

UCSD biologist receives major award for leading plant science research

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Maarten Chrispeels, professor of biology at the University of California, San Diego, has been awarded the Stephen Hales Prize from the American Society of Plant Physiologists.

The award is considered one of the highest honors in plant science research.

Chrispeels, who earlier this year was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, was recognized for his research combining cell biochemistry and cell biology. He has answered central questions in one of the most important areas of plant physiology: the function of proteins in intact cells, organized in compartments and in three dimensions. His pioneering work has encouraged a subsequent generation of researchers to study experimental and biochemical aspects of plant cell biology.

One of Chrispeel's most recent contributions has been the identification of the gene that encodes resistance to destructive insects in seeds of legumes. This research has tremendous implications for the use of a cost-effective and environmentally benign approach of genetically engineering insect-resistant seeds to help meet needed agricultural production levels, especially in developing nations.

In addition to his long list of research accomplishments, Chrispeels is editor of the major plant science journal, *Plant Physiology*.

The American Society of Plant Physiologists, headquartered in Rockville, Maryland, consists of nearly 5,000 academic, government and industry plant science researchers and teachers from the United States and more than 50 other nations.

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