



Science
Societies

In memoriam: Pedro Sanchez

February 18, 2026

In Memoriam

Pedro Sanchez
1940–2026



Dr. Pedro Antonio Sanchez, a renowned agricultural scientist specializing in tropical soils, passed away on Jan. 12, 2026. He was awarded the 2022 World Food Prize for his

groundbreaking contributions to reducing hunger and malnutrition throughout the developing world by transforming depleted tropical soils into productive agricultural lands. He was born in Havana, Cuba on Oct. 7, 1940, grew up on a farm; and earned his B.S. in Agronomy (1962), M.S. in Soil Science (1964), and Ph.D. in Soil Science (1968) at Cornell University. He passed away on January 12, 2026.

As the leader of the North Carolina State University Rice Research Program of Peru in the 1970s, Sanchez helped guide Peru to dramatically improve its national food security, achieving self-sufficiency in rice production within three years, and achieving among the highest rice yields in the world. From 1971–1976, he developed a comprehensive approach to soil management, which enabled 30 million hectares of the Brazilian Cerrado to be brought into production—the single largest increase in arable agricultural land in the last half-century. Sanchez brought the Green Revolution to Africa, developing a means to replenish crucial nutrients in exhausted soils through the development and promotion of agroforestry.

Sanchez was a SSSA and ASA Fellow and received the International Soil Science Award (SSSA), the International Agronomy Award (ASA), the Presidential Award (CSSA and SSSA). He was also elected Chairman of the Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition Commission of the International Society of Soil Science and received decorations from the governments of Colombia and Peru.

For the Latin American Soil Science Society (SLCS), this represents not only the loss of one of its members, but also the loss of a world-renowned scientist who embodied the commitment that science should have to global food security, a commitment he particularly demonstrated towards the developing countries to which he belonged.

—Source: *International Union of Soil Sciences*

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