



Announcement

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

EPSO members are invited to join the EPSO Plant Health Working Group

Brussels, 05.04.2022

EPSO is pleased to announce the start of its new Working Group 'Plant Health'. It will **focus on the impact of pathogens and pests onto plants and plant protection in agriculture, forestry and the natural (non-human made) environment**. It encompasses the continuum from basic to applied research.

It will link for instance to our Future Proofed Crops WG regarding abiotic stress, water and nutrient use efficiency and photosynthesis, to our Nutritional Security WG on crop nutritional quality and the Tree and Forestry Biology and Biotechnology WG.

The WG will **meet first time online on 5th July 2022** to discuss the draft statement on plant health and next steps.

Pls discuss this in your organisation and reply to Karin, cc Sofia and the chairs to become a member of this WG best by end April 2022 (we suggest 1-2 expert scientists per organisation interested in this subject). To enrol an expert, please provide the name, function in the institute, 1-3 keywords on the expertise and contact details. Pls confirm as well if the expert(s) will **join the 1st meeting** on 5.7.2022.

Interested in the other EPSO WGs?

Discuss in your organisation all EPSO Working Groups (see <https://epsoweb.org/working-groups/>) and let Karin know if you want to add expert scientists to the other WGs.

EPSO members start and coordinate EPSO Working Groups to collaborate on science advancement, networking, strategy and provide science advice to policy. We suggest that 1-2 expert scientists per member organisation join a WG relevant to them.

Membership in EPSO WGs is restricted to experts from EPSO Institutional members. Others can apply to become and observer of a WG

Looking forward to collaborating with you in the Plant Health WG
Beat, Tina, Maria, Gian Paolo, Andreas and Karin

Plant Health WG co-chairs: Beat Keller, Tina Romeis, Maria Jose Pozo, Gian Paolo Accotto and Andreas Voloudakis.

EPSO Executive Director: Karin Metzloff

Plant Health WG Activities

Plants comprise the key component for -direct or indirect- human nutrition. Agriculture must be highly productive in order to meet the increasing demand for food, feed, fuel and fibre to support a rapidly growing global human population, as well as reach higher quality providing health benefits. Because of the large areas devoted to agriculture and the large demand of resources, the technologies used in the production and protection of plants are highly relevant for the global environment. Pathogens and pests compete with humans for plant-based food. **The impact of these biota onto plants and plant protection in agriculture, forestry and the natural (non-human made) environment is the main area for the Plant Health (PH) working group (WG) of EPSO.** Pathogens and pests cause disease or damage to their hosts that accounts for up to 25% of global crop losses in the five major crops. Crop losses need to be significantly reduced both in the field as well as during the post-harvest storage and processing for human and animal consumption.

To sustainably improve plant health specifically in European agriculture, the Plant Health WG proposes to focus on three tasks:

- To develop novel, sustainable pathogen & pest control methods for plant health protection
- To detect pathogens & pests that affect plant health and reduce crop yields
- To develop ready-to-apply pathogen & pest management technologies and disseminate them to end users.

Raising the societal awareness on how plant health protection could contribute to food security, sustain farmers' income, protect biodiversity and reduce impacts on the environment, ensuring a high-quality product and boosting economic development is a major challenge. This requires a joint effort and engagement of academia with industry, farmers, citizens and policy makers.

It will link for instance to our Future Proofed Crops WG regarding abiotic stress, water and nutrient use efficiency and photosynthesis, to our Nutritional Security WG on crop nutritional quality and the Tree and Forestry Biology and Biotechnology WG.

Plant Health WG Members are already:

Gian Paolo Accotto, CNR / IT Khalid Amari, JKI, DE Yaroslav Blume, UKR Veronique Decroocq, INRAE, FR Eduardo de la Peña, CSIC, ES Matthias Erb, Univ Bern, CH Giuseppe Firrao, Univ Udine, IT Eleanor Gilroy, Hutton, UK Rita Grosch, IGZEV, DE Emilio Guerrieri, CNR / IT Jacek Hennig, IBB, PL Beat Keller, Uni ZUR, CH Magda Krzymowska, IBB, PL	Karin Metzloff, EPSO Antonio Molina, CBGP, ES Marusa Pompe-Novak, NIB, SV Marleen Riemens, WUR, NL Maria Jose Pozo, CSIC, ES Tina Romeis, IPB, DE Ian Toth, Hutton, UK Roberto Tuberosa, Univ Bologna, IT Leo van Overbeek, WUR, NL Andreas Voloudakis, AUA, GR Ralf Wilhelm, JKI, DE Przemyslaw Wojtaszek, Univ Poznan, PL
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Contacts

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EPSO:

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Sofia Ciravegna, EPSO Executive Assistant, Sofia.ciravegna@epsomail.org

Useful links

EPSO Working Groups: <https://epsoweb.org/working-groups/>

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

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

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 around 200 research institutes, departments and universities from 32 countries, mainly from Europe, and 2.600 individuals Personal Members, representing over 24 000 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