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# Obituary

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## Dr Pearse Lyons

August 3, 1944 - March 8, 2018



Dr Pearse Lyons died on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018 aged 73 in Lexington Kentucky due to an acute lung condition that developed during his recovery from heart surgery. Dr Lyons was a friend and mentor to many scientists and business people across the world, myself included. He had a great sense of humour, and considered that work should involve friends and fun, as well as achievement.

Dr Lyons had a degree from University College Dublin (Biochemistry), an MSc in brewing and fermentation from the British School of Malting and Brewing (now part of University of Birmingham, UK) and a PhD in biochemistry from University of Birmingham, UK, obtained in 1971. He was given an Honorary Doctorate from Heriot-Watt University in 2004. In the 1970s he worked in the brewing industry and emigrated to the USA in 1976, where he started the Alltech company in 1980 with a US\$10,000 loan, working from his garage. He was one of the original pioneers in specialist animal feed ingredients, involved in the early days of enzymes and pre-biotics. His business took off in the mid-1980s, and some of the original staff from these times are still with the company, which retains a family feel to it, even with expansion to its current levels.

On a personal note, I have worked with Dr Lyons for many years, and, like so many others, have great tales regarding those times. The Alltech Lecture Tour was an annual event, where participants lived in close proximity on the company jet for many days on end, surviving the punishing schedule (2-3 countries per day) on biscuits and Kentucky Ale, all with good humour and a great sense of camaraderie. He never ceased in his efforts to try to drag me out for a morning run, somewhat unsuccessfully I might add. More importantly, he taught me to push the boundaries of my scientific abilities and not be afraid to do something new.

Dr Lyons always encouraged and promoted animal science, sponsoring many PhDs, encouraging young scientists in their work and conducting large amounts of commercial research in all species. Dr Lyons instigated various philanthropic ventures and published a large volume of scientific papers and books, and was a strong advocate of communication in science, especially relating to practical and commercial applications.

Our thoughts must go to his family, his lovely wife Deirdre, daughter Aoife, son Mark and daughter-in-law Holly, as well as to the rest of the 'family' both working in and with Alltech around the world. As Mark said of his father, "He saw farther into the horizon than anyone in the industry, and we, as his team, are committed to delivering on the future he envisioned. He planted seeds that will produce a bountiful harvest for the world in the years to come."

The family is encouraging donations in his memory to the Alltech ACE Foundation, a 501c3 non-profit organisation that funds a variety of philanthropic endeavours around the world from disaster relief to primary schools in Haiti. Donations may be made at [alltech.com/pearselyons](http://alltech.com/pearselyons).

A lovely man and a leader of innovation in animal science, who will be sadly missed by all.

*Dr Lucy Waldron*  
*March 2018*

