

# ***Carlos Sánchez, 83, Dies; Embodied Colombian Coffee as Juan Valdez***

By Daniel E. Slotnik

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Carlos Sánchez, who for nearly four decades played Juan Valdez, the embodiment of Colombian coffee and one of the most recognizable pitchmen in the world, died on Dec. 29 in Medellín. He was 83.

His death was confirmed in an email from Colombia’s National Federation of Coffee Growers, which did not specify the cause.

Mr. Sánchez first donned Valdez’s signature wide-brimmed hat in 1969. He took over for Jose F. Duval, a Cuban actor who had played the character since it was created by the New York advertising agency Doyle Dane Bernbach in 1959.

Mr. Sánchez was Colombian and grew coffee as a youth before turning to painting and acting. As Valdez, an indefatigable farmer with a warm expression, a lush mustache and a mule named Conchita, he became an avatar for the farmers who harvested Colombia’s coffee beans and a positive depiction of a country that was often equated with terrorism and drug trafficking.

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