



James A. Dosman, MD

Canada is one of the most rural nations of the world, with 30% of its population living distant from large metropolitan areas. Canada is also the fifth largest agricultural exporter in the world, with more than 2 million men and women working in agricultural production. These men and women, our nation's farmers, often face hazardous working conditions and health risks unfamiliar or unknown to citizens living in urban centres. Dr. James A. Dosman, founder and director of the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture (CCHSA) and advisor to the International Labour Organization of the United Nations (ILO), has devoted his long career to improving and protecting the health of agricultural workers in Canada and throughout the world. Farmers who feed our cities and who help to feed the world have a tireless advocate in Dr. Dosman, whose achievements have secured him recognition as "the father of agricultural medicine in Canada."

Born in rural Saskatchewan, Dr. Dosman grew up with firsthand experience of the challenges of farming and the demands of rural work. As a physician and specialist in respiratory medicine, he early encountered the effects of dust exposure among grain workers in Canada, which led to the establishment of a nationwide database supporting research and training, later emulated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in the United States. Dr. Dosman went on to develop the Centre for Agricultural Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan, which became the Canadian Centre for Health and Safety in Agriculture, Canada's only diversified centre for research, teaching, prevention and service related to agriculture and rural life. Working with local governments in rural municipalities, Dr. Dosman formed the Agricultural Health and Safety Network, bringing health care knowledge into rural communities, serving many thousands of farm families.

Dr. Dosman's work to improve the health and safety of Canadian farmers eventually led to improvements worldwide. His development of the Canadian Coalition for Health and Safety in Agriculture (now Canadian Agriculture Safety Association) helped secure ongoing federal funding for the Canadian Agriculture Safety Program, and as a crowning achievement, Dr. Dosman led the ILO effort to design an international code, Safety and Health in Agriculture (Geneva: ILO, 2011), bringing health care standards to millions of farmers and agricultural workers worldwide. He currently serves as President and CEO of Agrivita Canada Inc., a non-profit company he helped form, promoting research, public health and safety in agriculture through the Canadian AgriSafety Applied Research Program.

Dr. Dosman has been much honoured. His research, publications, organizing skill, influence in developing regional and national policy, and contributions to global agricultural health standards constitute an enduring legacy for agricultural workers and farmers in Canada and the world.