

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CPS

Southwestern Ontario 2025



The Southwestern Ontario Regional Association (SORA) of the Canadian Phytopathological Society (CPS) held its 2025 annual meeting at the Guelph Turfgrass Institute on November 7. The event brought together plant pathologists, graduate students, industry partners, and academic researchers from across the region for a day of learning, networking, and knowledge exchange.

The meeting opened with registration and refreshments, followed by an initial poster viewing session where two student researchers presented their current work. Dr. Ken Conn, CPS-SORA Regional Representative, welcomed attendees, followed by greetings from CPS President Dr. Maria Antonia Henriquez.

The morning continued with two invited speakers. Shannon Shan (Plant Disease Clinic, University of Guelph) presented a talk entitled “Plant Disease Diagnosis – The “Science and Art” of Identifying Diseases and their Causal Agents” which provided insight into what it takes to diagnose a wide variety of diseases. Dr. Gursahib Singh (newly hired at University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus) followed with a talk entitled “From Prairies to Great Lakes: Advancing Field Crop Pathology at UG Ridgetown” where he discussed the research he has been involved with and what he plans to do at Ridgetown.

A catered lunch provided time for networking. Following lunch, Albert Tenuta (Provincial Field Crop Pathologist, OMAFA, Ridgetown) presented a talk entitled “What’s New and Old in Field Crop Diseases for Ontario” where he discussed the disease challenges in field crops observed in 2025 and potential future diseases. A final round of student poster presentations followed with four student researchers presenting their current work.

The day concluded with the annual business meeting of CPS-SORA, where student poster awards were announced, celebrating the quality of research and communication skills demonstrated by graduate presenters. First place winner was Sashini Samarakone, second place was Tetiana Borysenko, and third place was McKenna Campbell. Thank you to poster judges Katie Goldenhar and Igor Falak. In total, there were 37 attendees. Thank you to Sara Stricker, the local organizer. CPS-SORA thanks CPS for financial support of the meeting.





Student winners (from left to right: McKenna Campbell, Tetiana Borysenko, and Sahini Samarakone) with Dr. Ken Conn.

Respectfully submitted by Ken Conn, CPS Regional Representative for Southwestern Ontario

