

# Dr Mary Cole

Dr Mary Cole is a well known academic and plant pathologist and nationally and internationally recognised expert in the management of the fungal pathogen, *Botrytis cinerea*.

In 1980 Mary founded Agpath Pty Ltd, a small soil biology company providing laboratory testing in many fields of fungal and microbial pathology and farming consulting services in agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, environment air and water and food manufacturing.



The Agpath mission is to introduce farmers to biological farming with the view of improving soil health and productivity giving them a sustainable future while raising standards of environmental awareness, encouraging debate in alternative and more sustainable farming methods and generating innovative ideas for the long-term health of our planet for future generations.

The laboratory provides services in water and soil testing for microbial analysis; validates commercial biological products; provides expert witness statements; whole farm planning management procedures; runs workshops on organic and biological farming methods; Agpath works with other experts in biological agriculture such as Dr Maartin Stapper and Dr Elaine Ingham and others in informing and educating the community in biological farming and sustainable agriculture.

Dr Mary Cole – MAIA, MAIEA, MGAIAC - Professional Biography

## Career:

PhD in plant pathology from Monash University carried out at Monash University, South Australian Dept of Primary Industries & UCLA, Davis, California.  
Lectures in plant pathology, in particular, grape vine diseases, but agricultural and environmental pathology in general; microbiology of soil and biological/organic and biodynamic principles including the soil food web.  
1994 to present: Academic at Charles Sturt University, Monash University and University of Melbourne. 1999 appointed foundation director for Centre of Wine, Food & Agribusiness in Faculty of Business and Economics at Monash University.  
2006 appointed to Faculty of Land & Food Resources at University of Melbourne – involved in postgraduate distance mode to national and international students.  
2009 continuing part time lecturing in Diplomas of Viticulture and Oenology for Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE.  
2009 continuing part time lecturing in Faculty of Medicine, Monash University.  
2010 continuing coordinating and lecturing in a professional development subject with Dr Elaine Ingham of Soil Foodweb Institute USA.

## Research:

Recognised as national and international leader in research into the plant pathogen, *Botrytis cinerea*, the fungus that causes rot of grapes, flowers and many vegetables.  
Contributes papers to national and international journals.  
Has chaired and participated in national and international conferences and symposia in plant pathology.

## Consulting:

Has a research-consulting laboratory with 2 staff.  
Can carry out water testing, any plant disease identification and identification of fungi; quality assurance, label rate validation; research projects in agriculture, horticulture and biological post-harvest crop protection, soil biological health.  
Expert witness statements for courts and VCAT.  
Integrated Pest and Disease Management workshops for wine industry.

## Public interest:

20 years an Honourary Consultant to the Victorian Poisons Information Centre on mushroom poisoning and identification.  
Involvement in Landcare and alternative farming practices.  
Public speaking to professional, farming and community groups. Member of : Australian Institute of Agriculture Science & Technology; Australian Institute of Ecological Agriculture; Global Alliance of Independent Agricultural Consultants.