## Fourth Strategic Plan for 2016 – 2020

## The Canadian Phytopathological Society Inc.

## La Societe canadienne de phytopathologie

### Vision Statement

The Canadian Phytopathological Society (CPS) is a scientific association dedicated to the prevention and control of current and emerging plant diseases in Canada. As a dynamic, diverse, and progressive organization of plant pathologists and like-minded professionals, we possess the synergy and standards to be a national and international voice in matters of plant health and protection.

### Mission Statement

The objective of the Canadian Phytopathological Society (CPS) is to encourage and support research and education in plant pathology, to promote public awareness of the importance of plant diseases and the socio-economic benefits of controlling them, and to act as a forum for discussion of policies and strategies affecting all aspects of research and education in plant pathology in Canada.

### Core Values

Our success depends on:

* Proactive Leadership
* Helping Others
* Making an Impact
* Teamwork
* Creativity
* Action Orientated
* Innovation
* Ethical Conduct in Scientific Research
* Advancement of Knowledge

### Guiding Principles

1. We deliver timely, reliable, and scientifically sound plant pathology and plant protection related information and/or services that benefit our members, the scientific community, and the public.
2. We provide innovative leadership in research, extension and teaching in plant pathology.
3. We promote teamwork, knowledge sharing, mentorship, and volunteerism amongst members to foster the professional development and growth of individual members, and the overall profile of our profession.
4. We advocate proactive, action-oriented approaches that make a positive impact on the policies and strategies affecting all aspects of research and education in plant pathology in Canada.
5. We promote and encourage professional conduct in scientific research.
6. We encourage collaboration and active involvement with a broad spectrum of disciplines associated with the management of plant diseases.
7. We employ current communication technologies that enhance communication with members in a strategic and cost effective manner.

## 2016 – 2020 STRATEGIC GOALS

Through a formalized and lengthy strategic planning process, a CPS Strategic Planning Committee and the Board of Directors conducted a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the Society. This process involved gathering opinions and feedback from a variety of members representing close to 50% of our membership base, a tribute to the strength of our society. Recognizing that many of the society’s current strategies, tactics, programs, and services continue to be relevant, the priorities identified in this 2016-2020 plan represent complementing strategies that enhance and continue prioritized focus on the society’s existing strategic framework.

Specifically, this Plan identifies four strategic focus areas, those areas in which CPS should concentrate its efforts over the next five years to deliver on the Mission of the society. The identification and prioritization of these strategic goals and the establishment of related long-term objectives is considered critical to bridging the gap between our current state – where we are now – and our desired future – where we want to be in the future. The content of this strategic plan will be operationalized through the definition of specific initiatives, establishment of timelines, assignment of responsibilities, and tracking of ongoing action.

### STRATEGIC GOAL #1: ADVOCACY & PUBLIC AWARENESS

**Strategic Description**: As the leading professional scientific organization representing all aspects of plant pathology in Canada, CPS will advocate for building public awareness of plant pathology, and influencing government policies related to disease control. CPS will be the leader in elevating the recognition and observable value of plant pathologists.

**Measurement of Success**: Success will be demonstrated in a number of ways: increased visibility in the public domain, attraction of a broader scope of members, more active solicitation from government in public matters, heightened demand for information provided by CPS, and expanded media presence.

 **1.1. Long Term Objective: Visibility**

CPS is highly visible to key stakeholders within the Canadian educational community, agriculture sector, government, Agri industries, horticultural societies, industry and grower groups, health and environment sectors.

**Key Initiatives**

* Broaden the scope of the CPS website for public awareness of plant pathology.
* Provide a forum for the collection, discussion, and dissemination of information pertaining to all aspects of plant pathology and to activities of the CPS.
* Involve members in building public awareness of CPS.
* Seek out and participate in opportunities such as speaking engagements, sector meetings, trade shows, and other national level events that enhance the visibility of CPS to key stakeholders, and the critical role of plant pathologists.

**1.2. Long Term Objective: Public Outreach**

Enhance our public outreach and visibility by communicating the critical role of CPS and plant pathologists in agriculture and food security in today’s society.

**Key Initiatives**

* Develop and implement a public relations (promotion) strategy. Involve the Public Relations Committee in developing and executing this strategy.
* Effectively leverage media by communicating and reinforcing the societal (public) benefits of controlling plant diseases, the impact of global warming and droughts on plants, and the vital role plant pathologists play in these endeavors.
* Communicate the importance of science, in relation to plant pathology, to the general public.
* Establish an industry ethics standard that protects our Canadian food source.

**1.3. Long Term Objective: Primary Science-based Information Source**

Be viewed as the primary science-based information source in Canada for growers, crop producers, Agri industry, and gardeners in the identification and control of plant diseases. Be recognized as a subject matter expert and for providing clarification on technical matters relating to plant pathology.

**Key Initiatives**

* Unite sectors of the plant protection industry within Canada.
* Take the lead in building a plant disease network in Canada. Genomics, disease management in the field as well as nurseries, research on potential new invasive alien pathogens and resulting impact on the Agro-Forestry ecosystem.
* Promote and support research on plant pathology including emerging plant diseases, prevention strategies, and control or elimination once the disease is introduced into our environment.
* Enhance information provided on the CPS website such as posting new disease/pathogen awareness items and researching news highlights from CJPP (2015/2016).
* Establish a means to be seen as resolving problems for industry/producers i.e. biocontrol, agricultural practices. An example would be an “Ask the Expert” bulletin board on the CPS website.
* Become a source of experts by linking CPS members with industry/producers requiring intervention and assistance with issues concerning plant diseases, use of pesticides, invasive species and other issues negatively affecting our Canadian food supply.
* Identify and as available, provide commercial resources and guidance in the form of books, reference manuals, publication of research papers, and quick guides.
* Promote existing educational and other informational resources to educational institutes, agricultural and horticultural groups.
* Create a database of plant pathology resources in Canada.

**1.4 Long Term Objective: Influence on Public Policy**

Enhance influence on relevant public policies related to disease control, especially government regulations having a negative impact across society and the agriculture and forestry industries in Canada.

**Key Initiatives**

* Seek opportunities to work with and influence government policy makers such as CFIA,
* Identify significant, relevant issues appropriate to plant pathology and submit recommendations and/or position papers to government that influence and/or initiate government policy consistent with CPS Mission and Guiding Principles.
* Become more involved with government in crafting policies related to disease management that affects scientists, producers, and the general public.
* Seek opportunities to partner with like-minded professional bodies in the conduct of research, advocacy initiatives, or other representations.
* Act as a forum for discussion of policies and strategies affecting aspects of research and education in plant pathology in Canada.

**1.5. Long Term Objective: Professional Profile of Plant Pathologists**

Strengthen the professional status and public recognition of Plant Pathologists beginning at the educational level.

**Key Initiatives**

* Lobby government to re-invest in agricultural research and education by promoting the value of scientific research to the safety of the Canada’s food supply.
* Identify and document plant pathology education in Canada’s educational institutions in order to target appropriate educational institutions. Collaborate with these institutions to promote education on plant pathology and continue designation as Plant Pathologist as a career option.
* Participate in developing/enhancing graduate curriculum in plant pathology.
* Examine the possibility of offering nationally recognized professional certification as a Certified Plant Pathologist through CPS. This certification would be a means of guaranteeing professional accreditation and competence.
* Educate science teachers and students in primary and secondary schools about plant pathology.

**1.6. Long Term Objective: International Role**

Foster the international role of CPS and its visibility within comparable and relevant professional societies across the globe. Ensure CPS is positioned to play a global role in the prevention of major worldwide catastrophes related to plant diseases negatively affecting public health and availability of a safe food supply.

**Key Initiatives**

* Seek out and participate in events that offer opportunities to promote CPS and enhance the visibility and relevance of CPS on the international stage.
* Encourage internal contributions (research reports, articles, presentations, etc.) to increase the knowledge and awareness of projected issues pertinent to the control of plant diseases within Canada.
* Examine the possibility of coordinating a global network of specialists from professional societies to collaborate on issues related to threats to the world’s food supply. Communicate the value of international cooperation and research to government and the public as part of enhancing the image of plant pathologists and CPS.
* Raise public awareness of the value of our profession by advancing strategies to control plant diseases and invasive species related to climate change, population growth, and global trade. Emphasize our contribution to human health through these interventions.
* Continue to attract members from outside Canada by encouraging foreign plant pathologists and other individuals to join CPS.

### STRATEGIC GOAL #2: MEMBERSHIP REACH

**Strategic Description**: CPS will expand the reach of our society and represent an increase in membership scope, diversity, and participation.

**Measurement of Success**: CPS will experience gradual, sustained growth, especially within student memberships and memberships from related professions that ensure society viability and continuity well into the future. Membership retention will increase.

**2.1. Long Term Objective: Student Memberships**

Attract, increase, and retain student memberships by attracting students when they are still in the educational process and engaging students early in their careers.

**Key Initiatives**

* Identify and implement methods of promoting CPS membership to students gaining education leading to careers in plant pathology or related scientific fields while still within the educational system including high school to undergraduate degree programs..
* Increase financial assistance to students that assists recipients to attend regional and national events and meetings.
* Invite students to participate in society activities, especially those that build student exposure and competence in their personal career advancement. Promote as career and networking opportunities to encourage participation.

**2.2 Long Term Objective: Multi-disciplinary Involvement**

Encourage and increase multi-disciplinary involvement with CPS by expanding membership invitations to targeted individuals and members of groups, government, and academia involved with plant pathologists.

**Key Initiatives**

* Target new partnerships and relationships that offer the opportunity to expand the CPS membership base.
* Add more diversified membership levels. Identify and implement methods of promoting CPS membership to individuals (scientists, post-docs, grad students, technicians, molecular biologists, mycologists, geneticists, physiologists, industry, etc.) in professions and related scientific fields interacting with the field of plant pathology.
* Promote CPS at related professional associations.
* Explore and confirm dual membership deals with other scientific societies, both national and international. As a starting point, establish formal ties with these organizations to develop mutually beneficial relationships. (2018-2019)
* Consider offering free or reduced membership fee to non-profit organizations that could “spread the word” regarding plant pathology as a career option. An example would be Agriculture in the Classroom Canada and related provincial organizations.

**2.3 Long Term Objective: Member Retention**

Increase the retention of current members.

**Key Initiatives**

* Initiate a project to identify reasons for lapsed memberships and based on findings, initiate methods for retaining these memberships in the future.
* Promote benefit of involvement and membership in CPS to high government officials so that CPS members are eligible to attend CPS regional and national meetings.
* Invite emeritus members to share professional expertise with students and other CPS members in order to build competence and contribution of CPS members.

**STRATEGIC GOAL #3: MEMBER ENGAGEMENT**

**Strategic Description**: CPS will seek methods to enhance member, potential member, and non-member involvement and participation in the society.

**Measurement of Success**: Member participation in Society events, activities and volunteerism increases. Member satisfaction, as measured by the annual member satisfaction survey, increases by the end of year three.

**3.1 Long Term Objective: Member Networking**

Increase the opportunities for member networking and interactions that enhance opportunities for building connections across the society, related professions, and other individuals or associations that are beneficial to CPS members.

**Key Initiatives**

* Retain social aspects/networking opportunities for CPS members at annual events.
* Attract additional registrations to the CPS annual meeting by increasing involvement, interactions, and professional development opportunities for CPS members and individuals from related professions and other associations.
* Broaden the involvement of related professions and other associations by extending invitations to participate in regional and national CPS events.
* Partner with related professions and other associations to offer an annual CPS or joint meeting with participants from a variety of professional societies.
* Invite individuals from the CPS membership and related professions to present mini-reviews and/or special topics of interest to CPS members and non-members at national and regional events.
* Build and publish roster of CPS members, including areas of expertise, that are available to participate in industry events such as presentations, research projects, supervision of students, mentorship, educators, etc.

**3.2 Long Term Objective: Career Support**

Enhance the engagement of students (plant pathology and related professions) by providing career support during the early stages of their personal development.

**Key Initiatives**

* Enhance the Careers section of the CPS website to make it more attractive to employers to post job opportunities within the field and/or related fields.
* Contact all associations, private and public companies, government agencies, professional associations, educational institutions to promote the use of the CPS Careers section to post job opportunities and other items of interest to CPS members and in particular, student members. Offer initial “promotional offer” to encourage contributions.
* Provide career support by establishing a Mentorship Program that links students to long-term members. Survey members to identify potential mentors such as government, industry, emeritus scientists, and scientists from universities. Establish formal method of publicly recognizing mentors for contribution to enhancement of profession. (2016)
* Identify and implement membership activities specific to students that offer increased opportunities for making the right contacts, personal learning, development of professional expertise, presenting research, and CPS awards.

**3.3 Long Term Objective: Member Involvement at National Level**

Enhance and promote opportunities for member involvement at the national level.

**Key Initiatives**

* Investigate linking regional societies/groups to national membership by offering a benefit to become formally associated with the national society.
* Continue involvement of national representatives at regional events to promote participation of members at the national level.
* Add national “report” to regional websites and/or newsletters
* Identify and communicate opportunities for members, especially students, to participate in society activities and/or participate on CPS Committees.
* Promote and formally recognize volunteerism in the society at a national level.

**3.4 Long Term Objective: Member Involvement at Regional Level**

Enhance and promote opportunities for member involvement at the regional level.

**Key Initiatives**

* Enhance national support and involvement in regional events.
* Identify and communicate opportunities for members to participate in regional CPS activities.
* Identify and participate in regionally held events that offer opportunities to promote plant pathologists and CPS.
* Promote and formally recognize volunteerism in the society at a regional level. Encourage CPS members to volunteer for specific events such as science fairs.

**3.5 Long Term Objective: Member Recognition**

Enhance public awareness of the value of plant pathologists by increasing public recognition to members for being nominated and receiving a CPS Award for personal and community contributions in the field of plant pathology.

**Key Initiatives**

* Review and potentially restructure the process currently applied for the nomination and receipt of CPS Awards in recognizing the achievements and contributions of CPS members.
* Set up a formal and public recognition of recipients of awards.

### STRATEGIC GOAL #4: MEMBER SERVICES & RESOURCES

**Strategic Description**: CPS will anticipate and offer member services and resources through an enhanced service delivery model that optimizes member value and satisfaction with our organization. Emphasize the scientific value of member services and resources.

**Measurement of Success**: The annual CPS Member Feedback Survey indicates increased overall member satisfaction year-over-year. The use of CPS services and resources by members and non-members increases by the end of year three. Website usage and downloads increase. CPS remains financially viable and able to deliver on the strategic plan initiatives.

**4.1 Long Term Objective: Financial Stability**

Ensure the financial stability of the organization is sufficient to deliver on the strategic plan and operational requirements to execute this plan.

**Key Initiatives**

* Optimize access to and opportunities for additional funding, infrastructure and support by creating and executing a strategy designed to identify, approach, and request financial and other types of support from potential funders. (2017)
* Identify and initiate opportunities to obtain funding for conducting research, training, and/or adding resources perceived as valuable to our members and/or delivering on our strategic goals.
* Review sustaining member, regular member and student member annual dues, and adjust these as necessary (up or down) to reflect current reality and need.

**4.2 Long Term Objective: CPS Website**

Increase functionality and accessibility of CPS website.

**Key Initiatives**

* Add Events section that includes events applicable to CPS members and other individuals and groups related to and involved with CPS.
* Identify methods that measure use of CPS website to assess increase/decrease in accessibility and who is accessing the resources provided.
* Make optional use of modern communication technologies by increasing the use of social media and multi-media for delivery of information and resources.
* Active links to relevant websites are identified, maintained, and enhanced.

**4.3 Long Term Objective: Members Only Section**

Increase value of resources offered to CPS members through “Members Only” section on the CPS website.

**Key Initiatives**

* Refine Members-Only section on the CPS website. (2016)
* Publish member names, positions, industries and contact information to enhance networking and access.
* Add a Board member only section on the CPS website (2018).
* Add current information on new diseases, pathogen awareness, and other relevant issues that increase member competence and effectiveness in controlling and eliminating plant diseases negatively affecting society, growers, producers, and other parties.
* Add interactive discussion site where members can submit and receive input on issues of concern. Example is “Ask the Expert” where volunteer members are involved and provided with an honorarium to participate.
* Add “Regulatory Issues” section that includes contributions, research, articles, and reports from groups associated with industry regulatory issues. Allow members to contribute real case studies of situations affected by changes to industry regulations.

**4.4 Long Term Objective: Awareness of Resources & Services**

Increase awareness of the existing CPS resources and services offered to CPS members and non-members.

**Key Initiatives**

* Increase use of social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) to connect with CPS members on an ongoing basis.
* Increase and promote plant pathology educational material available to educational institutions and other non-educational events (science fairs).
* Partner with organizations offering educational programs at high school/elementary levels to incorporate information about plant diseases into standard curriculum. Agriculture in the Classroom Canada is an example of a potential partner organization.

**4.5 Long Term Objective: Value of Resources & Services**

Enhance the value, number, currency of CPS resources available to members and non-members.

**Key Initiatives**

* Review input from member feedback survey conducted every two years, verify value of resources currently offered, and prioritize revisions and/or enhancements to these resources.
* Evaluate resources offered by other scientific organizations and when appropriate, request permission to add to CPS website.
* Continue to improve the quality and impact of CJPP.
* Enhance and diversify content of CPDS by encouraging survey and report submissions, soliciting articles, and completing the electronic database.
* Create database of plant pathology resources in Canada by inviting CPS members to identify links to resources perceived to be of ongoing value to CPS members.
* Invite non-CPS members such as private industry researchers and related professional associations to contribute articles, research, and other information pertinent to enhancing the competence (knowledge, skills, ability) and updated industry/agricultural awareness of CPS members. This is at the regional, national and international level.
* Establish formal method of acknowledging and recognizing contributions that encourages individuals and associations to contribute and share resources with CPS members.

**4.6 Long Term Objective: Professional Development**

Expand our professional development delivery capacity in order to expand and diversify educational opportunities for members and non-members.

**Key Initiatives**

* Identify and implement methods to increase online learning resources beneficial to members. Example would be webinars that provide hands-on protocols or experiences in plant pathology.
* Identify and implement methods to increase online resources beneficial to farmers and consultants.
* Expand opportunities to share research, learn from experts, attend peer-reviewed lectures, discuss common issues, and network with other CPS members and non-members in national and regional meetings and/or modern technological methods.
* Increase presentations and/or training on relevant topics such as current research or issues within the field at regional and national meetings. Schedule and promote “special” events pertinent to significant current issues. Consider offering field based training and offering topical symposiums on diseases/pests.

**4.7 Long Term Objective: National to Regional Connection**

Continue to build the connection and relationship between the national CPS Society and CPS regional groups by promoting regional meetings and services to members, potential members and individuals from related groups.

**Key Initiatives**

* Strengthen national support to regions in funding and promoting regional meetings and events that offer enhanced benefits to CPS members.
* Continue representation of national CPS designates at regional events and meetings.
* Encourage and schedule joint regional meetings with other related groups.
* Facilitate attendance by the CPS President or a Board appointed representative at regional meetings, to convey the CPS ‘message’ to members, students and others in attendance, and to listen to and respond to questions, concerns and suggestions relating to the society.

**4.8 Long Term Objective: Organizational Structure**

Ensure the organizational structure is sufficient to support the execution of the CPS Strategic Plan and related initiatives.

**Key Initiatives**

* Conduct a review that evaluates whether a move to a staff versus volunteer driven structure is appropriate and financially feasible.
* Re-structure Board Committees to become more participative and involved in the execution and delivery of strategic objectives and initiatives.
* Increase industry diversity on the CPS Board.

**4.9 Long Term Objective: Historical Information**

Maintain historical information concerning CPS.

**Key Initiatives**

* Continue to collect and preserve historical information and archive with Archives Canada.
* Add section on history and recollections to CPS website.
* Involve members, specifically emeritus and long-term members, to participate in projects designed to collect and preserve historical information and memorabilia representing important events in Canadian plant pathology.