricultural research in Bolivia.

Thereafter, he developed tireless leadership and action in a context as difficult as that of Bolivia, to contribute to technological innovation and institutional sustainability. There were moments of uncertainty, pressure, instability and restlessness, but PROINPA came out ahead and today is an organization with a strong reputation for its contribution to Bolivian agriculture.





He did not do it all alone, his greater virtue in personal and professional life was knowing how to unite people around a goal, with a lot of passion, order and persistently pursuing possible goals. A combination of wisdom, intelligence and practicality, that very few human beings have. He was very adept at winning the trust of allies, partners, and funders to meet challenges. Confidence that managed to consolidate with solid achievements and permanent innovation.

You could say many more things about Toni, but his simplicity and humility were always what characterized him the most, he was part of the prestigious Bolivian Academy of Sciences and was awarded a lifetime with many honorable mentions. He participated in countless National and International events and contributed numerous papers, books and scientific articles of

great value to Bolivian science and to the forgotten crops of Bolivian agriculture in particular, of which the native potato was one of the most dedicated. Antonio also contributed to the development of science and innovation in the sustainable management of genetic resources and agrobiodiversity, integrated crop management, soil health and the orientation of all these fields for the economic benefit of producers.

In his later years, he returned to what he considered his passion, plant pathology with which he achieved great changes in the agriculture of the Bolivian East.

He influenced the lives of many people among relatives, students, professionals, authorities, farmers, men and women. Thanks to their efforts, many families had training, employment, livelihood, improved their economy and well-being. His departure in June 2020, was unexpected and swift way and caused to many, laments and great regret for his departure. The last goodbye was missing, the last I love you, the last thank you for everything. However, it remains in our minds as the always dear Antonio, dear Toni, dear giant. A huge giant in our hearts.

Luqui Terceros de Gandarillas, Rolando Oros, Ximena Cadima, Edson Gandarillas,
 Norka Camacho, Julio Gabriel, Jorge Blajos and the entire PROINPEÑA family

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