

Preamble: At the CSPB/SCBV Annual Business Meeting (June 20, 2016; Queen’s University), President Anja Geitmann assembled an Equity and Diversity Taskforce with the goal of developing an equity and diversity policy for the society. The Equity and Diversity Taskforce submitted their report in June 2017. The CSPB/SCBV Executive is working towards developing and implementing the equity and diversity policy based on the taskforce recommendations. The creation of this award follows a Taskforce recommendation to diversify the awards offered by the society in order to broaden the recognition of excellence by society members (*New awards could be created to specifically target particular areas of excellence and impact that the society believes to be important*).

Several new awards are under discussion and one is the proposed new award for which we would like to name after Professor Mary Spencer to recognition her exemplary career and contributions as a plant scientist and society member. This award would nicely complement the other research excellence awards offered by the society:

- The Society Medal (*awarded either for outstanding published contributions, or for distinguished service to plant biology, primarily in Canada*)
- The C.D. Nelson Award (*Outstanding research contributions to plant biology. Nominees shall have been in an independent, full-time research position for no more than 10 years*)
- The David J. Gifford Award in Tree Biology (*Outstanding research contributions in tree biology, primarily in Canada*)

The C.D. Nelson Award is an early career research excellence award while the Society Medal is typically given to recognize research excellence/distinguished service in the context of lifetime career achievements.

The proposed Mary E. Spencer Award would complement these awards as it is intended for mid-career researchers to recognize two facets of Professor Mary Spencer’s exceptional career: Outstanding research contributions and distinguished public service to the plant biology community.

A special thanks to former Spencer lab member, Professor Deep Saini (Vice-Chancellor & President, University of Canberra), for reaching out to Professor Mary Spencer and her family for the naming of this award.

By-Law XX - The Mary E. Spencer Award

- a) The Society shall award The Mary E. Spencer Award in Plant Biology.
- b) The Award shall be given for outstanding research in the field plant biology and active public service engagement in the plant biology community by a mid-career researcher. Nominees must be a current member of the Society, engaged in a research program in Canada at the time of the nomination, and shall have been in an independent, full-time research position for more than 15 years. The award includes a cash prize; the value of the prize is determined by the Board of Directors.
- c) The Award shall be awarded by decision of the Board of Directors on the recommendation of The Mary E. Spencer Award Committee.
- d) The members of The Mary E. Spencer Award Committee shall be elected at the annual meeting of members, and shall consist of three Full Members rotated in such a manner that one new member is appointed annually. The longest serving member of the committee becomes the Chair for one year. Membership in the Committee is for three years.
- e) The Mary E. Spencer Award shall be normally awarded with a maximum frequency of once in two years. The Award shall be presented at the annual scientific conference of the Society.
- f) The recipient of The Mary E. Spencer Award shall be invited to address the members at the annual scientific conference following at the one at which the award is made.
- g) A nomination for the Award must be supported by one Full Member and shall be documented with a curriculum vitae and a two-page summary outlining research and public service contributions. The nomination is to be submitted to the Chair of The Mary E. Spencer Award Committee at least ninety days before the annual meeting of members. Nominations shall stand for three years, but may be revised annually and shall be renewable.
- h) Nominations and supporting documents shall remain confidential to the Committee. After the three-year nomination period, or after the awarding of The Mary E. Spencer Award to a nominee, the nominee's "nomination file" shall be destroyed unless the nomination is renewed.

Professor Mary Spencer

Professor Emeritus,
Department of Agricultural, Food & Nutritional Science
Faculty of Agricultural, Life & Environmental Sciences
University of Alberta

Canadian Society of Plant Biologists/Société Canadienne de Biologie Végétale

(formerly Canadian Society of Plant Physiologists; [The First 25 years](#); [The Second 25 years](#))

Mary Spencer was one of the 86 CSPP founding members. She served as Western Regional Director in 1964, Vice-president in 1970, and President in 1971. Mary Spencer also chaired several committees (Gleb Krotkov award committee in 1990; Society Medal award committee in 1993, 1994 and 1999)

In 1991, Mary Spencer received the Society Medal for her research achievements (*Ethylene, nature's secret agent*).

GG.ca/honours/search

Order of Canada

Mary Spencer, C.M., Ph.D., F.R.S.C.

Edmonton, Alberta [Canada]

Member of the Order of Canada

Awarded on May 30, 2001; Invested on August 31, 2002

She has been a role model for women scientists in Canada for more than 50 years. Professor Emeritus of Plant Science and Biochemistry at the University of Alberta, she is an international authority on ethylene, its production and its effect on the environment. Appointed to many leadership roles within federal scientific research organizations, she has had a direct impact on policy and program development in Canada. A representative on both the International Council of Scientific Unions and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), she has helped to promote women's roles in the international scientific community.

Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012)

Spencer, Mary Eileen, C.M., Ph.D., F.R.S.C.

EDMONTON, Alberta [CANADA]

Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Medal (2002)

Spencer, Ms. Mary Eileen, C.M., Ph.D., F.R.S.C.

Edmonton, Alberta [Canada]

Queen Elizabeth II Silver Jubilee Medal (1977) Artsandscience.usask.ca/alumni/

Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada RSC-SRC.ca/en/search-fellows

Dr. Mary Spencer

Affiliation: University of Alberta

Academy: Academy of Science

Year Elected: 1976

Discipline: Plant Biology

One of first two women members of the National Research Council Artsandscience.usask.ca/alumni/



Photograph #5. Gold Medal Award: Dave Siminovitch (winner) and Mary Spencer (President in 1971), Halifax, June 1972

From the History of the Society - the first 25 years

<http://www.cspb-scbv.ca/archives/first25/first25main.html>



President Peter Joliffe presents the Gold Medal to Mary Spencer, Edmonton, June 1991

From the History of the Society - the second 25 years

<http://www.cspb-scbv.ca/archives/TheSecondTwentyFiveYears.pdf>