

## IS-MPMI

## Reporter

International Society for  
Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions

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## IS-MPMI REPORTER DEADLINE

**Deadline for submitting items  
for the next issue is June 25,  
2003.**

Submission of materials as electronic files, either on disk or as e-mail attachments, will speed processing. Please submit black-and-white or color photos generated from negatives. If your image was created digitally, please submit a laser print of the image and a disk containing the electronic graphics file (.tif and .eps formats are preferred).

For more information on submitting electronic images contact Kayleen Larson at [krlarson@uslink.net](mailto:krlarson@uslink.net).

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**Rooting GMOs in Africa**

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**Biotechnology and Agenda 21**

Last year there was a strong call from delegates at the World Summit On Sustainable Development (WSSD, Johannesburg 2002) to implement Agenda 21 in order to meet the obligations set out in the Convention On Biological Diversity. Access to and transfer of technology between parties to the Convention and the environmentally sound management of biotechnology are central to the implementation of Agenda 21. Agenda 21 acknowledges the benefits biotechnology can offer to address poverty alleviation, sustainable development and biodiversity conservation (UNEP/CBD/MYPOW/5, 2003). It sees value in both the old and new biotechnology techniques and through the Cartagena Protocol On Biosafety, it sets out mechanisms for safe and responsible use of living modified organisms. The assessment of our progress in implementing Agenda 21 will be undertaken in 2010, just 7 years away. This begs a review of what impact biotechnology is having in Africa — if only to serve as a baseline for future assessments of the continent's progress, but also to spur us on to establishing and completing programs for biotechnology transfer to developing countries.

**Biosafety in Africa**

The findings of two regional reviews (Komen *et al.*, 2000; Johannsen, 2001) both indicate an acceptance of non-controversial biotechnology techniques such as tissue culture and molecular breeding in most of the African states with scientific capacity, including Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. The implementation of genetic modification, however, is slow. The testing of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) is limited to countries with established biosafety frameworks. In these countries, activities with GMOs can be reviewed and approved (or refused) based on the level of risk they may generate and the ability to manage, monitor and minimize any risks to acceptable levels (Kitch, *et al.* 2002).

Three countries have passed laws to regulate genetic modification activities. These are South Africa, Zimbabwe and Malawi. The first two have functioning national biosafety frameworks and the third is currently implementing such a framework. Other countries, such as Egypt, Kenya, Mauritius, Tanzania and Uganda, are using interim biosafety measures to test GMOs in the field while national regulation is being developed. Most of the testing in Africa has been the result of technology transfer where international developers have evaluated their available technology to assess efficacy and relevance to local conditions and markets. The result of technology transfer has been the approval to use four GM crops in South Africa: Insect tolerant cotton and maize, and herbicide tolerant cotton and soya. However, in this country, less than 5 per cent of the over 340 field trials carried since 1990 have been for locally developed GMOs.

South Africa, Mauritius and Zimbabwe have active programs for developing GMOs, acknowledging that the solutions to major regional problems will come from within the continent. Scientists in Mauritius have patiently held locally developed GM crops in greenhouses for over three years while waiting for formal biosafety regulations that will enable them to run field trials.

**Policy options**

Under the UNEP/GEF Project 47 African countries are currently developing and implementing national biosafety frameworks. Each country will set its own level of precaution based on its understanding of the role biotechnology can play in sustainable development and the

**Rooting GMOs in Africa** continued on page 2

effectiveness of biosafety to manage risks associated with GMOs. To their detriment, the African Model Law On GMOs will guide some of these countries. This overtly cautious regulatory model was designed to hinder the implementation of biotechnology and fits firmly into the "preventative" group of biosafety regulations described by Paarlberg (2000) in his review of policy options for biosafety regulators.

Other countries will be guided by the Model Act For A Workable Biosafety Framework ([www.arentfox.com](http://www.arentfox.com)) or the ISNAR conceptual framework for implementing biosafety (McLean, *et al.*, 2002). These models will enable countries to position their regulations in relation to national legal traditions, existing laws and in accordance with the requirements of the Cartagena Protocol On Biosafety. Whatever these countries decide, we hope they will chose an efficient process that will enable them to test and implement GMOs safely and deal effectively with the diversity and volume of GM applications that will cross their desks in ten years time.

### Implementation delays

So what is holding back biotechnology development in Africa? It has been suggested that considerable negative publicity, bolstered by inaccurate reporting, has been used to caution the continent against the use of biotechnology (Morris and Koch, 2002). This orchestrated dissemination of misinformation has kept many African leaders in the dark with respect to the role biotechnology can and is playing to help meet national social and economic targets in developing countries. Just last year President Mwanawasa of Zambia, based upon advice from his scientists, refused GM food aid for his starving people, claiming it was "poison." However, not all political leaders have been misinformed. Following the launching of the New Partnership For Africa's Development (NEPAD), some African leaders have spoken strongly in favor of the role biotechnology will play in the economic and social revitalization of the continent: "*We have to devote the necessary resources to scientific and technological research and development, including biotechnology. We must further encourage innovation among our people and insure that we introduce new developments into our productive activities.*" Mr Thabo Mbeki, President of South Africa (6 January 2002 address to the ANC).

Track records show that concerns about the safety and socio-economic impact of each new GMO are being effectively monitored and regulated by biosafety frameworks. In addition, scientists on the continent are addressing these concerns through research and publications (Thomson, 2001; Wambugu, 2001). Recent reviews of safety, agronomic, social and economic impact of GM crops on small farmers in South Africa have confirmed the role appropriate technology can play in improving food production and economic viability of small farmers on the continent (Betz *et al.* 2000; ISAAA, 2002; Ismaël Y, *et al.* 2001).

### Biotechnology transfer to Africa

Biotechnology is not the only answer to Africa's development problems, but together with other tools, it is helping to address major constraints such as food production, control of pests and diseases, conservation of biological resources, access to benefits from these resources and more sustainable use of raw materials with reduced global pollution. The Association for Sustainable Agriculture Research in East and Central Africa (ASARECA) has identified the top agricultural constraints in their ten member countries and the available technology solutions to address these needs (Johanson, 2002). This sub-regional group has acknowledged that other constraints such as good governance, access to markets and viable transport routes will need to be addressed as well if agriculture is to play a meaningful role in sustainable development. However, biotic and abiotic constraints for crop and animal production are still major targets for technological solutions.

Certainly, knowledge about plant-microbe interactions will be critical in finding solutions for these constraints. Mode-of-action studies on microbial pests and diseases will help identify effective molecular targets for technological solutions. In addition, the relationships between microbes and plants with respect to nutrient availability and uptake will help to address the abiotic stresses of salty, dry, infertile soils. Researchers working in the area of plant-microbe interactions need to consider whether their research is potentially relevant technology for Africa. Partnerships that test how appropriate and effective these products are will assist the global goal of implementing Agenda 21 in the next decade.

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## Report on Preparations for the Eleventh IS-MPMI Congress, St. Petersburg, Russia

From Igor Tikhonovich

Preparations are in progress and at present the basic preparatory measures have been carried out. The preliminary registration of participants has been activated and the number of preregistered people has reached 700 persons. The acceptance of abstracts from the participants is practically finished and the preparations for the publishing of the Preliminary Abstract Volume have started. The Organizing Committee has received around 600 abstracts. The scientific program is close to completion and more than 60 leading scientists have been engaged for making presentations.

The Organizing Committee would like to inform attendees that The International Symposium "Biochemical Interactions of Microorganisms and Plants with Technogenic Environmental Pollutants" will be held in

Saratov on 28-30 July, 2003, within the framework of the IS-MPMI Congress. The Director of The Institute of Biochemistry and Physiology of Plants and Microorganisms of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Vladimir Ignatov, is hosting this event.

An exciting cultural program (including post-congress tours to Moscow and cultural-historical centers of the Russian Northwest) has been prepared for the Congress participants and accompanying persons. A University dormitory has been arranged for student accommodations at a reasonable cost. I would like to remind attendees that the deadline for registration fee payment is May 1, 2003.

We look forward to seeing you at the Congress!



**Register Now!**

To register online and to find out more, visit the Congress's website at <http://www.arriam.spb.ru/mpmi>

## 11th International Congress On Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions

July 18-26, 2003

### The scientific program will cover:

- Pathogenic fungi and bacteria
- Genetic colonization of plants (viruses, agrobacteria)
- Signaling and recognition
- Nodulation and mycorrhization
- Endophytes and epiphytes
- Functional and comparative genomics
- Gene expression, proteomics and metabolomics
- N<sub>2</sub> fixation inside and outside the plant
- Genetic and metabolic integration
- Diversity and evolution
- Biocontrol and stress adaptation
- Plant ecology and sustainability
- Improvement and application

### Plenary speakers include:

Carol Bender (USA); Sir John Beringer (UK); Ton Bisseling (The Netherlands); Christian Boucher (France); William Broughton (Switzerland); Nick Brewin (UK); James Carrington (USA); Casey Crooks (UK); Jeff Dangel (USA); Jean Denarie (France); Yury Dyakov (Russia); Vivienne Gianinazzi-Pearson (France); Dieter Haas (Switzerland); Maria Harrison (USA); Sheng Yang He (USA); Hauke Hennecke (Switzerland); Ann Hirsch (USA); Sergey Inge-Vechtomov (Russia); Jonathan Jones (UK); Christina Kennedy (USA); Adam Kondorosi (France); Eva Kondorosi (France); Jan Leach (USA); Andrzej Legocki (Poland); Ben Lugtenberg (The Netherlands); Gregory Martin (USA); Eugene Nester (USA); Charles Opperman (USA); Anne Osbourn (UK); Martin Parniske (UK); Alfred Puhler (Germany); Barbara Reinhold-Hurek (Germany); Barry Rolfe (Australia); Paul Schulze-Lefert (Germany); Konstantin Skryabin (Russia); Stewart Smith (USA); Brian Staskawicz (USA); Jens Stougaard (Denmark); Paul Tudzynski (Germany); John Turner (UK); Carroll Vance (USA); Marc Van Montagu (Belgium); Jonathan Walton (USA); Valerie Williamson (USA); and Pierre de Wit (The Netherlands)

### Rooting GMOs in Africa *continued from page 2*

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Muffy Koch is a botanist and microbiologist. She runs a biosafety and biotechnology consultancy in Midrand, South Africa. For the last 10 years she has focused on public awareness and the biosafety of genetically modified organisms, working to establish national frameworks and build the capacity needed to ensure sound decision-making. She believes that sub-regional biosafety frameworks will be the effective answer to the safe and responsible use of GM technology, but that these will only develop once there is confidence, experience and capacity at the national level to enable the negotiation of such structures.

## Genome Research of Agriculturally Important Bacteria in Germany

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Since June 2001, the German Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has funded bacterial genome research in Germany under the guideline "GenoMik" with more than 30 millions EUR. Three, nation-wide "competence networks" were established comprising more than 60 partners affiliated with universities, research institutes and companies. Each network focuses on specific groups of bacteria: those which are known as human pathogens, those that play a role in biotechnological production processes, and those that are relevant in the fields agriculture, environment and biotechnology. The networks are co-ordinated by "competence centres" located at the Universities of Würzburg, Göttingen and Bielefeld. The scientific progress achieved in the networks, particularly with regard to the more than 20 bacterial genome projects, was presented at the conference entitled "Presence and Future of Bacterial Genome Research in Germany" which was held at Bielefeld University October 10-11, 2002.

Genome research on agriculturally important bacteria is a main focus of the Bielefeld network, which is entitled "Genome research on bacteria relevant for agriculture, environment and biotechnology." The agriculture area covers plant-growth-promoting and phytopathogenic bacteria. The research cluster "Plant-Growth-Promoting Bacteria" comprises three research groups working on the nitrogen-fixing bacteria *Azoarcus* sp., *Bradyrhizobium japonicum* and *Sinorhizobium meliloti*. *Azoarcus* sp., an N<sub>2</sub> fixing endophyte of grasses, has been demonstrated to exert a growth-stimulating effect on certain grasses.

In the case of Kallar grass, the plant growth-promoting effect was attributed to the strain's N<sub>2</sub>-fixing capability. Most importantly however, under certain conditions, the host-range of *Azoarcus* sp. includes rice plants, which makes this organism an attractive candidate as a biofertilizer. Meanwhile, the shotgun-sequencing phase has been finished and the gap-closure phase has started (see Table 1).

Within the frame of the cluster's research, postgenomic analyses are addressed with the symbiotic nitrogen-fixing soil bacteria *Bradyrhizobium japonicum* and *Sinorhizobium meliloti*. For *S. meliloti* - the symbiont of the pasture crop alfalfa - a genome wide microarray was constructed (Table 1). The microarray contains PCR fragments from more than 6,200 genes and is used in transcriptomic studies. In particular, its transcription profile in the free-living state will be assessed and compared with the symbiotic state. Similarly, for *Bradyrhizobium japonicum*, (the symbiont of soybean) nearly five hundred open reading frames which are clustered in the so-called symbiotic region have been printed on microarrays (Table 1). The microarrays will also be used to assess the strain's transcription profile in the symbiotic state vs. the free-living state.

The research cluster "Plant-Pathogenic Bacteria" comprises three co-operating groups working with the Gram-positive pathogen *Clavibacter michiganensis* subsp. *michiganensis*, and two pathovars of the Gram-negative bacterium *Xanthomonas campestris* namely, pv. *campestris* and vesicatoria. At present, a sixfold coverage of the *C. michiganensis* subsp. *michiganensis* genome has been achieved

(Table 1). Within a short time, the finishing and polishing phase will be started. Applied aspects of the genome research on *C. michiganensis* subsp. *michiganensis* include the development of diagnostic tools for pathogen identification. The shotgun-phase has been finished with the Gram-negative *X. campestris* pv. *vesicatoria* and gap closure has been initiated (Table 1). These studies will unravel similarities and differences in the infectious potential of *C. michiganensis* subsp. *michiganensis* and *X. campestris* pv. *vesicatoria* since both pathogens infect tomato.

With regard to *X. campestris* pv. *campestris*, whose genome sequence has been published previously, a shotgun library loaded with transposons has been generated. Currently, the transposon insertion sites in some 10,000 clones are established. The library will be used to construct mutants by gene replacement and to study mutant phenotypes. In the long-term it is hoped that the results of the genome projects will also contribute to the design of environmental friendly agrochemicals for pest-management.

The attendance of more than 400 participants and 100 poster contributions reflected the importance of the conference. A follow-up European conference about prokary-

otic genome research will be held at Göttingen University from October 5 - 8, 2003. Due to the inevitable need for harmonizing and thus strengthening bacterial genome research in the European Union, this forthcoming conference is intended to provide a forum for discussing future strategic and policy of bacterial genome research at the European level.

Detailed information about the three GenoMik-networks is available at <http://www.genomik.uni-bielefeld.de>, <http://www.genomik.uni-goettingen.de>, and <http://www.genomik.uni-wuerzburg.de>. Further information about the Göttingen conference will soon be available at <http://www.dechema.de>.

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**Table 1.** Current status of the various projects of the Bielefeld network dealing with agriculturally important bacteria

Bacterium	Relevant characteristics	Genome size (Mb)	Status of the project	Project leader
<b>Genome projects</b>				
<i>Azoarcus</i> sp.	N <sub>2</sub> -fixing endophyte	4.5	finishing-/polishing-phase	B.Reinhold-Hurek, University of Bremen
<i>Clavibacter michiganensis</i> subsp. <i>michiganensis</i>	plant pathogen	3.4	shotgun-phase (6 x coverage)	R. Eichenlaub, University of Bielefeld
<i>Xanthomonas campestris</i> pv. <i>vesicatoria</i>	plant pathogen	5.4	finishing-/polishing-phase	U. Bonas, University of Halle
<b>Postgenome projects</b>				
<i>Sinorhizobium meliloti</i>	symbiotic N <sub>2</sub> -fixing organism	6.7	6.2K PCR microarray ready	A. Becker, University of Bielefeld
<i>Bradyrhizobium japonicum</i>	symbiotic N <sub>2</sub> -fixing organism	9.1	0.5K PCR microarray of the symbiotic region ready	M. Göttfert, TU Dresden
<b>Functional genomics</b>				
<i>Xanthomonas campestris</i> pv. <i>campestris</i>	plant pathogen	5.1	shotgun-library loaded with transposons available, 4000 insertion sites sequenced	K. Niehaus, University of Bielefeld

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*Erwinia carotovora* subsp. *carotovora* and *Erwinia*-Derived Elicitors HrpN and PehA Trigger Distinct but Interacting Defense Responses and Cell Death in *Arabidopsis*. T. Kariola, T. A. Palomäki, G. Brader, and E. T. Palva.

The 50-kDa Protein of Apple chlorotic leaf spot virus Interferes with Intracellular and Intercellular Targeting and Tubule-Inducing Activity of the 39-kDa Protein of Grapevine berry inner necrosis virus. M. Isogai, Y. Saitou, N. Takahashi, T. Itabashi, M. Terada, H. Satoh, and N. Yoshikawa.

Expression of Peroxidase-like Genes, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub> Production, and Peroxidase Activity During the Hypersensitive Response to *Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *vesicatoria* in *Capsicum annuum*. H. M. Do, J. K. Hong, H. W. Jung, S. H. Kim, J. H. Ham, and B. K. Hwang.

Analysis of the Involvement of an Inducible *Arabidopsis* RNA-Dependent RNA Polymerase in Antiviral Defense. D. Yu, B. Fan, S. A. MacFarlane, and Z. Chen.

Expression of the Bacterial Catalase Genes During *Sinorhizobium meliloti*-*Medicago sativa* Symbiosis and Their Crucial Role During the Infection Process. A. Jamet, S. Sigaud, G. Van de Sype, A. Puppo, and D. Hérouart.

Comparative Study of Regulatory Mechanisms for Pectinase Production by *Erwinia carotovora* subsp. *carotovora* and *Erwinia chrysanthemi*. H. Matsumoto, P. Jitareerat, Y. Baba, and S. Tsuyumu.

The HrpX/HrpY Two-Component System Activates hrpS Expression, the First Step in the Regulatory Cascade Controlling the Hrp Regulon in *Pantoea stewartii* subsp. *stewartii*. M. Merighi, D. R. Majerczak, E. H. Stover, and D. L. Coplin.

The Regulatory Cascade That Activates the Hrp Regulon in *Erwinia herbicola* pv. *gypsophylae*. R. Nizan-Koren, S. Manulis, H. Mor, N. M. Iraki, and I. Barash.

The 2b Protein of Cucumoviruses Has a Role in Promoting the Cell-to-cell Movement of Pseudorecombinant Viruses. B.-J. Shi, J. Miller, R. H. Symons, and P. Palukaitis.

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Dynamics of the VIGS-Mediated Chimeric Silencing of the *Nicotiana benthamiana* ChlH Gene and of the Tobacco Mosaic Virus Vector. J.-B. Hiriart, E.-M. Aro, and K. Lehto.

Acquired Resistance Functions in mlo Barley, Which Is Hypersusceptible to *Magnaporthe grisea*. B. Jarosch, M. M. Jansen, and U. Schaffrath.

Sulfated Fucan Oligosaccharides Elicit Defense Responses in Tobacco and Local and Systemic Resistance Against Tobacco Mosaic Virus. O. Klarzynski, V. Descamps, B. Plesse, J.-C.



Yvin, B. Kloareg, and B. Fritig.

*Meloidogyne javanica* Chorismate Mutase 1 Alters Plant Cell Development. E. A. Doyle and K. N. Lambert.

TIP, A Novel Host Factor Linking Callose Degradation with the Cell-to-Cell Movement of Potato virus X. I. Fridborg, J. Grainger, A. Page, M. Coleman, K. Findlay, and S. Angell.

Partial Resistance of Tomato to *Phytophthora infestans* Is Not Dependent upon Ethylene, Jasmonic Acid, or Salicylic Acid Signaling Pathways. C. D. Smart, K. L. Myers, S. Restrepo, G. B. Martin, and W. E. Fry.

Transient Expression of Homologous Hairpin RNA Causes Interference with Plant Virus Infection and Is Overcome by a Virus Encoded Suppressor of Gene Silencing. F. Tenllado, D. Barajas, M. Vargas, F. A. Atencio, P. González-Jara, and J. R. Díaz-Ruiz.

Genetic Analysis of a pH-Regulated Operon from *Rhizobium tropici* CIAT899 Involved in Acid Tolerance and Nodulation Competitiveness. P. Vinuesa, F. Neumann-Silkow, C. Pacios-Bras, H. P. Spaink, E. Martínez-Romero, and D. Werner.

QTLs for Tomato Powdery Mildew Resistance (*Oidium lycopersici*) in *Lycopersicon parviflorum* G1.1601 Co-localize with Two Qualitative Powdery Mildew Resistance Genes. Y. Bai, C.-C. Huang, R. van der Hulst, F. Meijer-Dekens, G. Bonnema, and P. Lindhout.

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Agrosuppression: A Bioassay for the Hypersensitive Response Suited to High-Throughput Screening. S. Kamoun, W. Hamada, and E. Huitema.

Candidate Defense Genes from Rice, Barley, and Maize and Their Association with Qualitative and Quantitative Resistance in Rice. J. Ramalingam, C. M. Vera Cruz, K. Kukreja, J. M. Chittoor, J.-L. Wu, S. W. Lee, M. Baraoidan, M. L. George, M. B. Cohen, S. H. Hulbert, J. E. Leach, and H. Leung.

Localization of a Potyvirus and the Viral Genome-Linked Protein in Wild Potato Leaves at an Early Stage of Systemic Infection. M.-L. Rzajamäki and J. P. T. Valkonen.

Differential Induction of Symptoms in *Arabidopsis* by P6 of Cauliflower mosaic virus. W. Yu, J. Murfett, and J. E. Schoelz.

A *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *tomato* DC3000 Hrp (Type III Secretion) Deletion Mutant Expressing the Hrp System of Bean Pathogen *P. syringae* pv. *syringae* 61 Retains Normal Host Specificity for Tomato. D. E. Fouts, J. L. Badel, A. R. Ramos, R. A. Rapp, and A. Collmer.

Infection-Blocking Genes of a Symbiotic *Rhizobium leguminosarum* Strain That Are Involved in Temperature-Dependent Protein Secretion. M. R. Bladergroen, K. Badelt, and H. P. Spaink.

BacS: An Abundant Bacteroid Protein in *Rhizobium etli* Whose Expression Ex Planta Requires *nifA*. O. J. Jahn, G. Davila, D. Romero, and K. D. Noel.

Intergeneric Transfer of Chromosomal and Conjugative Plasmid Genes Between *Ralstonia solanacearum* and *Acinetobacter* sp. BD413. E. Kay, G. Chabrilat, T. M. Vogel, and P. Simonet.

Salicylic Acid Inhibits Indeterminate-Type Nodulation but Not Determinate-Type Nodulation. P. C. van Spronsen, T. Tak, A. M. M. Rood, A. A. N. van Brussel, J. W. Kijne, and K. J. M. Boot.

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*Pseudomonas viridiflava* and *P. syringae*—Natural Pathogens of *Arabidopsis thaliana*. K. Jakob, E. M. Goss, H. Araki, T. Van, M. Kreitman, and J. Bergelson.

Modulation of Defense Responses of *Malus* spp. During Compatible and Incompatible Interactions with *Erwinia amylovora*. J.-S. Venisse, M. Malnoy, M. Faize, J.-P. Paulin, and M.-N. Brisset.

The P34 Syringolide Elicitor Receptor Interacts with a Soybean Photorespiration Enzyme, NADH-Dependent Hydroxypyruvate Reductase. Y. Okinaka, C.-H. Yang, E.

Herman, A. Kinney, and N. T. Keen.

The AVR4 Elicitor Protein of *Cladosporium fulvum* Binds to Fungal Components with High Affinity. N. Westerink, R. Roth, H. A. Van den Burg, P. J. G. M. De Wit, and M. H. A. J. Joosten.

Mutational and Transcriptional Analysis of the Type III Secretion System of *Bradyrhizobium japonicum*. A. Krause, A. Doerfel, and M. Göttfert.

Effect of Leaf Surface Waxes on Leaf Colonization by *Pantoea agglomerans* and *Clavibacter michiganensis*. L. M. Marcell and G. A. Beattie.

Analysis of Differences Between *Sinorhizobium meliloti* 1021 and 2011 Strains Using the Host Calcium Spiking Response. R. J. Wais, D. H. Wells, and S. R. Long.

Regulation of the MPG1 Hydrophobin Gene in the Rice Blast Fungus *Magnaporthe grisea*. D. M. Soanes, M. J. Kershaw, R. N. Cooley, and N. J. Talbot.

The Mitogen-Activated Protein Kinase Gene MAF1 Is Essential for the Early Differentiation Phase of Appressorium Formation in *Colletotrichum lagenarium*. K. Kojima, T. Kikuchi, Y. Takano, E. Oshiro, and T. Okuno.

## Hot Dates! Hot Topics in Plant Pathology!

The American  
Phytopathological Society  
Annual Meeting

August 9–13, 2003

Charlotte, North Carolina



Don't miss this opportunity to discuss these hot topics and more with fellow plant health professionals!

- The National Plant Pest and Disease Diagnostics Network (NP2D2N): A Federal - State Partnership for Homeland Security
- New Functional Genomics Approaches to Plant Pathology Research
- Oak Disease Threats Worldwide
- Animal and Plant Pathogens - Shared Strategies
- Mitigating the International Movement of Exotic Pathogens Associated with Lumber, Logs, Chips and Solid Wood Packing
- New Technologies, New Challenges in Managing Diseases of Greenhouse Crops
- Science and the Legal System: When Worlds Collide

For information on the program, registration, and housing materials please log on to [www.apsnet.org/meetings/2003](http://www.apsnet.org/meetings/2003). For exhibit and advertising information please contact Rhonda Wilkie at +1.651.994.3820.

## Welcome New Members

The following members joined IS-MPMI between November 1, 2002 and February 1, 2003.  
Please join us in welcoming them to the Society!

### Myung Ok Byun

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Suwon, KOREA

### Francesca C. Cardinale

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### Asita Chatterjee

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### Gary J. Loake

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### Mathias L. Muller

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### Kirankumar S. Mysore

Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation  
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### Sanushka Naidoo

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### Philippe Rech

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### Ana I. F. Ribeiro

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### Henrik U. Stotz

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### Mahmut Tor

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### Tetsu T. Tsurushima

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Matsubara, JAPAN

### Boris A. Vinatzer

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Chicago IL, U.S.A.

### Ruksana Yasmin

Kings College London  
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## News from the USDA ARS Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center

Dr. Jan Leach, a professor from the Department of Plant Pathology, Kansas State University presented a talk at USDA ARS Dale Bumpers National Rice Research Center (DB NRRC) on June 25, 2002. Her topic was "Dissecting defense response pathways in rice." During her visit, scientists from the University of Arkansas Rice Research and Extension Center and DB NRRC discussed the strategies to develop improved rice varieties/germplasm through Biotechnology.

Ms. Eugenia McMeans, a Ph.D. candidate from the Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University presented a talk at USDA-ARS DB NRRC on September 4, 2002. Her topic was: "The utilization of the hmg2 inducible promoter to genetically engineer parasite resistance in tobacco." She visited various laboratories at DB NRRC, field blast test, and conversed with rice breeders and pathologists from the University of Arkansas Rice Research and Extension Center.

## IS-MPMI Treasurer's Report

Carol Bender, IS-MPMI Treasurer

The IS-MPMI had a very good year in 2002. On the income side, we tracked near budget for membership, sales of Proceedings Vol. 1-3, miscellaneous income, royalty income, and postage income. The reimbursement for the 2001 International Congress was very successful. Sally Leong and her group did an outstanding job! On the expense side we also did very well. The Cost of Goods of the Proceedings was under budget and member services were also significantly under budget with savings being found in postage, promotion, newsletter production, and internet services. Administrative costs were on budget. A wonderful example of what a successful meeting and expense control can do for the organization.



### **Summer School on the Molecular Basis of Plant-Microbe Interactions**

June 5-7, 2003

*Leiden University, Institute of Molecular Plant Sciences*  
Besides lectures given by a team of international experts in the field, we expect an active role of participants. They are invited to present a poster or an oral presentation. Moreover we expect them to write a research proposal, a process in which they will be assisted by lecturers and other specialists. This Summer School is primarily aimed at PhD students but the program will also be of interest to post-docs, senior scientists and industrial scientists. The Summer School language is English. Information on the preliminary program and registration can be found on the following webpage: <http://www.wimp.leidenuniv.nl/zomerschool/index.html>. (Guido V. Bloemberg, PhD, Leiden University, Institute of Molecular Plant Sciences Wassenaarseweg 64, 2333 AL Leiden, The Netherlands. Tel: +31 71 5275056; Fax: +31 71 5275088

### **11th International Congress on Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions**

July 18-26, 2003

*St. Petersburg, Russia*

Contact: <http://www.arriam.spb.ru/mpmi/>  
(See page 3 for details)

### **Functional Genomics: Theory and Hands-On Data Analysis**

August 25-28, 2003 • *Utrecht University, The Netherlands.*

For more information on the program and registration please visit [www.bio.uu.nl/EPS-summarschool](http://www.bio.uu.nl/EPS-summarschool). Contact: Corné Pieterse, Section Phytopathology, Utrecht University, E-mail: [C.M.J.Pieterse@bio.uu.nl](mailto:C.M.J.Pieterse@bio.uu.nl).

### **Conference on Plant Stress, Reactive Oxygen and Antioxidants**

*Freising-Weihenstephan, September 10 -13, 2003*

The conference will be organized in collaboration with the Weihenstephan Center of Life and Food Sciences, TUM, and the GSF National Research Center for Environment and Health, Neuherberg. The main organizers are Erich F. Elstner and Christian Langebartels. The conference is also supported by the Society for Free Radical Research, Plant Group. The main subjects include:

- Oxygen and natural environmental stress
- Plant antioxidants and benefits for men
- Reactive oxygen species in cell metabolism and development
- Reactive oxygen species in plant-microbe interactions
- Programmed cell death in response to abiotic and biotic stress

For detailed information, online registration and abstract submission visit: <http://www.wzw.tum.de/pp/congress/>

### **Second International Workshop on Molecular Phytopathology: Mechanisms of Disease Susceptibility**

December 3-5, 2003 • *Castle of Rauischholzhausen,*

*Justin-Liebig-University, Giessen, Germany*

The workshop will focus on cereal diseases caused by biotrophic, hemibiotrophic, and necrotrophic fungal pathogens. While the first workshop focused on the phenomenon of durable resistance, this second workshop will be aimed at gathering international specialists for discussions about mechanisms of disease susceptibility. The program will include sessions on: Cytology of plant-microbe interactions (new microscopic techniques and single cell analysis); strategies of biotrophic and hemi-biotrophic pathogens (redox status, antioxidative system); defense- and cell death suppressor genes and pathways; cell wall alteration enzymes; pathogenicity factors; in silico-pathway modelling. More information can be found at: <http://www.uni-giessen.de/IPAZ-Workshop>. The workshop is organized by the DFG Research Group "Systemic Acquired Resistance" (SAR). Secretariat: Interdisziplinäre Research Center for Environmental Sciences (IFZ). Workshop on Molecular Phytopathology, Heinrich-Buff-Ring 26-32, D-35392 Giessen Deutschland (Germany). Tel: 0049 641 99-37492 / 37491; Fax: 0049 641 99-37499; E-Mail: [phytopathologie@agr.uni-giessen.de](mailto:phytopathologie@agr.uni-giessen.de).

### **British Society for Plant Pathology Presidential Meeting: Plant Pathogen Genomics – From Sequence To Application**

December 15-18, 2003

*University of Nottingham Jubilee Campus, Nottingham, UK.*

Including sessions on: Why use genomics? - The Current State of the Art - Functional Genomics and Bioinformatics - Emerging Insights into Pathogens and Their Interactions With Plant Hosts - Applications of Genomics. Invited speakers include: Richard Michelmore (US), Ralph Dean (US), Julian Parkhill (UK), Alan Collmer (US), Charlie Opperman (US), Ian Toth (UK), Regina Kahmann (Germany), Nick Talbot (UK), John Hargreaves (UK), Mike Adams (UK), Peter Waterhouse (Australia), Siv Andersson (Sweden), Ricardo Flores (Spain), John Mansfield (UK), Kim Hammond-Kosack (UK), Jane Parker (Germany), John Lucas (UK), Neil Gow (UK), David Denning (UK), Bart Fraaije (UK) and Pierre de Wit (The Netherlands). Further details are available at [www.bspp.org.uk](http://www.bspp.org.uk) or by contacting [matthew.dickinson@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:matthew.dickinson@nottingham.ac.uk)

### **Tenth Cell Wall Meeting, 2004**

August 29 - September 3, 2004

*Sorrento, Italy*

The aim of the Cell Wall Meeting is to bring together scientists whose research deals with any aspect of plant cell walls. As in the past, the meeting is completely open and there are no invited speakers. The organizers are committed to keeping the registration costs as low as possible to encourage students and young research scientists to attend. We also encourage industrial participation in order to establish links between cell wall research and potential downstream applications. The program will cover all aspects of cell walls from plants to algae and fungi (structure, biosynthesis, properties, relevance to industry,

etc.). The meeting will be held at the Hilton Sorrento Palace Hotel at its Congress Center. Sorrento is a lovely city located in Southern Italy, 30 km south of Naples. It is a traditional sea resort of about 20,000 inhabitants at the tip of the Sorrentine Peninsula.

Contact: Prof. Felice, Cervone, University of Rome "La Sapienza", Dipartimento di Biologia, Vegetale, P.le Aldo Moro, 5, 00185 Rome. Tel: +39 06 49912517; Fax: +39 06 49912446; E-mail: 2004.cellwall@uniroma1.it

## EMPLOYMENT

### Postdoctoral Research Opportunity

The USDA Agricultural Research Service, Root Disease and Biological Control Research Unit, in Pullman, Washington is seeking a Postdoctoral Research Associate (Research Plant Pathologist/Microbiologist/Molecular Biologist). Ph.D. is required. Salary is commensurate with experience (\$46,469 - \$72,400 per annum) plus benefits. There are some citizenship restrictions. USDA is currently unable to sponsor H-1B or TN visas. The incumbent will investigate rhizosphere ecology and biological control of cereal root diseases by fluorescent *Pseudomonas* spp., focusing on genes involved in microbial competitiveness, rhizosphere fitness, and interactions with the host plant and with fungal root pathogens. Skills in microbiological and molecular genetic techniques and knowledge of bioinformatic approaches to gene identification, comparative genomics, and data management and analysis are required. Knowledge of plant-microbe interactions is highly desirable. Refer to [www.ars.usda.gov](http://www.ars.usda.gov) for the full text announcement (RA-03-022H) and for complete application instructions. Send application materials and references to Dr. Linda Thomashow, USDA/ARS, P. O. Box 646430, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164-6430 or e-mail ([thomasho@mail.wsu.edu](mailto:thomasho@mail.wsu.edu)). USDA/ARS is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### Career Opportunities at Rothamsted Research

Are you a postdoctoral scientist/junior group leader with an interest in the molecular biology of plant pathogenic fungi? If so you may wish to consider joining the Plant-Pathogen Interactions Division at Rothamsted Research. Our current research (see <http://www.iacr.ac.uk/ppi/ppiindex.htm>.) is organized in three programs as follows: 1) Wheat Pathogenesis (Leader: Kim Hammond-Kosack), 2) Pathogen population biology and disease management (Leader: John Lucas), 3) Plant-Nematode Interactions (Leader: Brian Kerry). In the near future we have permanent posts arising in molecular plant pathology and the cell biology of fungal pathogens of cereals. One post requires expertise in functional genomics and/or bioinformatics, the other molecular genetics, biochemistry and bioimaging techniques. During 2003, the redevelopment program at Rothamsted will move into the final phase with the opening of the new Centenary Building providing state of the art molecular biological and analytical chemical facilities to accommodate a staff of 250. A bioimaging suite equipped with new transmission, scanning electron and confocal microscopes will open this March. Together with new glasshouses, biological containment, controlled environment and field facilities,

Rothamsted will offer a high quality integrated science site for all aspects of plant pathology research. Rothamsted Research is located 30 km north of London with good links to motorways, rail and airports. This government sponsored institute focuses on basic and strategic research on sustainable plant-based agriculture and the environment. There are about 500 staff of whom 70 are within the Plant-Pathogen Interactions Division. For further information contact either Kim Hammond-Kosack ([kim.hammond-kosack@bbbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:kim.hammond-kosack@bbbsrc.ac.uk)) or John Lucas ([john.lucas@bbbsrc.ac.uk](mailto:john.lucas@bbbsrc.ac.uk)).

## IS-MPMInet gets a new look!



IS-MPMInet's newly redesigned website is now live! A new look and the addition of more user-friendly features are just a few of the improvements we've made to IS-MPMInet. We hope that you find it easier to navigate and filled with the up-to-date information you are looking for.

Check it out at [www.ismpminet.org](http://www.ismpminet.org)!

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As of March 1, 2003

(Visit the [www.ismpminet.org](http://www.ismpminet.org) members area for access to the directory.)

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