



PROF NICO LABUSCHAGNE

After he matriculated in 1972 Nico Labuschagne started his studies in Plant Pathology at the University of Pretoria and obtained the degrees BSc Agric, MSc Agric (cum laude) and DSc Agric. He started his career as a researcher at the then Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and later moved to the Agrichemical company Agricura (Agrihold) as a research Plant Pathologist. He was subsequently appointed as a lecturer in the department of Microbiology and Plant Pathology at the University of Pretoria in 1982. He was subsequently promoted to senior lecturer and associate professor in Plant Pathology at UP.

In his research Prof Labuschagne has been specialising in soilborne plant diseases in a variety of crops. His research on the topic spans more than 3 decades and he has studied various economically important diseases including Phytophthora root rot of avocados, black hull of groundnuts, root rot of Citrus caused by Phytophthora and Fusarium spp., Pythium root rot in hydroponically grown vegetable crops and root knot nematodes of soybeans, tomatoes and carrots. For the last 10 years Prof Labuschagne's research focus has been on soil health and application of Plant Growth Promoting Rhizobacteria (PGPR) as biofertilisers and biocontrol agents. This research program strikes a balance between fundamental and applied research and has led to commercialisation of two biofertiliser products.

During his career he has presented more than 64 papers at national congresses and authored or co-authored 26 papers or posters at international conferences, published over 60 research articles in scientific journals and has written three chapters in scholarly textbooks. He has also supervised or co-supervised more than 30 masters and 9 doctoral students.