

IS-MPMI

International Society for Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions

REPORTER

September 2001



Over 1,000 Attend IS-MPMI Meeting in Madison!

Members of IS-MPMI won't be surprised to hear that the recent meeting in Madison, like our previous meetings, was a roaring success. Over 1,000 attendees from more than 40 countries enjoyed a week of scintillating science, wonderful weather, and abundant beer in marvelous Madison, Wisconsin. The proximity of the meeting hall to Lake Mendota and the surrounding terraces of the Union contributed greatly to the atmosphere.

All of our appreciation and thanks goes to **Sally Leong**, Chair of the Local Organizing Committee, and **Andrew Bent**, Associate Chair, for their huge efforts. Thanks also to the members of the Local Committee - **Paul Ahlquist**, **Caitlyn Allen**, **John Andrews**, **Frederick Blattner**, **Tom German**, **Robert Goodman**, **Jo Handelsman**, **John Helgeson**, **Eric Tripplet**, and **Chris Upper**, all of the University of Wisconsin. Thanks also to out-going IS-MPMI President **Jan Leach**, and good luck to the new president, **Ben Lugtenberg**.

Sally Leong would like to extend special thanks not only to the Local and International Organizing Committees but also to the speakers and chairs for presenting outstanding science. **Carol Grabins** and her staff at the UW Memorial Union did many of the local arrangements and handled the abstract submission service. **Maureen Sundell** and her staff at the UW Extension Conference Planning did the booking of the facilities and tours, registration, and accounting. **Glenn Heckard** at the printing house did a nice job on the abstract book and **Irene Golembiewski** on the graphics for brochures, signs, t-shirts and the abstract book. **Wendy Beckman** deserves the credit for a user-friendly, well-designed conference web site. Finally, Sally would like to thank all of the local farmers who provided such good ingredients for the meals we ate at the union, **Julie Etheridge** and her staff for their willingness to prepare this food, and **Janet Parker** for serving as a liaison between the farmers and Julie.

The next International Congress is scheduled to be in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 2003. Professor **Igor Tikhonovic** will be the Chairperson of the Local Organizing Committee. Stay tuned for details. The Congress is still considering locations for the 2005 meeting (see the Summary of the Minutes of the IS-MPMI Board of Directors for details about this and other issues of interest to Society members).

If anyone would like copies (electronic) of the pictures, please email walton@msu.edu. Thanks again to all the organizers, attendees, speakers, and poster presenters for making IS-MPMI a thriving scientific organization.

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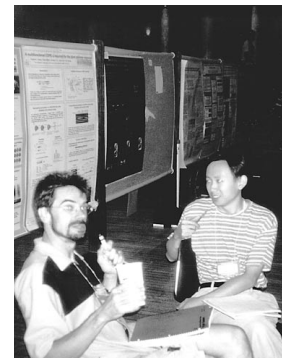
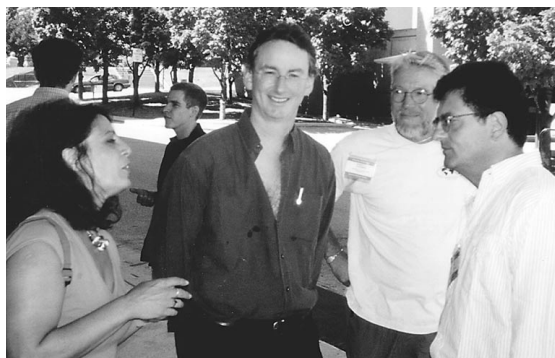
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IS-MPMI Mee



ting Pictorial



IS-MPMI Meeting Poster Winners

At the IS-MPMI meeting, prizes were given for best posters in 12 categories. The awards and prizes were distributed at the banquet. The winners were:

Cell Biology of Plant-Microbe Interactions

1st 98 **Nan Yao** Kobe University, Japan
2nd 84 **Mathieu Gourgues** CNRS/Aventis, France

Defense Signal Transduction

1st 106 **Cristina Azevedo** Sainsbury Laboratory, UK
2nd 169 **Peter Repetti** UC Berkeley, USA

Ecology and Population Biology

1st 216 **Lise Marcell** Iowa State, USA
2nd 206 **Carol Casavant** Iowa State, USA

Functional Genomics & Biotechnology

1st 274 **Roger Thilmony** Michigan State, USA
2nd 247 **Stephanie Genin** INRA-CNRS, France

Local and Systemic Resistance

1st 321 **Xiaoquan Qi** Sainsbury Lab, UK
2nd 296 **Bryan Bailey** ACSL/ARS/USDA, Beltsville, USA

Novel Plant-Microbe Interactions

1st 341 **Edgar Huitema** Ohio State, USA
2nd 348 **Danny Vereecke** University of Ghent, Belgium

Plant-Fungus Interactions

1st 362 **Heidi Böhnert** CNRS/Aventis, France
2nd --- **Uta Paszkowski** Torrey Mesa Research Inst, USA

Plant-Nematode Interactions

1st 468 **Chin-Feng Hwang** UC Davis, USA
2nd 461 **Jan deBoer** Iowa State, USA

Plant-Rhizobium Interactions

1st 502 **Maria Soto** CSIC, Granada, Spain
2nd 481 **Julia Frugoli** Clemson Univ, USA

Plant-Virus Interactions

1st 541 **A. Noueir** U. Wisconsin, Madison, USA
2nd 510 **E. Allen** Iowa State, USA

Recognition of Pathogens by Plants

1st 558 **D. L. Arnold** U. West England, UK
2nd 594 **Julia Krüger** Sainsbury Lab, UK

Secretion of AVR and VIR factors

1st 655 **Qiaoling Jin** Michigan State, USA
2nd 649 **Lisa Crossman** Sainsbury Lab, UK

IS-MPMI Board of Directors Meets

Participants

The IS-MPMI Board met on July 10, 2001 prior to the MPMI Congress in Madison, WI. Members attending were **Carol Bender** (Treasurer), **Andrew Bent**, **Alan Collmer** (Secretary), **Jeff Dangl**, **Amy Hope** (IS-MPMI Headquarters), **Jan Leach** (President), **Adam Kondorosi**, **Sally Leong**, **Ben Lugtenberg** (President Elect), **Shigeyuki Mayama**, **Anne Osbourn**, **Barry Rolfe**, **Linda Thomashow**, **Jonathan Walton**.

New Board Members Added

Four newly elected members welcomed to the Board were: **Andrew Bent** (USA), **Dieter Haas** (Switzerland), **Adam Kondorosi** (France), and **Jonathan Walton** (USA; Editor-in-Chief of the IS-MPMI Reporter). Members rotating off the board (**Alan Collmer**, **Pierre de Wit**, **Noel Keen**, **Sally Leong**, **Barry Rolfe**, and **Linda Thomashow**) were thanked for their excellent service. At the close of the MPMI Congress, **Ben Lugtenberg** became President, and will preside until the conclusion of the 2003 IS-MPMI congress.

2003 ISMPMI Meeting

Igor Tikhonovich, host of the 2003 IS-MPMI Congress in St. Petersburg, Russia, presented the current status of his planning. The meeting will be a few months after the 300th anniversary of the city and will be held in the Hotel Pribaltiyskaya. The hotel can accommodate 90% of the participants' lodging, and cheaper dormitory houses are within five blocks of the hotel.

At the time of the board meeting, no one had submitted a proposal to host the 2005 meeting, which by IS-MPMI tradition

should take place in the Western hemisphere. **Sally Leong** solicited proposals at a plenary session early in the week and got responses from members in Mexico and Davis, CA. Additional suggestions from IS-MPMI members are welcome!

Publication of 2001 Meeting Proceedings

The Board discussed at length the format for publication of the meeting Proceedings. Income from sales of the last two volumes of the Proceedings has dropped. Given the current advances in publication venues, the Board discussed replacing the current hardbound version of the Proceedings with an option for online, CD, or soft cover versions. An email questionnaire will be sent to the membership to determine if there is support for electronic or CD versions of the Proceedings.

Update on MPMI

Editor-in-Chief **Herman Spaink** submitted a report on the status of *Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions*, the societies' official journal. The MPMI editorial board has made several changes in the format for the journal and in the instructions to submitting authors. Please check the journal website (<http://www.scisoc.org/ismpmi/mpmi/>) for the new instructions. IS-MPMI Reporter Editor-in-Chief **Jonathan Walton** reported that the IS-MPMI Reporter will be published at the rate of three issues per year. Material for inclusion in the Reporter is always welcome, including, for example, articles about the societal impact of the research carried out by IS-MPMI members, and articles from other scientific society newsletters.

STUDENT NEWS

Abstract of the thesis of **Gustavo Hernández-Guzmán** (CINVESTAV Irapuato, Mexico).
email: ghernand@ira.cinvestav.mx.
Thesis advisor: Dr. Ariel Alvarez-Morales.

I am working with the bean pathogen *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *phaseolicola*, the causal agent of the "halo blight" disease of beans. A key component to the development of the disease is a non-host specific toxin produced by the bacterium known as phaseolotoxin (N-phosphosulphamyl-ornithyl-alanyl-homoarginine). Its target is the enzyme ornithine carbamoyltransferase (OCTase), which catalyses the conversion of ornithine to citrulline in the pathway leading to the biosynthesis of arginine. The consequence is blockage of arginine biosynthesis and thus death of the host cells.

Phaseolotoxin is the major virulence factor from the pathogen and we are looking for genes involved in its biosynthesis. The literature suggests the participation of a non-ribosomal peptide system to synthesise the organic moiety of the toxin, and an amidinotransferase to synthesise ornithine and homoarginine, both components of tripeptide toxin.

In my Ph.D. work, in order to clone the amidinotransferase gene we designed a PCR-based strategy to specifically amplified the amidinotransferase gene from *P. s. pv. phaseolicola*, with degenerate primers designed from an alignment of different Streptomyces and mammalian amidinotransferases. We amplified successfully a fragment with high homology with amidinotransferases. This gene was further characterized and we have discovered that the gene: 1) is located adjacent to argK (the gene which confers immunity to phaseolotoxin in pv. *phaseolicola*), 2) is expressed under the same conditions as phaseolotoxin synthesis and the size of the mRNA indicates a monocistronic gene, 3) is a single copy gene (GenBank accession AF186235), and 4) is present only in pv. *phaseolicola* isolates.

I have also isolated a mutant for this gene by disruption and its phenotype is a beautiful tox-! We are especially pleased with this result, because there are no previous reports of genes directly involved in phaseolotoxin synthesis. I am very confident in the future results from our model in order to investigate the regulation of the amidinotransferase gene and phaseolotoxin synthesis.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The following members joined IS-MPMI between April - August 2001. Please join us in welcoming them to the Society!

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PhD position

To participate in molecular-genetic studies on the smut fungus (*Ustilago hordei*) and its interactions with barley including gene-for-gene relationships, avirulence genes, fungal genomics, host response, etc. AFLP marker-based cloning of two of five known fungal avirulence genes is underway. Research includes molecular and genetic analyses as well as microscopic and histological techniques. Among the tools available for this fungus are genomic cosmid-, cDNA- and ordered BAC-libraries and an efficient transformation system, allowing gene knock-out. Our lab is part of genomics networks involving several other Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada Research Centres. We are engaged in an EST project in collaboration with the Genome Sequence Centre in Vancouver (www.bcgsc.bc.ca). Students will be enrolled through the Dept. of Botany, UBC (www.botany.ubc.ca). Please visit <http://res2.agr.ca/parc-crapac/english/2summerland/biotechnology/bakkeren.htm>. To inquire or apply (send CV, transcripts, and substantiate your interest and background) contact: **Guus Bakkeren**, PhD., Adj. Prof, Dept of Botany, UBC, Research Scientist, Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada, Pacific Agri-Food Research Centre, Highway 97, Summerland, BC, Canada V0H 1Z0, Phone: (250) 494-6368, Fax: (250) 494-0755, E-mail: bakkereng@em.agr.ca

Assistant Professor/Physiological Weed Geneticist

Department of Vegetable Crops, University of California, Davis, CAVL #00-09
Assistant Professor and Assistant Physiological Weed Geneticist. A tenure-track position in the Agricultural Experiment Station and the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. This academic position has 50% Organized Research and 50% Instruction & Research responsibilities. The appointee will be located in the Department of Vegetable Crops at UC Davis. Appointee will develop a strong research program investigating fundamental aspects of weed science, particularly areas related to molecular biology and genetics. The research should have ultimate application in understanding herbicide activity in plants, weed biology, taxonomy, competition, weed management, or gene flow from transgenic crops. Examples of potential research areas are weed systematics and ecological distribution of weed ecotypes, biotypes or populations, herbicide resistance, and the potential for gene flow between transgenic crops and weeds. Appointee should seek and acquire extramural funding. The appointee will teach at the undergraduate and/or graduate level in the area of herbicide activity and topics associated with weed molecular biology and genetics. The appointee will also guide graduate students. Applicants must hold a Ph.D. degree in weed science or related discipline with emphasis on molecular biology or genetics. Postdoctoral experience is highly desirable. Ability or the potential to conduct independent research in molecular weed genetics must be demonstrated. Applicants should have a desire to be an

effective teacher. The position is open until filled. To ensure consideration, applications must be received by October 15, 2001. A C.V., statement of research and teaching interests with documentation, official transcripts if within 5 years of receiving degree, and names and addresses of at least three professional references should be sent to: **Joseph M. DiTomaso**, Search Committee Chair, Weed Science Program, Robbins Hall, Department of Vegetable Crops, University of California, Davis, CA 95616-8746. Phone: (530) 754-8715, Fax: (530) 752-4604 or E-mail: ditomaso@vegmail.ucdavis.edu. The University of California is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer.

Sainsbury Laboratory, John Innes Centre Opportunities in Molecular Plant Pathology

Postdoctoral Research Scientist Positions - Reference number 10 25/10 26.

Applications are invited for two three-year positions required to investigate the biosynthesis of defense-related antimicrobial triterpenoid saponins (avenacins) in roots of diploid oat using molecular genetic and biochemical approaches. A number of tools have been generated for this purpose, including a collection of saponin-deficient (*sad*) oat mutants [PNAS 96,12923, 1999] and an EST resource of over 12,000 sequences from oat roots. Candidates should have a PhD together with a strong background in molecular genetics and/or biochemistry. Experience in the area of plant secondary metabolite biosynthesis, protein localization, vacuolar transport processes or root development may be advantageous but is not essential. Salary on appointment will be within the RA1A range of £17,278 to £25,969 depending on qualifications and experience. Please quote post reference number 10 25/10 26 in all correspondence.

Technical Position - Reference number 10 27.

A one year technical position is also available with the possibility of extension, subject to further funding. This position will support the above project by developing methods for testing gene function in oat by complementation of characterized *sad* mutants with cloned genes and also by gene silencing. Experience of transient assays systems for gene expression in plants (particularly cereals) would be advantageous. Candidates should have a BSc in molecular genetics or biochemistry. Salary on appointment will be within the RA1B range of £17,278 to £19,293 depending on qualifications and experience. Please quote post reference number 10 27 in all correspondence.

To apply please send a full CV together with the name of two referees to the Personnel Officer, John Innes Centre, Colney, Norwich, NR4 7UH, UK quoting the appropriate post reference number.

MEETINGS / EVENTS

September 15-19, 2002, Maratea, Potenza, Italy 6th International Conference on *Pseudomonas syringae* pathovars and related pathogens

The Conference (born as a working group on *P. syringae*) will mainly focus on recent advancements on the different aspects of *P. syringae* pathovars. Furthermore, confirming the novelty introduced at the Conference held in Berlin 1995, contributions on related phytopathogenic pseudomonads as well as former pseudomonads (*Burkholderia*, *Acidovorax*, etc.) are encouraged. A second circular, to be distributed in March, 2002, will include a call for abstracts and full papers and provide details of the program, registration, and accommodations. Information will also be available at the web site <http://www.unibas.it/utenti/pseudomonassyringae>. In order to receive the second circular, please complete the reply form available on the web site and return it before October 31, 2001 to: **Nicola Sante Iacobellis**, Dipartimento di Biologia, Difesa e Biotecnologie Agro-Forestali, Università degli Studi della Basilicata, C. da Macchia Romana, 85100 Potenza, Italy, Phone: +39-0971-205498 Fax: +39-0971-205503 E-mail: pseudomonassyringae@unibas.it

September 7-12, 2001. Castelvechio Pascoli, Italy. Biology of Type IV Secretion Processes: Euroconference on the Medical and Ecological Implications.

Type IV secretion machineries mediate direct cell-to-cell transfer or secretion of virulence factors from Gram-negative pathogens to modulate their hosts' defense response. This strategy is used by many important human and animal pathogens. Type IV secretion machineries also mediate the spread of plasmids carrying antibiotic resistance genes and genetic transformation of plants by *Agrobacterium*. Talks and posters will present recent work on basic aspects such as DNA processing, transfer of virulence factors, host response and ecological implications. Chairman: **Christian Baron** (University Munich), Vice-Chairman: **David O'Callaghan** (INSERM, Nimes, France). The conference is open to researchers world-wide, whether from industry or academia. Participation will be limited to 100. The Conference Fee covers registration and full board and lodging. Grants will be available, in particular for nationals from EU or Associated States under 35. Deadline for applications: 30 April, 2001. For information, contact the Head of the EURESCO Unit: Dr. J. Hendekovic, European Science Foundation, 1 quai Lezay-Marnesia, 67080 Strasbourg Cedex, France, Phone +33 388 76 71 35; Fax: 33 388 36 69 87; E-mail: euresco@esf.org. Website: <http://www.esf.org/euresco>.

ASM announces new journal to be called *Eukaryotic Cell*

ASM (American Society for Microbiology) is starting a new journal, *Eukaryotic Cell*, that should be of interest to IS-MPMI members. According to their web site (www.journals.asm.org/misc/eukaryot.shtml), This bimonthly journal, commencing publication in February 2002, in both print and online formats, will present reports of basic research on simple eukaryotic microorganisms such as yeasts, fungi, algae, protozoa, and social amoebae. Topics will include, but are not limited to:

- Basic biology
- Molecular and cellular biology
- Mechanisms, and control, of developmental pathways
- Structure and form inherent in basic biological processes
- Cellular architecture
- Metabolic physiology
- Comparative genomics, biochemistry, and evolution
- Population dynamics
- Ecology

C.C. Wang is the editor-in-chief of *Eukaryotic Cell* and the senior editorial board is composed of Jay Dunlap, Ursula Goodenough, Ching Kung, Adam Kuspa, and Aaron Mitchell.

Update on Microbial Genomes

Sophien Kamoun (Ohio State University) writes that he has put together a web page which compiles several web resources on plant associated genomes. The address is:
http://www.oardc.ohiostate.edu/phytophthora/genome_links.htm

IS-MPMI REPORTER DEADLINE

Deadline for submitting items for the next issue is October 15, 2001.

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 klarson@uslink.net.

Send items to:

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