



THE CANADIAN PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE PHYTOPATHOLOGIE

2026 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Phytopathological Society (CPS)

**Lord Nelson Hotel
Halifax, NS, CANADA
June 14 -18, 2026
Program**



THE CANADIAN PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE PHYTOPATHOLOGIE

CPS Executive Board

President	Maria Antonia Henriquez
President-elect	Stephen Strelkov
Vice President	David Joly
Past President	Guillaume Bilodeau
Secretary	Tom Fetch
Treasurer	Michelle Hubbard
Membership Secretary	Sara Stricker
Senior Director-at-Large	Rudolph Fredua-Agyeman
Junior Director-at-Large	Miao (Mindy) Liu
CJPP Editor in Chief	Linda Jewell
Website Editor	Michael Holtz

Local Arrangement Committee

Shawkat Ali	Chair
Maria Antonia Henriquez	President, CPS
Tom Fetch	Secretary, CPS
David Joly	Vice President, CPS
Stephen Strelkov	President Elect, CPS

Finance Committee

Michelle Hubbard, CPS treasurer
Kenneth Conn, Assistant to CPS Treasurer

Portal for registration, Website

Michael Holtz Chair: Webmaster (CPS webpage, registration abstract)
Jiacheng (Eric) Chuan
Xavier Godin

Hotel Committee

Shawkat Ali
Tom Fetch

Maria Antonia Henriquez

Scientific Committee including the Executive group

- Shawkat Ali,
- David Joly,
- Rhea Amor Lumactud,
- Yunfei Jiang,
- Sean Li,
- Oualid Ellouz,
- Jonathan Griffiths,
- Tahera Sultana
- Adam Foster
- Oscar Molina
- Badea Ana
- Gurcharn Brar
- Rishi Burlakoti
- Shuanglong Huang
- Tom Fetch
- Maria Antonia Henriquez
- Stephen Strelkov

Workshops committee & Special sessions

Shawkat Ali
Wen Chen
Gurcharn Brar

Society Awards committee

Rhea Amor Lumactud
Molina Oscar
Badea Ana

Awards for the students for the best oral and poster presentation

Travel Awards: 3 travel awards for graduate students

Student social committee

Graduate Student mixer
Xavier Gordon



Sponsorship committee

David Joly
Shawkat Ali
Tom Fetch

Program book committee

Shawkat Ali
David Joly
Rhea Amor Lumactud

Pre-Conference Tour

Rhea Amor Lumactud
Yunfei Jiang,
Shawkat Ali,
Maria Antonia Henriquez
Oscar Molina

Coordination of volunteers:

Yunfei Jiang
Rhea Amor Lumactud

Xavier Godin and Muhammad Riaz, Preparation name tag and table-room setup:

Thanks to our sponsor:

The Organizers of the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Phytopathological Society acknowledge the generous support of the sponsors!



Welcome Message:

On behalf of the organizers of the 2026 Canadian Phytopathological Society (CPS) Annual Meeting, we are pleased to invite you to the 97th Annual Meeting of the CPS to be held June 14–18, 2026, at the Lord Nelson Hotel, 1515 South Park Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3J 2L2. The CPS is dedicated to encouraging research, education, and the dissemination of knowledge on the nature, cause, and control of plant diseases. Society-sponsored, national and regional association meetings provide an opportunity for plant pathologists to meet, exchange ideas and discuss their common interests. The Annual Meeting brings together participants from industry, government and academic institutions to interact, share knowledge, educate and communicate on the nature, cause and control of plant diseases.

The 2026 programme will feature a wide range of presentations, including contributions from leading researchers across North America.

Our Annual Meeting typically attracts research, industry, and extension personnel from across Canada, the USA and internationally with attendance ranging from about 100 to more than 140 participants for joint meetings. Presentations and posters at the meeting will span a wide range of crops from field crops like potatoes, wheat, barley, and canola through to horticultural and forest species. Topics will include both applied and fundamental research covering areas such as host-pathogen interactions, disease epidemiology, diagnostics, and innovative management strategies. The general meeting starts in the evening of June 14 and ends on June 17. There are events on June 13 and June 18 for CPS board members.

Field tour: An exciting day tour will take place on Sunday, June 14, 2026 (9:00 AM to 4:00 PM)

An exciting full-day bus tour has been arranged for Sunday, June 14, 2026, from 9AM to 4PM to the South Shore. The field tour requires separate registration. To book a spot, , the cost is \$75 per person, which includes transportation from the Lord Nelson Hotel to the South Shore and lunch served on the bus.

Theme of the Meeting: Plant Pathology in a Changing World

Preliminary Programme

- **Saturday evening (June 13): CPS-Financial advisory meeting (FAC) and CPS Outgoing board meeting (6:00 pm to 10:00 pm) at the Vanguard I room.**
- **Sunday (June 14): Registration opens (5:00-9:00 pm); Regency Ballroom**
- **Sunday (June 14): Field Tour (9:00 am to 4:00 pm);**
- **Sunday (June 14): Welcome reception (6:00 pm to 9:00 pm), Imperial and Regency Ballroom**
- **Monday (June 15) to Wednesday (June 17): Conference plenaries, talk, posters.**



- **Monday (June 15): CPS Student Social, President's Reception;**
- **Tuesday (June 16) CPS AGM (12:00-1:00 pm),**
- **Tuesday (June 16) Banquet Dinner; Imperial and Regency Ballroom**
- **Wednesday (June 17): 1:30- 4.00 Workshop in the afternoon. 'Statistical Analyses & Presentation of Data Generated from Field Experiments'. Admiral Room**
- **Wednesday (June 17): 1:30- 5.00 Workshop Verticillium Stripe Forum – From Knowledge to Action. Imperial Ballroom**
- **Thursday (June 18): CPS Incoming board meeting (8:00 am to 12:00 pm) Belleisle I & II Boardroom**

Sunday (June 14): Field Tour (9:00 am to 4:00 pm)

An exciting full-day bus tour has been arranged for Sunday, June 14, 2026, from 9AM to 4PM to the South Shore. The field tour requires separate registration. To book a spot, , the cost is \$75 per person, which includes transportation from the Lord Nelson Hotel to the South Shore and lunch served on the bus.

Registration opens: 5:00-9:00 PM

Welcome reception around 6:00-9:00 PM: Opening Reception - Imperial and Regency Ballroom
(Sponsored by Bayer CropScience)

Monday, June 15

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Registration / Poster Set Up - Regency Ballroom

8:15 AM Welcome and Opening Addresses – Imperial Ballroom

8:30 AM – 12:00 PM Symposium 1: Emerging technology in plant disease management (Imperial Ballroom)

8:30 - 9:15 AM [S1-1] Plenary speaker-Invited speaker



Dr. Hailing Jin, Professor, Department of Microbiology & Plant Pathology at the University of California, Riverside, USA



Dr. Hailing Jin is the Cy Mouradick Chair Professor in the Department of Microbiology & Plant Pathology at the University of California, Riverside, USA. Her research focuses on RNA biology, epigenetic regulation, and antimicrobial peptides in plant–microbe interactions, with the goal of developing innovative, environmentally sustainable strategies for controlling fungal and bacterial diseases in crops. Dr. Jin’s laboratory discovered cross-kingdom RNA communication between plants and their pathogens, as well as between bacteria and fungi, and established the critical role of extracellular vesicles in mediating this process. Her team further demonstrated that many fungal pathogens can efficiently uptake environmental RNAs and vesicles, providing a foundational basis for the development of spray-induced gene silencing technologies for crop protection.

Dr. Jin received her PhD from the Shanghai Institute of Plant Physiology & Ecology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, and completed postdoctoral training at the John Innes Centre (UK) and the University of California, Berkeley. She has published 118 peer-reviewed articles with 23,551 citations and an H-index of 69. Dr. Jin is a member of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Inventors, and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the American Academy of Microbiology, the American Phytopathological Society, and the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research. She has also been recognized as a Highly Cited Researcher by Web of Science.



9:15 - 10:00 AM [S1-2]

Dr. Mark Belmonte, Professor at the University of Manitoba



*Dr. Mark Belmonte, a Professor at the University of Manitoba, leads a research program at the intersection of plant biology and molecular genetics aimed at enhancing global food security. His work focuses on the complex cellular and molecular interactions between plants and their pathogens, with a primary emphasis on developing innovative, sustainable crop protection strategies. A cornerstone of his research is the use of RNA interference (RNAi) technology to create targeted molecular fungicides. By silencing essential genes in devastating fungal pathogens like *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* (white mold), his team develops tools that protect high-value crops like canola while minimizing environmental impact.*

Using advanced techniques such as laser microdissection and global transcriptomic profiling, the Belmonte Lab maps the genetic blueprints of plant-pathogen interactions at a cellular level. This systems-biology approach allows Belmonte and his team to identify the specific pathways plants use to defend themselves against biotic and abiotic stressors. Additionally, his work explores the efficacy of biostimulants to naturally boost plant vigour and disease resistance. By integrating fundamental discovery with applied agricultural biotechnology, Dr. Belmonte's research provides the Canadian agricultural sector with next-generation tools to combat evolving pests and pathogens in a changing climate.



THE CANADIAN PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE PHYTOPATHOLOGIE

10:00 -10:30 AM Coffee Break (Sponsored by CropLife) - Regency

10:30 - 11:00 AM [S1-3]

11:00 - 11:30 AM [S1-4]

11:30 - 12:00 PM [S1-5]

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM Lunch (sponsored by SeCan) – Regency

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM, Symposium 2: Imperial Ballroom, (6 each room, 12 total)

1:30 - 1:50 PM [S2-1]

1:50 - 2:10 PM [S2-2]

2:10 - 2:30 PM [S2-3]

2:30 - 2:50 PM [S2-4]

2:50 - 3:10 PM [S2-5]

3:10 - 3:30 PM [S2-6]

3:30 PM – 7:00 PM Poster Session (sponsored by CropLife) – Regency

3:30-5:00 Posters (odd numbers) The poster presenter will be present.

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM, Symposium 3: Admiral

1:30 - 1:50 PM [S3-1]

1:50 - 2:10 PM [S3-2]

2:10 - 2:30 PM [S3-3]

2:30 - 2:50 PM [S3-4]

2:50 - 3:10 PM [S3-5]

3:10 - 3:30 PM [S3-6]

7:30PM Evening Graduate Student Social (sponsored by Alberta Grains) – Place to be decided

(Non-students – on their own)



Tuesday, June 16

8AM – 5PM Registration / Poster Set Up - Regency Ballroom

8:30 AM – 12:00 PM Symposium 4: Omics in plant pathology (Imperial Ballroom)

8:30 - 9:15 AM [S4-1] Plenary speaker-Invited speaker

Dr. Wen Chen, Research Scientist, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Ottawa Research and Development Centre



Dr. Wen Chen is a Research Scientist at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Ottawa Research and Development Centre. Her research integrates microbial ecology, genomics, and metagenomics to advance microbiome driven discovery in modern plant pathology. She investigates pathobiomes under biotic and abiotic stress, pathogen dispersal across air, water, and soil interfaces, and microbiome mediated disease suppression. Her work supports high resolution surveillance, risk modeling, and microbiome informed biocontrol strategies to strengthen climate resilient agricultural systems. On a broader scale, she studies how agricultural systems reshape environmental microbiomes and antimicrobial resistance across watershed ecosystems within a One Health framework. Dr. Chen holds an adjunct professorship at the University of Ottawa, serves as Senior Editor for the Canadian Journal of Plant Pathology, and previously served as Senior Director of the Canadian Phytopathological Society.

9:15 - 10:00 AM [S4-2]



THE CANADIAN PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE PHYTOPATHOLOGIE

Dr. Awais Khan, Professor at Cornell University, New York, USA



Dr. Awais Khan is a Professor at Cornell University, New York, USA in the Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology Section, leading a research program to characterize and utilize disease resistance in apples to develop cultivars with improved resistance. Dr. Awais Khan's research career has taken him through some of the leading research institutions in the world. He has a PhD from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich, Switzerland (ETH) on fire blight of apples. Dr. Awais Khan obtained an MSc from the University of Gottingen, Germany. He also has research experience in applied genetics and breeding at the University of York, UK, and the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA. Prior to taking this position, Dr. Khan led a global research program as a senior scientist at the International Potato Center (CIP) in Lima, Peru, a CGIAR center, to develop genomic tools to breed potatoes and sweet potatoes with stress tolerance for Central and South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America, a critical need for adapting crops to thrive under climate change.

Dr. Awais Khan has published extensively in high impact scientific journals including Science, Nature Genetics, and Genome Research, on plant genetics, genomics, and bioinformatics and has given invited talks at international conferences globally. His research was highlighted in popular magazine as the Science Magazine, The economist and the New York Times. The unique aspect of his career is his work across five continents, six crops, and with breeders, geneticists, students, and farmers in both developing and developed countries for sustainable improvement of agriculture.

10:00 -10:30 AM Coffee Break (Sponsored by DL Seeds) - Regency

10:30 - 11:00 AM [S4-3]

11:00 - 11:30 AM [S4-4]

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM [S4-5]



12:00 PM – 1:30 PM Lunch (sponsored by Corteva) – Regency

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM, Symposium 5: Imperial Ballroom, (6 each room, 12 total)

1:30 - 1:50 PM [S5-1]

1:50 - 2:10 PM [S5-2]

2:10 - 2:30 PM [S5-3]

2:30 - 2:50 PM [S5-4]

2:50 - 3:10 PM [S5-5]

3:10 - 3:30 PM [S5-6]

3:30 PM – 7:00 PM Poster Session (sponsored by SaskWheat) – Regency

3:30-5:00 PM Posters (even numbers) The poster presenter will be present.

1:30 PM – 4:00 PM, Symposium 6: Admiral

1:30 - 1:50 PM [S6-1]

1:50 - 2:10 PM [S6-2]

2:10 - 2:30 PM [S6-3]

2:30 - 2:50 PM [S6-4]

2:50 - 3:10 PM [S6-5]

3:10 - 3:30 PM [S6-6]

7:00 PM – 12: 00 PM CPS Banquet and Award Ceremony – Imperial and Regency Ballroom

Wednesday, June 17

8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Registration / Poster Set Up - Regency Ballroom

8:30 AM – 12:00 PM Symposium 7: Imperial ballroom, Plant Immunity and the Molecular Battle Between Plants and Pathogens (Imperial Ballroom)



THE CANADIAN PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE PHYTOPATHOLOGIE

8:30 - 9:15 AM [S7-1] Plenary speaker-Invited speaker

Dr. Peter Moffett, Professor at Department of Biology University of Sherbrooke



Dr. Peter Moffett is a Professor at Department of Biology University of Sherbrooke. His group studies the plant immune system, with the long-term goal of applying this knowledge to the generation of disease-resistant plants. Dr. Moffett's research uses several model plants to study interactions between plants and pathogens, including viruses and bacteria. This includes the investigation of how plants recognize pathogens, the signaling molecules involved in disease resistance and ultimately, how plants eliminate pathogens. His group also studies how bacterial pathogens manipulate plant metabolism to create an environment conducive to their growth, and how plants actively counteract these strategies. Many bacterial pathogens deploy type III secretion system (T3SS) effector proteins that reprogram host processes to enrich the apoplast with water and nutrients, thereby establishing an extracellular niche favorable for bacterial proliferation. At the same time, plants mount defense responses that modify apoplastic conditions, such as restricting water accumulation and limiting nutrient availability, suppressing pathogen growth. His group investigates how effectors reshape the plant-pathogen interface and how plants fight back to maintain control of their extracellular environment.



9:15 - 10:00 AM [S7-2]

Dr. John Rathjen, Professor, Research School of Biology, Australian National University



Professor John Rathjen's research applies genomics and other approaches to investigate the evolution, population structure, and adaptive capacity of plant pathogens, particularly cereal rust fungi. His work integrates long-read genome assembly, haplotype analysis, and population genomics to examine evolutionary processes. His research explores molecular determinants of virulence and host recognition including pathogen effectors and plant immune signalling pathways, and integration of plant physiology with immunity. Overall, his program aims to connect fundamental understanding of pathogen biology with practical approaches to resistance strategies relevant to cereal production systems.

10:00 -10:30 AM Coffee Break (Sponsored by Syngenta) - Regency

10:30 AM-12:10 PM Symposium 8, Imperial Ballroom

10:30 - 10:50 AM [S8-1]

10:50 - 11:10 AM [S8-2]

11:10 - 11:30 AM [S8-3]

11:30 - 11: 50 AM [S8-4]

11: 50 - 12: 10 PM [S8-5]



THE CANADIAN PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE PHYTOPATHOLOGIE

10:30-12:10, Symposium 9 Admiral

10:30 - 10:50 AM [S9-1]

10:50 - 11:10 AM [S9-2]

11:10 - 11:30 AM [S9-3]

11:30 - 11:50 AM [S9-4]

11:50 - 12:10 PM [S9-5]

12:10 PM – 1:30 PM Lunch (sponsored by Dalhousie Faculty of Agriculture and Genome Atlantic) – Regency

1:30- 5.00 PM Workshop (Admiral Room)

Statistical Analyses & Presentation of Data Generated from Field Experiments- organized by Dr. Gurcharan Singh Brar

Many field crop pathologists and researchers conduct field experiments to collect data for answering some research questions. To collect the best quality data, it is crucial to have an appropriate experimental design. Once the data is collected, particularly disease data (ordinal/qualitative data), the data should be analyzed using appropriate statistics and tests. This workshop will focus on all these aspects and provide a quick crash course on statistical analyses and experimental design.

3:00 to 3:30 Coffee Break in the middle (sponsored by SaskWheat)

1:30- 5.00 Workshop 2 (Imperial Ballroom)

Verticillium Stripe Forum – From Knowledge to Action organized by Shuanglong (Simon) Huang,

Event Description

With many unanswered questions surrounding Verticillium stripe (*Verticillium longisporum*), the Verticillium Stripe Forum: From Knowledge to Action aims to assess the current and potential impacts of this emerging disease on canola production. The forum will examine the Canadian research landscape and draw on global experience to better understand how Verticillium stripe is being studied and managed elsewhere.

This forum will bring together researchers, plant breeders, pathologists, industry representatives, agronomists, and extension specialists from Canada and abroad to collectively characterize the disease and explore effective management approaches. Topics will include pathogen epidemiology and surveillance, diagnostic tools, resistance breeding, yield and economic impacts, and



integrated disease management strategies, with a strong emphasis on translating international knowledge to Prairie production systems.

The forum will also foster open discussion around key questions, such as:

- How much does Verticillium stripe impact yield?
- Is there an interaction or overlap with blackleg or other canola diseases?
- What has been learned from regions where the disease is more established?
- How reliable are current diagnostic and surveillance tools?
- What are the most promising management and resistance strategies moving forward?



The Organizers of the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Canadian Phytopathological Society acknowledge the generous support of the following sponsors!

Platinum



Gold



THE CANADIAN PHYTOPATHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
LA SOCIÉTÉ CANADIENNE DE PHYTOPATHOLOGIE

Silver



Bronze



Friends of CPS

