

ENRIQUE ARIAS JIMENEZ

Enrique Arias Jiménez, born 15th July 1948 in Guadalajara, Jalisco, México, he graduated from the University of Guadalajara with a degree in Agronomy. He proceeded to obtain a master's degree in Fruit Production from the National Fruit Production School of Mexico (1974). During this time, he also studied Agricultural Extension with the Ministry of Agriculture in Israel (1973). He then obtained a Diploma of Specialization in Food Science and Technology from the University of La Sapienza, Rome, Italy (1979).



He worked at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for more than 25 years as an Agricultural Officer – Horticulture, in Africa (Angola, Liberia and Malawi), and in the headquarters in Rome.

Before that, he had worked for the National Fruit Production Commission for more than twelve years, as the Head of the Center for Fruit Production Development, and as the Research Professor, Chief of the Department and Coordinator of studies in the Master in Fruit Production.

In his work at FAO, he promoted programs for the development and improvement of fruit growing, particularly in Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean Basin and Eastern Europe. He organized and executed symposia, workshops, training courses and specialized publications. He formulated and acted as technical supervisor of fruit projects, under different climatic conditions, aimed at the integrated development and improvement of fruit growing for local and export markets, as well as fruit and vegetable projects whose primary objective is to improve the nutritional levels of rural and urban populations.

He was the technical supervisor of projects for the development of date palm, in countries such as Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mexico, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, Syria and Yemen, and a regional project for Africa that covered Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe. He also worked in Saudi Arabia (1996-2010), United Arab Emirates (cooperation with a UNDP project), Iraq (remotely from Jordan due to the challenges in the country at the time), Namibia (comprehensive development for fifteen years from plant production to export, from 1995 to 2010) and Palestine, which had date palm as one of its components in the rehabilitation program.

Special mention should be made of his role in the creation and operation of the International Technical Cooperation Network on Cactus (current FAO-ICARDA CactusNet) from its creation in Santiago de Chile (1993) until his retirement from FAO in 2010. He supported the holding of several International Congresses, workshops and different meetings in several countries, with the hope that this crop would help improve the quality of life of small farmers. After his retirement, he continued with real interest the activities of the network.

Technical coordinator (or co-coordinator) of the FAO publications:

"Agroecology, cultivation and uses of cactus pear", Plant Production and Protection Paper 132 (1995) .

"Cactus (Opuntia spp.) as forage". Plant Production and Protection Paper 169 (2001).

"Date Palm Cultivation", Plant Production and Protection Paper 156, translated into Arabic (2002).

"Utilización agroindustrial del nopal", Bulletin of Agricultural Services of FAO 162 (2006). Translated into English (2013).