Professor Emeritus Dr. R. Kenneth Horst, known as Ken, was a highly productive and widely respected plant pathologist, specializing in the diseases of floral crops. His scholarly contributions included the training of numerous graduate students who went on to successful careers in ornamentals pathology, now termed environmental horticulture pathology. Dr. Horst passed away on June 9, 2021, at the age of 85, following a long illness.

Dr. Horst received his bachelor’s degree from Ohio University in 1957, in plant science. Five years later he earned his Ph.D. in plant pathology from The Ohio State University and was hired by Yoder Brothers in Barberton, Ohio as the director of the Plant Pathology Laboratory for that leading chrysanthemum breeding company.

He came to Cornell University in 1968 as an assistant professor in the then Department of Plant Pathology (now the Section of Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology in the School of Integrative Plant Sciences). At Cornell he trained and mentored graduate students and conducted research on chrysanthemum, roses and other ornamental crops. His research specialty was diseases caused by viruses and virus-like entities, but he also contributed significantly to knowledge of other important diseases, including Fusarium wilt, Botrytis blight, and powdery mildew. In addition to professorial lectures, Dr. Horst also played an active role in Extension education programs for the New York flower industry, giving presentations and preparing bulletins and recommendations and solving problems for the growers, frequently collaborating with his colleagues in other departments. He was tenured in 1973 and promoted to full professor in 1980.

A prolific writer, Dr. Horst authored or co-authored more than 230 articles, book chapters and books. He followed upon the outstanding work of Cynthia Westcott, Cornell Ph.D. ‘32, by updating and expanding her *Plant Disease Handbook*, authoring the 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th editions of that encyclopedic reference. He also developed books for the American Phytopathological Society (APS): he authored the first edition of the *Compendium of Chrysanthemum Diseases*
with his longtime friend Dr. Paul E. Nelson of Pennsylvania State University, wrote the first edition of the *Compendium of Rose Diseases* and co-authored a second edition titled the *Compendium of Rose Diseases and Pests*. Befitting someone who collected and organized information expertly, he maintained a particularly orderly office, scented with his signature aroma of pipe tobacco.

Professor Horst retired after 30 years with Cornell. He founded a private company with his longtime collaborator Herb Israel that was supported by a grant from the Church and Dwight company, a major American manufacturer of household products. H&I Agritech, for which he was president and CEO, was focused on the development of environmentally safe disease and insect control products. Dr. Horst patented a number of organic pest control agents and served as a consultant to the commercial flower industry internationally.

Dr. Horst was a member of many professional societies in addition to APS: International Society of Plant Pathology, International Society of Horticultural Sciences, American Association for the Advancement of Science, Committee Tissue Culture Association and the Society of American Florists. He received a Distinguished Citizen Award in 2000 from Massillon Washington High School, from which he graduated in 1953. He also was recognized in 1996 by Sigma Xi Gamma Sigma Delta with a medal from The Warsaw Agricultural University for “contributions to the faculty and the college”.

Professor Horst is remembered by his students for the trust he put in them, the hospitality that he and his wife offered, and the social gatherings that tempered the hard work he expected. His colleagues recall his excellent winemaking skills and his enthusiastic participation in Rotary International, the Cornell Gourmet Club, and a local softball league.

Dr. Horst is survived by his wife of 52 years, Hope Thorn Horst (BS HEC ’81), a daughter and three sons, and a number of grandchildren—one of whom, Maddie Turner, is currently a student in the ILR class of ’22.

*Written by Magdalen Lindeberg, Margery L. Daughtrey, and George W. Hudler*