

Dedication to Manoel Pimentel Neto – 1928★–2010†

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Introduction

Dr Manoel Pimentel Neto was one of the pioneers in studying the ecology and epidemiology of helminthoses of ruminants and pigs in Brazil. His papers on this topic, although published long ago, contained in their essence information that continues to be up to date for the 21st century, the century of sustainable production (a current topic in any scientific debate) of protein using means and methods that are more efficient and less aggressive to the environment and consequently to man. The first time I met Pimentel (as he was known to his friends) was when I was still doing trainee placements as a student in the veterinary medicine course of UFRRJ, at the former Institute of Animal Biology (IBA), since transformed into EMBRAPA Animal Pathology, located at the former Km 46 of the Rio-São Paulo highway. Our friendship became closer as students in the first intake of the master's course on veterinary parasitology at UFRRJ, which was in August 1972. During our time as students in this course, we had the opportunity to discuss various matters relating to ecology and epidemiology and their importance in controlling helminths in ruminants and pigs. These discussions became transformed into interesting and agreeable “chats”, thanks to his extraordinary capacity for observation, his acute critical sense and his patience in teaching new concepts to this parasitologist who was still just a beginner. From this relationship, solid and long-lasting friendship resulted, which was only cut short when he passed away this year (2010). João Luiz Horácio Faccini

The following paragraph was written by the second author of this text, Dr David Eric Evans:

I first met Dr Pimentel at the First National Congress of Bovine Parasitology, Campo Grande, MS, Brazil, in July 1979. There I presented my first paper in Portuguese to the Brazilian scientific community – quite a harrowing experience! This was not helped by another new colleague who not only used his advantage as the session's lead speaker to “steal” most of my subject matter but he also “congratulated” my performance by thanking me for the opportunity it gave him to take a nap! Only when I knew him better was I able to accept his unique sense of

humor, and respond “appropriately.” Pimentel was a much more gracious listener. He recognized straight away a fellow spirit as a field population ecologist, even if of ectoparasites! We got on well immediately, included being “stranded” at the Iguaçu Falls en route home, finding that we shared many other likes (especially food, drink and amusing conversation). From then on, I enjoyed a delightful and informative professional relationship, right up until I last visited him, just a few days before he died. How unfair it was to see him deprived of just those things he most cherished: extensive conversation, and hearty but healthy food and drink! My mind returned to the many great times together: in simple, quality restaurants, the frequent lunches at his home, and the snacks under the mango tree at my *sítio*. This was his true natural habitat for scientific discussions. The operation for mouth cancer had robbed him of these pleasures, but I was, thankfully, at least fortunate to be able to give one last “abraço” to a very dear old friend and colleague, by then such a very frail figure indeed.

Faccini has eulogized appropriately Pimentel's great learning, teaching and scientific achievements. They were truly pioneering, with very little infrastructure and help, and respected by students, colleagues and leading world experts, such as Richard Reinecke, South Africa, and Jimmy Armour, Scotland. You have to admire someone like Pimentel who comes back out of retirement, writes up and successfully defends his PhD thesis at 69 years of age, to take up the so-deserved title of “Dr”, and then embark on a second scientific and training career. To see him and his esteemed colleague, Hakaro Ueno, from Japan, working together was always pure, natural, eccentric joy: a model example of the intercultural relationships that my present organization goes to such great lengths to promote. An accomplished and modest scientist, equally at ease yet demanding the highest quality of work and thought with colleagues, students and livestock producers alike, Pimentel's agricultural origins, in northeastern Brazil, gave him an easy and naturally educated manner with everyone. We will not see his like again. I am privileged to have known him so well, been inspired by his enthusiasm and dedication, and been touched by his values as a true gentleman. My professional success and enjoyable time in Brazil (1978-2001) in government technical cooperation and university research and teaching, with various international and national agencies, was in great measure due directly to the gracious reception and generous collaboration of Brazilian colleagues like Pimentel.

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Professional Life

Dr Manoel Pimentel Neto's career as a researcher and adviser is recalled in this summary of his professional life. He adored his work, to which he dedicated himself fully as an exemplary public employee.

In 1958, he graduated in veterinary medicine from the Rural University of Brazil (*Universidade Rural do Brasil*; URB), which today is the Rural Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (*Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro*; UFRRJ).

At that time, postgraduate training in different aspects of veterinary medicine did not exist. Dr Pimentel started his activities as a veterinary surgeon at the then Ministry of Agriculture, working on cattle health, and later on transferred to the National Department of Agricultural and Livestock Research (DNPA), which was the institution that evolved into the present-day EMBRAPA. He carried out research activities within veterinary parasitology for 32 years, from 1959 to 1991, when he retired. He was responsible for introducing scientific research on the ecology and epidemiology of helminthoses in ruminants and pigs. During this period, he distinguished himself as one of the most renowned veterinary helminthologists. Dr Pimentel participated in the National Parasitosis Commission from 1965 to 1972, under the auspices of the then Ministry of Agriculture, which was the precursor of the present-day Brazilian College of Parasitology (*Colégio Brasileiro de Parasitologia*; CBPV). While still a researcher at the DNPA, allocated to the IBA, he entered the first intake of the postgraduate course on veterinary parasitology at UFRRJ, and graduated with a master's degree in veterinary parasitology in 1976. After his retirement from EMBRAPA, he again entered the postgraduate course on veterinary parasitology at UFRRJ as a student invited because of his renowned knowledge of veterinary helminthology. He graduated in 1998, with a doctorate in veterinary parasitology. After receiving his title, he lectured and advised students in the postgraduate course on veterinary parasitology as an invited professor and bursary holder of the Research Support Foundation

of the State of Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ). His last activity as a researcher and adviser was in the State of Rio Grande do Norte as a visiting professor and CNPq bursary holder.

During his career as a veterinary helminthologist, he was a CNPq bursary holder. He published many scientific articles on the ecology and epidemiology of helminthoses in domesticated animals, particularly those that affect ruminants. Without a shadow of doubt, these papers constitute the foundation of the present-day knowledge of this subject and they have especially contributed towards advancing the state of art of Brazilian Veterinary Medicine.

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