

## European Plant Science: A Field of Opportunities

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EPSO brought scientists from the various fields in plant science together to develop a **vision “European Plant Science: A Field of Opportunities” for Europe**. It organised a brainstorm in Gent, February'04 and coordinated the formulation of a position paper, which will be published in the Journal of Experimental Botany in June 2005.

The outcome of the brainstorm was already presented last year to the EC Commissioner for Research, Philippe Busquin. You can access the **presentation** [here](#).

We would like to thank the **Gent Group\***, the drafting group for the paper, specifically Mark Stitt and Dirk Inze, and all **people sending comments\*\*** leading to this vision.

**We would welcome a contribution from colleagues in scientific areas like** taxonomy, soil science, agronomy, human nutrition, food processing, sensor technology, and field and global ecology, important disciplines with which plant sciences will need to interact with increasingly closely in the future. Click [here](#) to submit your contribution.

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European Plant Science Organisation (EPSO)

**Abstract:** Plants have a pivotal role in eco- and agricultural systems. Genomics is driving a rapid expansion of our understanding of how genes, individually and in networks, determine plant function. Technological developments in breeding and genomics are providing strategies to translate this knowledge into crop improvement. The possibilities range from improvement of existing crops and the systematic use of natural diversity through to the domestication of completely new species. As examples of possible goals, it is discussed how profiling of composition will integrate plant breeding and agronomic practice with emerging knowledge about nutrition and health, how improved and novel crops will contribute to the creation of new bio-based economies revolving around plant products, and how advances in our knowledge about plant-environment and plant-pathogen interactions will provide novel strategies to stabilise agricultural yield in a fluctuating environment, and contribute to integrated approaches in which modern agriculture is carried out in concert with the environment. In addition, knowledge generated by plant science will be needed to monitor, understand and cope with climate change and its impact on agriculture and ecosystems. Realisation of these goals will require close interactions with related disciplines including agronomy and ecology. Further, it will be important to continue and deepen open support for research in the developing world.

You can access from here the [full paper at JEB](#) web site as soon as it is published.



\*The **Gent Group** is made up of: (from the left to the right): Michel Caboche, Mark Stitt, Pere Puigdomenech, Dénes Dudits, Göran Sandberg, Chris Pollock, Jon Agren, Bill Davies, Maarten Koornneef, Karin Metzloff, Dirk Inzé, Wilhelm Gruitens and Francesco Salamini. Not in the picture: Jonathan Jones.

\*\***Additional contributions** were kindly provided by:  
Ton Bisseling, Eva Kondorosi, Helene Lucas, Ivana Machackova, Ioan Negruțiu, David Scholefield, Ulrich Schurr, Roberto Tuberosa, Wouter van Doorn, Ludger Wessjohann, Pierre de Wit and Ulrich Wobus.