



**News item**

European Plant Science Organisation  
<https://epsoweb.org>

## 2nd EPSO Plant Science Seminar

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Brussels, 31.3.2021

We would like to announce the next of our new European-wide seminar series supported by the European Plant Science Organisation (EPSO) and aimed at the Plant Science community and its stakeholders. Our aim is to provide a stimulating set of seminars once a month on a hot and/or emerging topic in plant science, giving the floor to both eminent world leaders and talented up-and-coming early career researchers.

TTT: The seminar will be held online each third Thursday of the month at three (CET).

On **15<sup>th</sup> April 2021** at 15:00 (CET) we will present three talks exploring **The Wonderful World of Plant Microbe Interactions**.

**In the coming months we will be on the lookout for talented plant scientists among the EPSO membership** to present their findings and perspectives to the EPSO seminar series. If we approach you to talk, we hope you will be happy to support the initiative. This is a fantastic opportunity for **senior as well as early career researchers** to present their research to an international audience and to network with potential collaborators. If you wish to **suggest a theme for one of the autumn seminars and / or nominate** yourself or one of your colleagues to give a seminar, we most welcome your suggestions. Please contact Tim George ([tim.george@hutton.ac.uk](mailto:tim.george@hutton.ac.uk)) to provide your name and potential talk title.

In this second seminar we will present talks from



**[Prof Corné M.J. Pieterse](#), University of Utrecht, The Netherlands**

**“The plant microbiome and plant health”**

*Corné Pieterse studied Plant Breeding and Plant Molecular Biology at Wageningen University where he graduated cum laude in 1988. He performed his PhD research in Wageningen on the molecular basis of pathogenicity of the potato late blight pathogen *Phytophthora infestans*. After obtaining his PhD degree in 1993, he moved to Utrecht University. First as a post-doctoral fellow, and between 1998 and 2004 as an assistant professor in molecular phytopathology at the department of Biology. In 2004 he was appointed as full professor Plant-Microbe Interactions. In 2010, he was awarded an ERC Advanced Investigator grant by the European Research Council. His research group pioneered research on unravelling the rhizobacteria-induced systemic resistance signalling pathway and the role of phytohormone crosstalk in the regulation of plant immunity. In 2013 he was elected as a member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW). Since 2014 he is an ISI Highly Cited Researcher (World's top 1% in the field). Besides heading the Plant-Microbe Interactions group at the*

Department of Biology, Corné Pieterse is scientific director of the Institute of Environmental Biology of the Faculty of Science at Utrecht University. Nationally and internationally, he fosters plant microbiome research.



**Prof Paola Bonfante**, University of Turin, Italy

**“Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi: living in between plants and endobacteria”**

*Paola Bonfante is Professor Emerita of plant biology at the University of Turin, she has dedicated her scientific activity to the symbiosis between fungi and plants (mycorrhizae), associations that affect 85% of plants with significant impacts on ecosystems, as well as on agriculture. Using cellular and molecular biology and next generation sequencing techniques, she contributed to the knowledge of the biological-functional diversity of mycorrhizal fungi and how they communicate and interact with the host plant. She discovered endobacteria living inside mycorrhizal fungi and with omic approaches she described how they modulate some functional traits of fungal hosts. These results opened a new field of research in the context of the plant microbiota. She belongs to Rome Accademia dei Lincei, Turin Academy of Sciences, French Academy of Agriculture, and Academia Europea. She is among the most cited researchers in the world (Highly Cited Researchers 2017, 2018, 2020 Clarivate Analytics) and is in the list of top Italian scientists.*



**Prof Gabriel Castrillo**, University of Nottingham, UK

**“Coordination between the microbiota and the root endodermis is required for plant mineral nutrient homeostasis”**

*Gabriel Castrillo studied biochemistry (1995-2000) at the Havana University, Cuba. He started his PhD thesis (2004-2009) as a MAE-AECI fellow in the lab of Prof Javier Paz-Ares at the Spanish National Centre for Biotechnology working on phosphate starvation response signalling. In the same institute he did a Postdoc (2009-2013) in the lab of Prof Antonio Leyva describing the molecular basis of the arsenate signalling in plants. He left Spain to do a second Postdoc (2014-2018) at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, USA, in the lab of Prof Jeff L. Dangl. There, he worked on the interaction between the phosphate starvation response and the plant microbiome. In 2018 he started as an Assistant Professor at the University of Nottingham, and he was awarded with the Nottingham Research Fellowship. Currently, he is an Associate Professor, and his group focuses on the study of plant-microbe interactions in the context of plant nutrition.*

The seminars will be hosted on Zoom and last approximately 1.5 hours. Numbers will be limited to 300 attendees and therefore please register early if you would like to join. There will be ample opportunities to ask questions and join the debate. So please join us to support this new and exciting initiative for European Plant Science by following this link just prior to the start of the seminar.

EPSO Members register in advance for this meeting:

<https://helsinki.zoom.us/meeting/register/u5Mld-uurjgvGtABFFBvwfI9444gxewj80EL>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you all for the next EPSO seminar on the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Tim George, Alan Schulman and Emily Breeze  
*EPSO Plant Science Seminar Series Organising Committee*

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**Useful links**

EPSO breaking news: <https://epsoweb.org>

EPSO member institutes and universities: <https://epsoweb.org/about-eps/eps-members/>

EPSO representatives: <https://epsoweb.org/about-eps/representatives/>

**About EPSO**

EPSO, the European Plant Science Organisation, is an independent academic organisation that represents more than 200 research institutes, departments and universities from 32 countries, mainly from Europe, and 2.700 individuals Personal Members, representing over 26 000 people working in plant science. EPSO's mission is to improve the impact and visibility of plant science in Europe, to provide authoritative source of independent information on plant science including science advice to policy, and to promote training of plant scientists to meet the 21st century challenges in breeding, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, plant ecology and sectors related to plant science. <https://epsoweb.org> | EU Transparency Register Number 38511867304-09