



In memoriam of Paulo Cesar Sentelhas

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We were profoundly shocked to receive the tragic news that Prof. Paulo Cesar Sentelhas had passed away September 21st, 2021, a week before his 57th birthday, due to COVID-19 complications.

Born September 28th in 1964, in São Caetano do Sul, São Paulo state, he subsequently graduated in Agronomic Engineering from the Faculty of Agronomy and Animal Science “Manoel Carlos Gonçalves” at UniPinhal in 1987. His association with the University of São Paulo (USP), “Luiz de Queiroz” College of Agriculture began when he embarked on a Master’s program in Agrometeorology in 1992. Before his acceptance as a faculty member, he was a researcher at the Meteorological Research Institute of UNESP and the Instituto Agrônômico de Campinas (IAC), becoming a faculty member of USP in 1996, whilst still engaged in a Ph.D. program on Irrigation and Drainage, which was completed in 1998. At the time of his demise, he was a Full Professor in the Department of Biosystems Engineering.

He made a major contribution to developing agricultural modeling applications in tropical agriculture and forestry, such as yield simulation (Sentelhas et al., 2015), disease warning (Sentelhas et al., 2010), broaching the topic of the operational effects of weather conditions. He also championed recognition of the weather as an input factor, in the same category as fertilizer and seed, for biomass production decision-making.

His international presence in the international arena took a giant leap in the 2000s when he was made a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Guelph and visiting scientist in the consortium between the same university and Weather Innovations Incorporated.

Among his brilliant accomplishments as an undergraduate and graduate student, as well as scientist, the following stand out:

- Twelve times professor honored by the Agricultural Engineering Classes;
- Co-author of over 220 articles - the most referenced has more than 3775 citations (Alvares et al., 2013);



Paulo Cesar Sentelhas (Crédito: Gerhard Waller)

- Advisor to 58 graduate and 90 undergraduate students. Supervisor of five post-docs;
- CNPq fellow at level 1A, the highest distinction a scientist can attain in Brazil;
- He was simultaneously President of the Brazilian Society of Agrometeorology and the Latin American Federation of Agrometeorology (2005 to 2007);
- For a decade, he represented Brazil in the Group of Specialists in Agrometeorology of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO-UN);
- In 2019, he received the Sergio Westphalen Award from SBAgro in recognition of his contributions to the field of Agrometeorology in Brazil;
- For the last six years, he served as Editor-in-Chief of the *Scientia Agricola* Journal.

Due to his stature, being a former volleyball player, he was usually addressed using the augmented version of his name - Paulão (the great Paulo) and he made a telling difference in the lives of thousands of students.

Every single semester one would notice the "magic" being repeated yet once more. The first day of his classes would see the usual scenario of undergrads attending a mandatory course, with half of the group there simply to fulfill their attendance credits obligation. However, over the next few weeks, a transformation would take place: whoever attended the first class and returned only the following month would find a different atmosphere in the classroom. The whole group would be paying maximum attention. Sharp eyes, and faces almost smiling, carefully following every word uttered. The mandatory course had become enjoyable, almost fun.

How Paulo managed to do this, we do not know. Perhaps it was because he knew each student by name and nickname, and the relevant fraternities and sororities etc. Maybe it was because of the genuine interest he took in every individual. He was fully skilled at successfully propitiating this exciting, heady learning environment and for many, he was more than a lecturer, professor, and mentor. He was a dear and kind Master.

His key differentiating attribute indeed cannot be found in his academic *curriculum vitae*. Those who had the privilege of personally interacting with this Herculean figure witnessed high principles at work and examples of life, friendship, hard work, posture, character, and family. All the impassioned displays on social networks and wide dissemination in the media over his passing is proof that our dear friend has reached a position of immortality in the hearts and memories of his audience.

However, his profession was simply part of the background: he was married to Rosana, and father of Barbara, Isabella, and Luana. He prioritized his family, which he acknowledged as the best chapter of his life and any mention of his beloved ones would bring tears to the eyes of this giant of body and soul and his voice would choke up.

Rest in Peace, Professor, Colleague, Friend!

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