

and linked to Shimla by the UNESCO-listed Kalka–Shimla Toy Train. Shimla is also easily accessible by road from Delhi (350 km) and Chandigarh (115 km) through regular Volvo, HRTC bus, and taxi services.

Note: Connectivity from Delhi to Shimla is best, with Himachal Roadways buses providing direct service (<https://online.hrtchp.com>). However, from cities like Karnal, Ambala, Chandigarh, and Kalka, bus connectivity is available, but Volvo services may not be.

Accommodation

Due to the limited availability of accommodation in government guest houses at Shimla, lodging cannot be assured for all delegates. Participants are therefore advised to make their own accommodation arrangements by booking hotels of their choice well in advance to avoid inconvenience and secure better rates. A list of nearby hotels with contact details and indicative tariffs is provided below for reference.

Registration for the symposium

Category of Delegates	Amount to be Paid (Rs.)
Researchers and Academicians	INR 5000
Students and Research Scholars	INR 2500
Accompanying Person(s)	INR 2000 each

The registration fee should be paid through online transfer, UPI or credit/debit card. The official bank account of conference is given below.

Account Name : Indian Potato Association

Account Number : 10836122130

Bank Name : State Bank of India

Bank Branch : Main Branch Shimla

IFSC Code : SBIN0000718

MICR Code : 171002002

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NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

on

NEXT-GENERATION PLANT HEALTH STRATEGIES FOR CLIMATE RESILIENCE, FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

&

Northern Zonal Meeting of Indian Phytopathological Society

22-23 October 2026

Jointly organized by

Indian Potato Association (IPA), Shimla
Indian Society of Plant Pathologists (INSOPP), Ludhiana
Himalayan Phytopathological Society (HPS), Solan
ICAR- IARI Regional Station, Shimla

at

ICAR-Central Potato Research Institute

Bemloi, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh 171001

DISEASE INFECTED FIELD → DIAGNOSIS USING MOLECULAR TECHNIQUES → AI-POWERED DIAGNOSIS & DECISION SUPPORT → NEXT-GENERATION MANAGEMENT → HEALTHY & CLEAN SUSTAINABLE FIELD

Preamble

Agriculture is facing unprecedented challenges from climate change, emerging pests and diseases, and the increasing demand for food and nutritional security. Erratic weather patterns and rising temperatures are intensifying biotic stresses, making plant health a critical component of climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture. Recent advances in genomics, biotechnology, biological control, precision agriculture, and digital tools are transforming agriculture including plant health management. These next-generation strategies offer effective and eco-friendly solutions to reduce crop losses, enhance productivity, and strengthen food security. The National Symposium on “Next-Generation Plant Health Strategies for Climate Resilience, Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture” will be held on 22nd–23rd October 2026 at ICAR-Central Potato Research Institute, Bemloi, Shimla. It will provide a platform for scientists, academicians, policymakers, industry representatives, and students to share innovations and deliberate on emerging challenges in plant health management. The symposium is expected to foster scientific collaboration and generate actionable strategies to promote resilient agricultural systems, ensure food security, and advance sustainable agriculture.

About Indian Phytopathological Society (IPS)

The Indian Phytopathological Society (IPS) is a premier professional body dedicated to the advancement of Plant Pathology and plant health management. Established on 28th February 1947 at the then Imperial Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, the Society has emerged as one of the world’s largest associations of plant pathologists, with members from more than 50 countries. Its membership includes scientists, academicians, extension personnel, students, technicians, and industry professionals. IPS promotes scientific exchange and capacity building in plant health sciences through its official journal, Indian Phytopathology published by Springer Nature, along with national and international conferences, symposia, and seminars. The Society provides a global platform for disseminating recent advances in plant disease research and sustainable plant health management across agricultural, horticultural, forestry, and urban ecosystems. The IPS Zonal Chapters play an important role in strengthening regional collaboration, mentoring young researchers, and encouraging scientific excellence through academic competitions, oral and poster presentations, and merit awards at zonal and national levels.

About Indian Potato Association (IPA)

Indian Potato Association (IPA) was established in 1974 with its Headquarters at ICAR-Central Potato Research Institute, Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. The Association has six zones each of which is headed by a Vice-President and is supported by four councillors. This is the only scientific association in the country where the farmers outnumber the scientists. The association is dedicated to advance the cause of potato research and development by fostering regional and international co-operation, holding periodical conferences, symposia, workshops, brain storming sessions, trainings etc., promote exchange of scientific knowledge among potato stakeholders. To encourage excellence in potato research, the Association confers awards such as Ramanujam Memorial Award Lecture, IPA-Kaushalya Sikka Memorial Award, IPA-Chandra Prabha Singh Young Scientist Award, IPA Medal for the Best Paper published in the Potato Journal, Best Poster Award, Grower of the Year Award.

About Indian Society of Plant Pathologists (INSOPP)

The Indian Society of Plant Pathologists (INSOPP) was established in May 1984 and registered on 19th October 1984 under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860. Headquartered at the Department of Plant Pathology, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, the society is dedicated to promoting research, education, and extension in plant pathology, including mycology, bacteriology, virology, nematology, and allied disciplines. INSOPP advances plant health science through the publication of its journal, Plant Disease Research, and serves as a national forum for scientists to exchange ideas on current issues in plant pathology research, teaching, and extension. Since its inception, the society has organized national symposia and seminars at leading agricultural universities and research institutions across India, including Haryana Agricultural University, CSK Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishvavidyalaya, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, ICAR-Central Potato Research Institute, GB Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, and Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, and University of Mysore, Mysuru, Karnataka. The most recent annual meeting of INSOPP was held at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, on 20th–21st November 2025. Guided by the leadership of several distinguished plant pathologists over the years, the society continues to promote excellence in plant health research.

About Himalayan Phytopathological Society (HPS)

The Himalayan Phytopathological Society was established in 2017 by the Department of Plant Pathology and registered under the Societies Registration Act, 2006 (Registration No. PSH/16/892/2018 dated 31.12.2018). The Society promotes research, communication, and sustainable disease management strategies for crops of the Himalayan and adjoining regions.

The Society regularly organizes workshops, symposia, guest lectures, farmer–scientist interactions, and training programmes, besides publishing the e-magazine Technology Notes for technology dissemination. Since its inception, it has organized several national and international events on plant health management, including conferences in collaboration with International Association for the Plant Protection Sciences, International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, and CSK Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishvavidyalaya. To encourage excellence in plant pathology, the Society confers awards such as the Dr. R.L. Munjal Best Ph.D. Thesis Award, Young Scientist Award, Innovative Farmer Award, and Lifetime Achievement Award.

About ICAR IARI Regional Station, Shimla

The ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute Regional Station was established in its present form on 1st April 2005 through the merger of the Cereals Breeding Centre, Tutikandi, and the Horticultural Crops Research Centre, Dhanda, with administrative and laboratory facilities located at Amartara Campus. The cereal research programme, initiated in 1935 under the leadership of Kailas Chandra Mehta and Benjamin Peary Pal, has made significant contributions to wheat and barley improvement for the North-Western Himalayan region. The station has developed 19 wheat and 9 barley varieties for commercial cultivation, besides registering 24 genetic stocks possessing valuable agronomic traits. The horticultural research programme, established on 19th October 1965, focuses on the collection, conservation, and evaluation of temperate fruit germplasm. The station has developed two apple varieties, one apple rootstock, one walnut variety, and one stone-fruit rootstock. It has also contributed significantly to integrated disease management strategies for cereals and temperate fruits, emphasizing disease diagnosis and precise pathogen identification. The station continues to support sustainable agriculture in the Northern Hill Region through research, innovation, and technology dissemination.

Themes for Technical Sessions

Rapid climate change, emerging and re-emerging plant diseases, declining soil health, evolving pathogen populations, and increasing demand for safe and sustainable food production have created new challenges for global agriculture. Recent advances in genomics, artificial intelligence, digital agriculture, microbiome research, and eco-friendly crop protection strategies are transforming the field of plant health management. In this context, the conference on “Next-Generation Plant Health Strategies for Climate Resilience, Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture” aims to provide a multidisciplinary platform for researchers, academicians, industry professionals, policymakers, extension workers, and farmers to deliberate on innovative and sustainable approaches for safeguarding crop health, improving agricultural productivity, and strengthening climate-resilient farming systems.

Proposed Themes

- 1. Climate Change, Emerging Plant Diseases and Biosecurity
- 2. Genomics, Omics and Next-Generation Technologies in Plant Health Management
- 3. Artificial Intelligence, Digital Agriculture and Precision Disease Management
- 4. Biological Control, Microbiome Engineering and Sustainable Crop Protection
- 5. Integrated Plant Health Management for Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture
- 6. Frontiers in Mushroom Dynamics- Phylogenetics, Pathogenesis and Mushroom Health
- 7. Farmer-Industry-Researcher-Policy Interface for One Health and Sustainable Plant Health Innovations

Call for Abstracts

Participants are invited to submit original research abstracts related to the conference themes. Abstracts should be prepared in Times New Roman font with the following specifications:

- Title: Font size 14, bold
- Author(s): Font size 12, italics; presenting author must be underlined
- Affiliation and Address: Font size 10, regular; include complete postal address with PIN code and e-mail ID of the presenting author
- Abstract Text: Font size 12, single spacing, justified/left aligned, with a maximum limit of 250 words

Abstract for the conference should be submitted through online mode only

(<https://conference.ipsdis.org/northern/shimla>)

All abstracts will be reviewed by the Scientific Programme Committee and assigned to appropriate technical sessions. The Committee reserves the right to accept, edit, or reject abstracts and to decide the mode of presentation (oral or poster). Accepted abstracts will be published only after receipt of the registration fee.

For queries regarding abstract submission or technical sessions, please contact: ipsnzshimla@gmail.com, +91 98053 25107. Abstract submission deadline: 15th September, 2026.

Guidelines for Poster Preparation

Posters should be prepared in a standard size of 76 cm (width) × 102 cm (height). The poster must clearly include the title, author(s), affiliation, e-mail of the presenting author, introduction, methodology, key results, and major conclusions in a concise and readable format.

Awards and Fellows

IPS Awards (NZ)- Zonal Level Contest for Selection to National Level

- 1. APS Travel Sponsorship for Ph D Students
- 2. Prof. M J Narasimhan Merit Academic Award

For more details log in to www.ipsdis.org and submit abstract through online mode (<https://conference.ipsdis.org/northern/shimla>).

INSOPP Fellow

The society rewards its senior members with honour of Fellows and the members having seven years of continuous membership of the society may submit their complete biodata to Secretary, INSOPP, Department of Plant Pathology, PAU, Ludhiana along with a demand draft of Rs 5000/-in favour of treasurer, INSOPP, Department of Plant Pathology, PAU, Ludhiana (email: secinsopp@pau.edu) or via online mode. The maximum number of fellows to be admitted will be restricted to five only.

INSOPP Awards

- 1. Dr. T S Thind Distinguished Plant Pathologist Award/Fellowship
- 2. Dr. S S Kang Best Ph D Thesis Award
- 3. Dr. S S Chahal Best Master’s Thesis Award

For more details on INSOPP Awards, log into www.insopp.org.in and submit application to the Secretary, INSOPP, Department of Plant Pathology, PAU, Ludhiana (email: secinsopp@pau.edu). Abstracts for the M.Sc. and Ph.D. Thesis Awards should be submitted through the online portal: <https://conference.ipsdis.org/northern/shimla>

Payment details for INSOPP fellow/awards, Annual/Life membership:

Account Name	: INSOPP, PAU, Ludhiana
Account Number	: 10088207589
Bank Name & Branch	: State Bank of India, PAU
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MICR Code	: 141002019



HPS Awards

- 1. Dr. RL Munjal Best Thesis Award
- 2. Innovative Farmer Award

For more details on HPS Awards, log in <https://uhf.ac.in/user/plant-pathology/hpsociety> and submit application to the Secretary HPS through E-mail: secretaryhps2018@gmail.com Submit your application by 15th September, 2026.

Important Note: The same abstract or research dataset cannot be used for more than one award.

Venue of the Symposium

The symposium will be held at the ICAR-Central Potato Research Institute, Bemloi, Shimla

About the Venue

Shimla experiences pleasant weather during October, with daytime temperatures generally ranging between 15-22 °C and cooler nights around 8-12 °C. The month is characterized by clear skies, comfortable climate, and scenic Himalayan views, making it one of the best seasons for tourism and outdoor activities. Light woollen clothing is recommended, especially during mornings and evenings.

Connectivity

Shimla is well connected by air, rail, and road. The nearest airport is Chandigarh (115 km), while Kalka is the nearest broad-gauge railway station, connected to major cities