In Memoriam



Dr. Oscar Agustín Almazán del Olmo
(1940-2026)

The International Society of Sugar Cane Technologists (ISSCT) mourns the passing of Dr. Oscar Almazán del Olmo, who died on 3 July 2026 at the age of 86.

With his passing, the sugar cane world has lost one of its most distinguished scientists, a pioneering researcher in sugar cane Co-Products and derivatives, and a passionate advocate for the diversification and sustainable development of the sugar cane industry.

For much of his remarkable career, Dr. Almazán was associated with the Instituto Cubano de Investigaciones de los Derivados de la Caña de Azúcar - Cuban Institute for Research on Sugarcane Derivatives - (ICIDCA) in Havana, Cuba, where his scientific career was deeply connected to the utilisation and valorisation of sugar cane by-products, including fermentation, single-cell protein, bioethanol, biogas and other avenues for industrial diversification. He played a prominent role in the Asociación de Técnicos Azucareros de Cuba - Association of Sugar Technicians of Cuba (ATAC), serving as its President from 1979 to 1984 and again from 1989 to 2002. He received the award of Doctor Honoris Causa in Technical Sciences from the Universidad de Oriente, Cuba in 2000. He was also recognised as an honorary member of several sugar technology organisations.

Long before the concepts of the circular bioeconomy and biorefinery became widely established, Dr. Almazán understood the enormous potential contained within the sugar cane plant. He saw sugar cane not simply as a source of sucrose, but as a versatile renewable resource capable of providing energy, food, chemicals, materials and a wide range of other products. His scientific vision helped demonstrate that the future of the sugar industry depended not only on producing sugar efficiently, but also on making intelligent and sustainable use of every part of the crop.

Dr. Almazán's scientific legacy is extensive, spanning more than five decades of research, writing and knowledge sharing on the utilisation of sugar cane and its co-products. His early work in the 1960s focused on fermentation technologies, sugar cane molasses and the production of feed yeast and single-cell protein from residues of the sugar and ethanol industries. These studies reflected his early conviction that materials traditionally regarded as waste could be transformed into valuable products. His landmark contributions to the study and development of sugar cane derivatives established him as an internationally recognised authority in the field. Among his notable publications was Producción de Proteína Unicelular a partir de subproductos de la Industria Azucarera (1982), co-authored with Miguel Klibansky and Miguel Ángel Otero. He was also a principal author of El Bagazo de la Caña de Azúcar: Conocimiento y Potencial, published by ICIDCA, and was associated with the influential Handbook of Sugar Cane Derivatives published in 1988. His extensive scientific contributions also included publications in the Proceedings of the ISSCT, particularly in the field of sugar cane co-products.

His involvement with ISSCT dates back to 1980 when he attended the XVII Congress in the Philippines, during which hosting of the next Congress was entrusted to Cuba. He was the Secretary General Treasurer of that very successful event. He was a member of the ISSCT Executive Committee from 1986-1995, Co-Products Commissioner 1999-2001, ISSCT Councillor for Cuba at the XXV Congress in 2005, and Co-Products Spanish Deputy-Commissioner in 2005-2010. In recognition of his distinguished services, he was awarded Honorary Life Membership in 1983.



Dr. Almazan (middle) receiving the Centennial medal from the ISSCT Chair Mr. Sanjay Awasthi

At the ISSCT XXXII Centennial Congress held in Colombia in 2025, Dr. Almazan del Olmo received two medals, one as second oldest Honorary Life Member and a second one as being one of the three prominent contributors for the period 2000-2023 for Excellence in Research in Sugar Cane Co-Products.

Dr. Almazan presented papers at five ISSCT Congresses in 1980, 2007, 2010, 2019 and 2023. He was one of the contributors in the ISSCT Centennial Volume, published in 2025, for his contribution in the field of Co-Products for the period 1924-1938. Through his books, scientific papers and numerous contributions to technical conferences, Dr. Almazán helped shape the scientific foundations of sugar cane co-products and industrial diversification. His publications remain an enduring part of his

legacy, continuing to serve as a source of knowledge and inspiration for the researchers and technologists who are carrying forward the challenge he championed throughout his career: to extract greater value from sugar cane while using its resources more sustainably.

Dr. Almazán was more than a researcher; he was a mentor and ambassador for the sugar cane industry. His ability to connect scientific research with practical industrial applications, and his willingness to share his knowledge with colleagues around the world, earned him deep respect across the international sugar cane community.

The ISSCT extends its deepest condolences to Dr. Almazán's family, friends and to the many members of the international sugar cane community who had the privilege of knowing and working with him.

Dr. Oscar Almazán del Olmo leaves behind an extraordinary scientific heritage. The sugar cane community has lost a great scientist and a remarkable colleague. His contribution will not be forgotten and he will be missed.

ISSCT Secretariat