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Look Inside for Directory

Turn to page 13 to find colleagues in the molecular plant-microbe interaction field. Use the 2006 Directory as a tool to reach experts in your field and make contacts throughout the world.

MPMI Survey

Thank you to all IS-MPMI members who took the recent MPMI Survey. Your feedback is greatly appreciated and helps shape the Society's esteemed publication. Look for results in the next issue of IS-MPMI Reporter.

**IS-MPMI REPORTER
DEADLINE****Deadline for submitting items
for the next issue is July 24, 2006.**

Submission of materials as electronic files, on disk or as e-mail attachments, will speed processing. For information on submitting electronic images contact Joel Berg at jberg@scisoc.org.

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Interview with IS-MPMI Leadership

In an effort to better acquaint the membership with the leadership of their Society, the IS-MPMI Reporter will be publishing interviews with members of the Board of Directors and other leadership roles. In this issue, you will find interviews with President Pierre de Wit, Secretary Andrew Bent, and the new Editor-In-Chief of the *IS-MPMI Reporter*, Sophien Kamoun. Please feel free to contact the leaders of IS-MPMI with any questions or concerns; a listing of the Board and their contact information are printed in every issue. You can find that listing on page 27.

Meet IS-MPMI Board of Directors**Pierre de Wit, IS-MPMI President**

Q: Tell us about yourself and your work?

A: I received my Ph.D. at Wageningen University in 1981. Then I spent a post-doc period in the U.S.A. at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, in the laboratory of professor Joseph Kuc. After my return to The Netherlands, I was appointed at Wageningen University in the Laboratory of Phytopathology, where I became full professor of phytopathology in 1990 and head of the laboratory in 1992. The laboratory has five faculty members working on different pathosystems, including *Phytophthora infestans*-potato (Francine Govers), *Botrytis cinerea*-tomato (Jan van Kan), *Mycosphaerella graminicola*-wheat (Maarten de Waard), Molecular ecology and biological control (Jos Raaijmakers), *Cladosporium fulvum*-tomato (Matthieu Joosten, Bart Thomma, and myself). Within this last group, Matthieu Joosten has an independent position and focuses on Avr-triggered defense pathways in tomato and *Nicotiana benthamiana*. Bart Thomma is setting up a new pathosystem: *Verticillium dahliae*-tomato/*Arabidopsis*. I myself have been working for more than two decades on the pathosystem *Cladosporium fulvum*-tomato. Many Ph.D. students and post-docs have worked on this system through the years. We were the first to clone a fungal Avr gene (*Avr9*) in 1991. So far, we have cloned eight Avr and Ecp genes, and for two, we have identified an intrinsic function apart from inducing a hypersensitive response (HR) in the presence of the cognate Cf resistance gene. The Avr2 peptide is secreted by *C. fulvum* into the apoplast of tomato leaves and, in the presence of the tomato extracellular membrane-anchored Cf2 protein, triggers the HR that also requires the extracellular tomato cysteine protease Rcr3. Avr2 binds and inhibits Rcr3, and the Rcr3-Avr2 complex is subsequently recognized by the Cf-2 protein. Avr4 is a chitin-binding protein that protects the fungus against basic plant chitinases. Avr4 proteins encoded by virulent alleles in strains of *C. fulvum* are no longer recognized by Cf-4 plants but still bind to chitin, suggesting that chitin-binding by Avr4 could represent a defensive virulence function. Presently, we are searching for intrinsic functions of all cloned *C. fulvum* Avr and Ecp genes. It is expected that *C. fulvum* has many more effector genes, and we have submitted a proposal for sequencing the *C. fulvum* genome. When the genome sequence becomes available, we will search for additional effectors that most likely all exhibit different functions to facilitate fungal growth in the apoplast of tomato. When the tomato genome becomes available within 1 to 2 years, the *C. fulvum*-tomato system becomes even more exciting to work on.

IS-MPMI Interview continued on page 2

Message from the IS-MPMI Reporter Editor-In-Chief



Sophien Kamoun

I am pleased to take over from Thomas Baum as editor-in-chief of the *IS-MPMI Reporter*. I am looking forward to the challenge and thank Pierre de Wit and the Board of Directors for their trust. I also thank Thomas, the previous editor, as well as Karen Deuschle and the support staff at IS-MPMI headquarters, for setting up a high standard for this publication.

What's my vision for the *Reporter*? The first priority is to communicate important information and news about the society and the congress. A second objective is to help you to better know your colleagues as well as the leadership of the society. To this purpose, we will continue the successful feature "Meet IS-MPMI Members" that runs profiles of randomly chosen members at various stages of their career. Also, starting with this issue, we will publish interviews with the society officers and various members that we hope will provide some entertaining reading. A third objective is to increase the visibility of the journal *Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions* and inform you of changes in the journal board and policies. In the near future, we will start highlighting the content of *MPMI*, possibly by featuring selected articles. Lastly and most importantly, the *Reporter* is also your forum. I urge you to continue to contribute suggestions and notices, particularly announcements of appointments, retirements, job postings, graduations, awards, conferences and symposia, web-based courses, etc...

Finally, to enhance communication with a broader group of graduate students, post-docs, and faculty active in the research area of plant-microbe interactions, the IS-MPMI staff is developing a list of individuals that serve as institutional contacts and function as a bridge to colleagues at their institution. Some of you already received enquiries but if you would like to serve as the IS-MPMI contact for your university or department, please feel free to contact Karen Deuschle at kdeuschle@scisoc.org or +1.651.994.3804.

IS-MPMI Interview continued from page 1

Q: When and why did you first join the Society?

A: I thought that I joined the society since its foundation in 1992, but when I checked the paid invoices I could not go further back than 1993. So, most likely it was 1993, but maybe the IS-MPMI archives can help me out.

Q: Which IS-MPMI Congress did you first attend? What was the experience like?

A: I was invited as a speaker to the Acapulco IS-MPMI congress in 1988, but I could not attend it. I had just made a tour through Canada and the U.S.A., and I could not go to Acapulco due to teaching obligations in the period. So my first IS-MPMI congress was in 1990 in Interlaken, Switzerland. The congress was very well organized by Hauke Hennecke. I still remember that congress very well. We traveled with a mini-bus from Wageningen to Interlaken with many Ph.D. students, post-docs, and colleagues. The Ph.D. students have now their own independent research groups, including Corné Pieterse, Guido van den Ackerveken, Jos Wubben, Matthieu Joosten, and Jan van Kan. It was an excellent congress. There were many reports on bacterial *Avr* genes and the plans to clone fungal *Avr* genes and plant resistance genes by transposon tagging and map-based cloning. There were also many talks on induction of defense signaling genes by different types of nonspecific elicitors (nowadays called PAMPs).

Q: Do you think it is important that Ph.D. and post doc students in your lab are IS-MPMI members? What can/should IS-MPMI offer young scientists in our field?

A: Yes, I think it is important that Ph.D.s and post-docs are members of IS-MPMI, but of course the society should offer them something in return. IS-MPMI should be a platform where they can interact with their international colleagues. I think the *IS-MPMI Reporter* should become a medium for this type of interactions. Leaders in the field should give interviews and tell students about their ambitions and challenges in the field. I would propose that after the interviews in the *IS-MPMI Reporter* with the Board of Directors, we should continue to interview great leaders in the field of molecular plant-microbe interactions. I think that young scientists want to identify themselves with great scientists. As a student, my role models were the late Noel Keen, Peter Albersheim, and Joseph Kuc. In Europe, Ph.D. students will not become members unless they get a real benefit for their membership. I am sure we can have many more members than we have now, when we offer more. The society could grow from 500 to 750 members. The society should also become truly international. In my laboratory in the past, more Ph.D. students, post-docs, and faculty were members of IS-MPMI. Thus for the benefit of membership, I see several good reasons:

1. Sponsoring of the journal *MPMI*; it is too expensive for Ph.D. students and post-docs; also they would rather get it through their library.

2. The *IS-MPMI Reporter* should become an informal platform where young scientists can meet their colleagues and international role models through (i) interviews, (ii) laboratory websites, (iii) Ph.D. courses and seminars (video conferencing), and (iv) vacant positions.

3. Organize excellent biannual Symposia. These are the real highlights for all members. Make the registration fees for Ph.D. students and post-docs as low as possible. Being a member of IS-MPMI should give a significant reduction in registration fee. The reduction should be so significant that Ph.D. students and post-docs become and remain members of IS-MPMI.

Q: What drew you to plant-microbe interactions?

A: As an M.Sc. student, I became fascinated by the gene-for-gene hypothesis put forward by professor A. P. Oort in the Netherlands after WWII with wheat and *Ustilago tritici* and by Flor in the U.S.A. with flax and *Melampsora lini*. Their research started with genetics and then moved slowly forward to finding the molecular basis of the phenomenon. However, as we know now, the situation is much more complex than we thought initially. However, the gene-for-gene hypothesis has remained always a good working hypothesis.

Q: What inspired you most in your career?

A: I like to have role models, whether it is sports or science. After Harold Flor, for me came Noel Keen, Peter Albersheim, and Joseph Kuc. These scientists had a clear goal and working hypothesis in mind. They did not always reach what they set out for, but I liked their endurance. I experienced the same. It took me and my group six years to go from a proteinaceous fraction of Avr9 elicitor to pure protein to the encoding gene. So never give up is my motto. The route can be hard, but when you have reached the goal, the reward feels good.

Q: What's the most exciting paper you read recently?

A: Compared to the past, there are many more exciting papers to read. It is difficult to keep up with all literature. When I was a Ph.D. student, by reading five to 10 journals, you were well informed. Now there are many more exciting scientific journals. It is also exciting that so many plant and plant-microbe papers appear in *Science* and *Nature*. I rate papers for faculty 1000. The last two that I reviewed and submitted to faculty 1000 were:

1. Janjusevic R, Abramovitch RB, Martin GB, Stebbins CE. A bacterial inhibitor of host programmed cell death

defenses is an E3 ubiquitin ligase. *Science* 2006 Jan 13 311(5758):222-6

2. Gilbert MJ, Thornton CR, Wakley GE, Talbot NJ A P-type ATPase required for rice blast disease and induction of host resistance. *Nature* 2006 Mar 23 440 (7083):535-9

Q: What is the next "big thing" in plant-microbe interactions?

A: Identifying the intrinsic functions of all those viral, bacterial, fungal, oomycete, and nematode effectors that show up in their sequenced genomes. Plant pathogens have developed extremely ingenious ways to exploit their hosts and to evade host defense systems.

Q: What's your favorite gene?

A: Of course I am fascinated by the effectors of *C. fulvum* (*Avr2* and *Avr4* in particular). From the bacterial genes, I like *AvrRpt2* and *AvrPtoB* from *Pseudomonas syringae* and *AvrXv4* from *Xanthomonas campestris*.

Q: What are your favorite activities outside the lab?

A: I am fond of sports. I like cycling tours. I cycle nearly every day to the lab, rain or shine (rain coat). On Saturday mornings, I go out with a group of friends to run for 8 to 10 km in the woods near Rhenen, the town where I live. I have played tennis since I was 16. For 30 years, I have played amateur competition and on Tuesday evening, we practice for 1.5 hrs. For seven years, I have played golf, which is my next challenge. After the IS-MPMI meeting in Amsterdam, I started to play golf with my tennis teammates, which is physically less strenuous than tennis. We took a few lessons, and now we play very early on Sunday mornings. I really enjoy it. In the evenings and weekends, I try to keep up with the scientific literature, and during vacations, I read novels and biographies.

Q: What book are you reading these days?

A: Presently I am reading a book by Daniel Dennett entitled "Consciousness Explained."

Q: What's your favorite vacation?

A: I like camping in France, our favorite vacation destination. In the past, I went with my wife Els and our two sons, Christian and Matthieu. Now our sons go on their own. We take our bicycles and golf equipment and camp not too far away from a golf course. We alternate by making cycling tours to picturesque villages and cities and play golf. In the evening, we read books in an easy chair next to the tent. That is living like a god in France as the saying goes.



Andrew Bent, IS-MPMI Secretary

Q: Tell us about yourself and your work?

A: We primarily study molecular aspects of plant disease resistance. The focus has been on *R* gene-mediated defense, and on the *Arabidopsis/P. syringae* interaction, but interests evolve. We've spent significant time on soybean as well, trying to bring ideas such as floral-dip transformation and ethylene-insensitive mutants to the study of this important crop plant. That theme continues. With *Arabidopsis*, we have added FLS2-mediated flagellin recognition as a major effort, looking, for example, at how an LRR goes about recognizing its target.

Q: When and why did you first join the Society?

A: Not sure, to be honest. But see answer to next question.

Q: Which IS-MPMI Congress did you first attend? What was the experience like?

A: My first IS-MPMI meeting was in Montreal in 1986. I was a relatively new graduate student. I was thrilled by the meeting—literally. I was just very impressed with everything. It was like I had found my niche. I haven't missed an IS-MPMI meeting since then. I find IS-MPMI meetings to be incredibly useful, just a great use of time, at many levels.

Q: Do you think it is important that Ph.D. and post doc students in your lab are IS-MPMI members? What can/should IS-MPMI offer young scientists in our field?

A: IS-MPMI is a community. Getting to know people. But also, being a formal part of a community like this says something to those who read your CV—it means you cared about it and identified with it and think of yourself professionally as a part of that discipline. People who have never heard of IS-MPMI will know that it was a point of reference for you. People within IS-MPMI will know that you are into the same thing as them. Attendance at the bi-annual meetings is the main thing. And how could you pass up the chance to read stuff like these interviews in the newsletter?

Q: What drew you to plant-microbe interactions?

A: Love of plants, relevance of diseases in agriculture and in natural plant communities, interest in two organisms living intimately and exchanging signals and co-evolving.

Q: What inspired you most in your career?

A: Gene-for-gene disease resistance. How does it work? I'm still inspired by this—we still have work to do.

A close second, as I get further into professorship, is teaching students to distinguish powerful research findings and approaches—to see how to pick a good question and good experimental systems and methods and to really match up their “wishes” about an experiment with command of the literature and a strong dose of reasoning. What inspires me—there are the dual outcomes later on, beautiful insights into biology and people who can be excellent scientists.

Q: What's the most exciting paper you read recently?

A: Lipka V, Dittgen J, Bednarek P, Bhat R, Wiermer M, Stein M, Landtag J, Brandt W, Rosahl S, Scheel D, Llorente F, Molina A, Parker J, Somerville S, Schulze-Lefert P. (2005). Pre- and postinvasion defenses both contribute to nonhost resistance in *Arabidopsis*. *Science*. 310:1180-1183.

Q: What is the next “big thing” in plant-microbe interactions?

A: Two answers: 1) How do *R* gene products, directly and initially, activate defense? 2) How can we make new *R* genes that do useful things they previously could not do?

Q: What's your favorite gene?

A: Even though I don't work on it much anymore, it has to be *Arabidopsis RPS2*!

Q: What are your favorite activities outside the lab?

A: Being with my kids and wife. Camping, trail-building. Playing soccer (U.S. ranked #5 in world - THAT is progress, even if the ranking is, well... speculative).

Q: What book are you reading these days?

A: I don't read many books—sleep is often a higher priority. But I've gotten great pleasure from the few books a year I do read—most recently “Blue Mars” (but it is a sleeper, for sure).

Q: What's your favorite vacation?

A: Backpacking. Or any place with no computers!



**Sophien Kamoun, IS-MPMI
Reporter Editor-In-Chief**

Q: Tell us about yourself and your work.

A: I am an associate professor in oomycete molecular genetics in the Department of Plant Pathology at Ohio State University, working at the Wooster research campus.

I study effector biology in the *Phytophthora infestans-Solanum* pathosystem. Current research objectives in my lab are to functionally characterize interactions between pathogen effectors and host defense processes and to determine the mechanisms of effector protein trafficking from eukaryotic pathogens to host cells. My lab also plays a key role in the genome sequencing projects of several *Phytophthora* spp.

Q: When and why did you first join the Society?

A: I was a member on and off as a postdoc, but I have been a steady member since I joined Ohio State in 1998. Joining the Society was most natural considering that my scientific interests since graduate school center on plant-microbe interactions.

Q: Which IS-MPMI Congress did you first attend? What was the experience like?

A: Interlaken in 1990. It was a fantastic experience. The setting in the Swiss Alps was dazzling and I met several colleagues for the first time. The science was very exciting. Nod factors were just discovered and you could tell that the work on bacterial *hrp* genes was about to generate exciting discoveries. I also recall sleeping through the first morning due to a bad case of jetlag. I felt pretty embarrassed by that.

Q: Do you think it is important that Ph.D. and post doc students in your lab are IS-MPMI members? What can/should IS-MPMI offer young scientists in our field?

A: I certainly encourage them to join. Students and post-docs need to appreciate that the society is critical for activities like organizing the congress and publishing *MPMI*. These activities greatly benefit the community and promote the growth and visibility of our field. This said, these days, students are often under financial stress and it can be difficult to convince them to pay the membership fees.

Q: What drew you to plant-microbe interactions?

A: Initially, a great deal of serendipity, but afterwards, I was very much drawn to a field that is highly dynamic and

very rich in concepts and theories. To this day, I continue to be amazed at all the commonalities that repeatedly arise from very distinct pathosystems.

Q: What inspired you most in your career?

A: A number of things. I was always attracted to biodiversity and the beauty of the natural world. When I grew up, I collected and studied insects, especially beetles. Later on, I avidly read evolutionary writings, such as Stephen Jay Gould's work. In school, I was very inspired by early molecular biology work, such as the experiments and models of Jacob and Monod, Watson and Crick, and a few others. Many of those experiments were amazingly creative with such a simple and elegant design. I still view DNA, evolution, and diversity as the inescapable cornerstones of biology.

Q: What's the most exciting paper you read recently?

A: The papers from the Martin and Stebbins labs that show that AvrPtoB has E3 ubiquitin ligase activity that is required for suppressing hypersensitivity. These papers persuaded me that suppression of programmed cell death will turn out to be a central feature of the biotrophic lifestyle in many pathogens, not just bacteria.

Q: What is the next "big thing" in plant-microbe interactions?

A: High-throughput 3D structure analysis of effector proteins.

Q: What's your favorite gene?

A: Right now, I would say the CRN family of effectors that widely occurs in pathogenic oomycetes. Mostly because they remain mysterious and we don't precisely understand what they do.

Q: What are your favorite activities outside the lab?

A: Sports, movies, music...

Q: What book are you reading these days?

A: "Blink: The power of thinking without thinking" by Malcolm Gladwell. It's very entertaining and describes some intriguing experiments in human psychology.

Q: What's your favorite vacation?

A: There are many magical spots out there. I loved Australia and South Africa. But my favorite would be to travel to an exotic location for the first time.

Update on the XIII International Congress on Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions

July 21 - 27, 2007, Sorrento, Italy - Hilton Sorrento Palace Congress Centre



The organization of the next IS-MPMI Congress is in full-throttle and going well. The website (www.mpmi2007.org) is activated, the event has been widely publicized, and the next announcement will be released by the end of the summer.

An International Advisory Scientific Committee is being appointed, and it will work together with the Italian National Scientific Committee to develop a state-of-the-art scientific program that will cover as many aspects of MPMI as possible. This will include plant-pathogen recognition, signaling, plant responses, plant interactions with pathogenic fungi, bacteria and viruses, symbiotic plant-microbe interactions, plant nematode and insect interactions, plant endophyte interactions, mechanism of resistance to microbes, biocontrol interactions, and microbe-microbe interactions.

The general framework of the Congress involves an opening ceremony, about 10 plenary, 20 concurrent (with no more than three running at the same time), and two poster sessions spread over five days. There is the possibility to organize satellite meetings, and colleagues that wish to do so are requested to contact the Local Organizing Committee (committee@mpmi2007.org).

Search for sponsors is under way, and we expect to be able to provide travel support to selected students (the application program will be published soon).

A provisional budget plan for the Congress has been developed and approved by the Board of Directors of the IS-MPMI, which allows us to establish the early Congress registration fees at 550 euro for IS-MPMI members, 650 euro for nonmembers, and 350 euro for students. Registration includes: access to Congress facilities and Congress package, transportation from and to airport and between different hotels and the Hilton, a guided visit to Pompeii excavations, and Sorrento orientation tour, and all coffee breaks and all lunches on site.

Why did we choose Sorrento for the IS-MPMI Congress?

Sorrento is perched high on the cliffs overlooking the Gulf of Naples, offering breathtaking views of the spectacular landscape that captivates the visitor. The town gives its name to the Sorrentine peninsula, a large area of land

extending from Vico Equense to Massa Lubrense that is suspended between green mountains and transparent blue sea. The town has been a popular vacation and cultural destination in the Campania region of southern Italy for centuries. It offers a wide selection of accommodations in hotels of different categories. The convenient geographical location makes it an ideal departure point for excursions to Capri, Ischia, Pompeii, Amalfi, Positano, Herculaneum, Paestum, and the Vesuvius, all located within a distance of 50 km.

Finally, plans have been made to make this meeting also a cultural event in a country where ancient Greek and Roman cultures fused and flourished.

The meeting tour includes a visit to the Pompeii excavation, indisputably the best-preserved archaeological site of the Roman time (www.marketplace.it/pompeiruin/; www.marketplace.it/pompeionline/). You will have the chance to travel back in time following professional guidance and wander through an ancient city whose life was frozen about 2,000 years ago. The delegates that would like to extend their immersion in the local attractions will be able to visit the summit of the nearby Vesuvius volcano and the incredibly beautiful coast of Sorrento, Amalfi, Positano, and Ravello, all reachable by single day tours from Sorrento. Few will be able to resist the attraction of the island of Capri, located in front of Sorrento, a land of such a beauty that the Roman Emperor Tiberius left Rome, *caput mundi*, and made his home there.

Welcome and farewell parties will include some cultural entertainment and classical Neapolitan music.

Visit our website and pre-register in order to receive upcoming announcements – www.mpmi2007.org.
First important deadline: July 15, 2006 for online pre-registration

Congress Web Site: <http://mpmi2007.org>
Contact Matteo Lorito, Dipartimento Ar.Bo.Pa.Ve., Facoltà di Agraria, Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II", Via Università, 100 - 80055 Portici (NA), Italy
E-mail: lorito@mpmi2007.org or committee@mpmi2007.org,

The Agency Sirene Eventi will assist participants for pre-registrations, booking accommodation and transportation to/from Sorrento. E-mail: info@mpmi2007.org; Phone: +39(081)877060; Fax: +39(081)8770258

Benvenuti A Sorrento!



An agreement with the Hilton Sorrento Palace Congress Centre has been reached and a very suitable price for rooms has been obtained in this first class hotel. We need to fill and guarantee a minimum number of rooms at the HSPCC, so please check the Congress price at the Hilton before booking elsewhere! (The Hilton Sorrento Palace offers extensive leisure and meeting facilities, with 21 meeting rooms.)



Sorrento is famous for the handmade artifacts, the local cuisine, and colorful and lively narrow streets, but also for its museums, monuments, archaeological sites, and nature. It is a resort town close to Naples, which attracts international congresses, music, theater, and sports events. Sorrento can be reached by plane: Naples International Airport is a one-hour drive from the town and it's connected to all the main capitals of Europe, with direct flights from New York, London, Paris, Munich, Amsterdam, and Barcelona and also by

train. Naples Central Station is one of the largest and best connected in South Italy, only one hour away from Sorrento by metro. Fast train service is available from Milan, Bologna, Florence, and Rome.

Typical agriculture products of the area are lemons (represented in the Congress logo), a famous Sorrentine variety of controlled origin used to make liquors and pastries.

Other culinary delights include pasta dishes, fish and sea food and some of the best Neapolitan pizzas. Not to mention the wines, which include some of the best "whites" in the Country.

We would like to extend an invitation to everyone, delegates and accompanying persons alike, to attend this scientific and cultural event. Let yourself be lured by the otherworldly singing and beauty of the mythological Sirens capable of inexorably attracting sailors and fishermen and today's tourists and scientists alike.

Meet IS-MPMI Members

IS-MPMI's diverse membership spans the globe and includes professionals who have been in their field for decades as well as those who are just starting out. To help members learn more about their colleagues, the *IS-MPMI Reporter* includes profiles of members at different career stages and chosen randomly.

Student



Luis Maldonado

Cinvestav Irapuato Unit
Mexico

I am currently a Ph.D. student at Cinvestav Irapuato Unit, Mexico (Research Center and Advanced Studios in Plant Biotechnology). During my undergraduate studies, I was interested in plant-microbe interactions and started to work in capsidiol biosynthesis (a major phytoalexin in chili pepper and tobacco) and tissue culture techniques focused to phytoalexin production. In 2002, I joined Dr. Edmundo Lozoya's Lab at Cinvestav Irapuato Unit. There, I worked on the tobacco hairy root system to study molecular aspects of phytoalexin and alkaloid biosynthesis in response to different elicitors and endogenous stress signals. From the hairy root system, some sesquiterpene and alkaloid biosynthetic genes were cloned and characterized. Later on, my Ph.D. project was specifically focused on the chili pepper 5-*epi*-aristolochene synthase (*peas1*) promoter characterization. This enzyme catalyzes the critical step in chili pepper phytoalexin biosynthesis, but there are remarkable differences from the previously characterized tobacco 5-*epi*-aristolochene synthase promoters. This fact suggests a particular regulation of the *peas1* gene as a control point in phytoalexin biosynthesis in chili pepper. We then generated transgenic tobacco plants carrying different *peas1-gusA* transcriptional fusions as a first approach to detect key *cis*-acting elements involved in its transcriptional activation. We are also interested in how signal transduction pathways are interacting in spatial and temporal in *peas1* regulation. This system allows the comparison of *peas1*-mediated *gusA* versus tobacco 5-*epi*-aristolochene synthase gene expression in response to a variety of pathogen-associated molecular patterns (e.g., pep-13) and endogenous stress signals. Moreover, we have analyzed the *peas1* promoter response to avirulent and virulent *Pseudomonas* and *Erwinia* strains, with interesting results.

However, it is quite necessary to canalize efforts and attention to study other topics in plant-microbe interactions. We now have the opportunity to evaluate MAP kinase activity in chili pepper in response to some pathogen-associated molecular patterns.

I'm also very interested in bacterial effector proteins, lipid-derived signals, MAP kinase targets, systemic acquired response, and global approaches to study gene expression patterns during pathogen attack.

To be an IS-MPMI member means a great opportunity to meet and get in touch with different workgroups to collaborate and the chance to contact fellow researchers working in related fields to look for a postdoctoral residency to continue my learning in this interesting area.

Postdoctoral/Early Career



Vivianne Vleeshouwers

Wageningen University
Wageningen, The Netherlands

My research is focusing on the interaction of wild *Solanum* species with *Phytophthora infestans*. In my lab, we study plant responses to *Phytophthora* effectors; we aim to dissect the defense reaction and at the same time identify novel *R* genes against late blight.

During my M.Sc. study of Biology in Wageningen, The Netherlands, I realized that I wanted to become a scientist and decided to experience as many research topics as possible, in different fields and at different places. I had the opportunity to travel to Siena, Italy, for biochemical research on the cytoskeleton in tobacco, and subsequently, I went to Guelph, Canada to study somatic embryogenesis of alfalfa. After working on a few other research topics, like plant physiology, cytology, and developmental biology, I graduated in 1992.

My interest in molecular plant-microbe interactions developed when I worked on the *Cladosporium fulvum*-tomato interaction in Professor Pierre de Wit's lab. Then, I started my Ph.D. on the *P. infestans*-*Solanum* interaction at the Plant Research International in Wageningen, in collaboration with the Lab of Phytopathology. I studied the defense mechanism of various *Solanum* species to *P. infestans*. My major finding was that resistance was always associated with the hypersensitive response, independent of the type of resistance. *Phytophthora infestans* penetrated all tested plant species, yet the speed of HR induction was correlated with the resistance level. This characteristic occurrence of the HR in the *Solanum-Phytophthora* interaction continues to be the basis for my current research, recognition of *Phytophthora* effectors must be the key to all sorts of resistance phenotypes to late blight.

During my first post doc, I worked on the pathogen side and studied the elicitor gene family of *P. infestans*, in the lab of Francine Govers. Subsequently, I moved to the

potato lab at Plant Breeding, Wageningen University. I worked with two Ph.D. students, Sanwen Huang and Tae-Ho Park, who were mapping and cloning *R* genes to late blight. In addition, I got involved in a potato genomics project and initiated a large-scale search for novel *R* genes in the *Solanum* germplasm. Next to broadening my expertise, my real interest remains on the molecular interaction itself, and recently, I had the chance to shift back to this subject.

I now have my own research group in Plant Breeding. Although potato breeding has proven very unsuccessful in terms of the 'late blight problem,' there is certainly a challenge here. To my opinion, potato breeders have ignored too much the biology of this oomycete (and sometimes treat this complex organism as a chemical). My line of research follows a functional genomics approach to learn why *P. infestans* is sending effectors into the plant and how plants respond and adapt to this. Here, we combine genetic and genomics resource from both the *Solanum* and *P. infestans* sides to screen for novel interactions. For this, we work in close collaboration with Sophien Kamoun, who initiated functional genomics on the *P. infestans* side and built extensive collections of effectors. I also joined forces with Edwin van der Vossen, whose expertise is cloning *R* genes from potato. Recently, we got new projects granted, and several Ph.D. students have started. We have gathered the essential ingredients to gain insight in the working spectra of the *R* genes, the effectors, and most of all the biology of the interaction itself.

I enjoy the field of plant-microbe interactions and the oomycete community with its collegial atmosphere and open collaborations. I had the opportunity to attend almost all IS-MPMI conferences since I started my Ph.D. and even traveled to Mexico both times. The quality of these conferences is high and very inspiring, and every time I look back at a meeting, I feel overwhelmed with information and motivation.

Distinguished member



Ilan Chet
President of the Weizman
Institute of Science
Rehovot, Israel

Prof. Chet was born in Haifa in 1939. He completed his doctoral work in microbiology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Faculty of Agriculture in Rehovot. Prof. Chet's research deals with the biological control of plant

disease, focusing on the use of environment-friendly microorganisms to decrease the need for pesticides. He

has published more than 350 articles in international scientific journals, edited three books in his field, and holds 32 patents. He has trained more than 30 Ph.D. and 50 M.Sc. students.

Prof. Chet served as the Founding Director of the Otto Warburg Minerva Center for Agricultural Biotechnology (1983 to 1986), as Dean of Hebrew University's Faculty of Agriculture in Rehovot (1986 to 1989), and as Vice President for Research and Development of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1991 to 2001). He was a visiting professor at Harvard, Cornell, and Rutgers Universities in the United States and at the University of Goettingen and Lund University in Europe. Chet also served as senior scientist at DuPont, Delaware, U.S.A. and as a member of the scientific advisory committees of both the European Union and NATO. He has been a member of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities since 1998 and the European Academy of Sciences since 2004.

Prof. Chet's national and international renown is exemplified by his rich list of academic appointments, prizes, and awards. These include the Rothschild Prize in Agriculture (1990), an honorary doctorate from Sweden's Lund University (1991), the Max-Planck Award for Distinguished Research (1994), the Israel Prize (1996), the Japanese Arima Prize for Applied Microbiology (1996), the Wolf Prize (1998), and the EMET Prize (2004). He also received the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (2001). He was conferred the title of Institute Professor in the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot, Israel in April 2005. Prof. Chet received an honorary Doctorate from the University of Haifa in 2006.

Ilan and Ruthie have five children: Gal, Guy, Dana, Tal, and Tom.

Welcome New Members

The following members joined IS-MPMI between January 16, 2005 and April 15, 2006.

Please join us in welcoming them to the Society!

Fiona Doohan
Univ College Dublin
Belfield, Dublin 4, IRELAND

Tzvi Tzfira
Univ of Michigan
Ann Arbor, MI, U.S.A.

Elmar Kannenberg
Univ of Georgia
Athens, GA, U.S.A.

Nian Wang
Berkeley, CA, U.S.A.

Benoit Poinssot
Univ of Bourgogne
Dijon, FRANCE



Postdoctoral Position**Plant-Microbe Interactions---Department of Plant Pathology, Michigan State University**

A postdoctoral position is available beginning July 1, 2006 in the laboratory of Dr. Brad Day at Michigan State University. Research in the Day Laboratory studies the molecular genetics of disease resistance, particularly focused on *Arabidopsis thaliana*-*Pseudomonas syringae* (Day et al., 2005. The Plant Cell); however, the expansion of our research into other plant-pathogen systems is possible. The successful candidate will use a variety of molecular biology and biochemistry techniques to study the mechanisms of defense signaling in response to perception of *P. syringae*. Applicants should have received their Ph.D. degree in biochemistry, genetics, plant molecular biology, molecular plant pathology, or a closely related field. Candidates with experience in biochemistry, protein purification, and the

structural/genetic analysis of protein-protein interactions are especially encouraged to apply. Michigan State University offers state-of-the-art research facilities in genomics and the plant sciences, with more than 125 plant research faculty. Salary will be based on qualifications and experience. Michigan State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. **Application Instructions:** Applications will be considered until the position is filled. Applicants should submit a cover letter, a brief summary of past and current research, including a description of specialized techniques, if applicable; a short statement of future research interests, a CV, and the names and contact information for three references. Questions regarding this position or electronic submission of applications should be directed to bday@nature.berkeley.edu, or materials may be sent to: Brad Day, Department of Plant Pathology, 107 CIPS, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1311.

COMING EVENTS**2006**

June 11-14, 2006

XVth Biennial Workshop on Smut Fungi. Prague, Czech Republic.

www.lolo.usd.cas.cz/workshop

July 1-5, 2006

EMBO Workshop in Plant Virology 2006, "Suppression & Circumvention of Host Defense by Plant Viruses" Finland.

<http://cwp.embo.org/w06-17/>

July 17-21, 2006

XVth Congress of the Federation of European Societies of Plant Biology. Lyon, France.

www.fespb2006.org

July 19-21, 2006

16th John Innes Symposium, "Organisms and the Environment: Intergrating Signals and Responses." Norwich, UK.

www.jic.bbsrc.ac.uk/events/symp

July 23-27, 2006

3rd International Workshop on Barley Leaf Blights. Edmonton Alberta, Canada.

orrdd@agr.gc.ca

July 29-August 2, 2006

APS/CPS/MSA Joint Meeting. Québec City, Québec, Canada.

<http://meeting.apsnet.org>

August 5-9, 2006

Plant Biology 2006. Boston, MA.

www.aspb.org/meetings/pb-2006/

August 28-September 5, 2006

International Powdery Mildew Conference. Monterey, CA.

wdgubler@ucdavis.edu

August 31-September 3, 2006

Non-specific and Specific Innate and Acquired Plant Resistance. Budapest, Hungary.

www.nki.hu/pr_symposium2006/index.html

November 8-10

Third Brazilian Meeting on Induced Resistance in Plants to Pathogens. Viosa, Brazil.

www.ufv.br/dfp/ir

November 9-12, 2006

7th Australasian Plant Virology Workshop. Rottneest Island, Perth, Western Australia.

M.Jones@murdoch.edu.au

November 12-16, 2006

7th International Conference on Pseudomonas syringae Pathovars and Related Pathogens. Agadir, Morocco.

www.iavcha.ac.ma/p.syringae2006

2007

July 2-6, 2007

The downy mildews – 2nd International Symposium. Olomouc, Czech Republic.

www.downymildews.upol.cz

July 21-27, 2007

13th Congress on Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions. Sorrento, Italy.

www.mprmi2007.org

July 28-August 1, 2007

APS Annual Meeting. San Diego, CA (Joint with SON)

May 20-26, 2007

5th International Geminivirus Symposium & 3rd International ssDNA Comparative Virology Workshop. Ouro Preto, Minas Gerais, Brazil.

www.ufv.br/dfp/virologia/OP2007

2008

August 24-29, 2008

9th International Congress of Plant Pathology. Torino, Italy.

www.icpp2008.org

Recently published research in *Molecular Plant-Microbe Interactions*Find complete abstracts online with links to full-text articles at www.ismpminet.org/mpmi/search.asp**March 2006, Vol. 19, Issue 3**

The Production of Species-Specific Highly Unsaturated Fatty Acyl-Containing LCOs from *Rhizobium leguminosarum* bv. *trifolii* Is Stringently Regulated by *nodD* and Involves the *nodRL* Genes.

Long- and Short-Chain Plant-Produced Bacterial *N*-Acyl-Homoserine Lactones Become Components of Phyllosphere, Rhizosphere, and Soil.

Inhibition of Resistance Gene-Mediated Defense in Rice by *Xanthomonas oryzae* pv. *oryzicola*.

The Expression of Genes Encoding Lipodepsipeptide Phytotoxins by *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *syringae* Is Coordinated in Response to Plant Signal Molecules.

Nonhost Resistance in *Arabidopsis-Colletotrichum* Interactions Acts at the Cell Periphery and Requires Actin Filament Function.

Cloning and Characterization of Pectate Lyases Expressed in the Esophageal Gland of the Pine Wood Nematode *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*.

Pervasive Purifying Selection Characterizes the Evolution of *I2* Homologs.

Pseudomonas syringae Effector *avrB* Confers Soybean Cultivar-Specific Avirulence on *Soybean mosaic virus* Adapted for Transgene Expression but Effector *avrPto* Does Not.

Two Novel MvaT-Like Global Regulators Control Exoproduct Formation and Biocontrol Activity in Root-Associated *Pseudomonas fluorescens* CHA0.

Insights into Symbiotic Nitrogen Fixation in *Medicago truncatula*.

Suppression of Defense Response in Plants by the *avrBs3/ptbA* Gene Family of *Xanthomonas* spp.

Identification of a *Plum pox virus* CI-Interacting Protein from Chloroplast That Has a Negative Effect in Virus Infection.

April 2006, Vol. 19, Issue 4

Sinorhizobium meliloti Differentiation During Symbiosis with Alfalfa: A Transcriptomic Dissection.

Spontaneous Root-Nodule Formation in the Model Legume *Lotus japonicus*: A Novel Class of Mutants Nodulates in the Absence of Rhizobia.

Heterologous Expression of the *Mi-1.2* Gene from Tomato Confers Resistance Against Nematodes but Not Aphids in Eggplant.



MgSlt2, a Cellular Integrity MAP Kinase Gene of the Fungal Wheat Pathogen *Mycosphaerella graminicola*, Is Dispensable for Penetration but Essential for Invasive Growth.

EIL2 Transcription Factor and Glutathione Synthetase Are Required for Defense of Tobacco Against Tobacco Blue Mold.

Transcriptome Analysis of the Barley-*Fusarium graminearum* Interaction.

Biocontrol of Avocado Dematophora Root Rot by Antagonistic *Pseudomonas fluorescens* PCL1606 Correlates With the Production of 2-Hexyl 5-Propyl Resorcinol.

Integrated Signaling Network Involving Calcium, Nitric Oxide, and Active Oxygen Species but Not Mitogen-Activated Protein Kinases in BcPG1-Elicited Grapevine Defenses.

A Class 1 Hemoglobin Gene from *Alnus firma* Functions in Symbiotic and Nonsymbiotic Tissues to Detoxify Nitric Oxide.

Population Behavior Analysis of *dspE* and *pelD* Regulation in *Erwinia chrysanthemi* 3937.

May 2006, Vol. 19, Issue 5

A Root-Knot Nematode Secretory Peptide Functions as a Ligand for a Plant Transcription Factor.

The *Rhizobium leguminosarum* biovar *trifolii* ANU794 Induces Novel Developmental Responses on the Subterranean Clover Cultivar Woogenellup.

Transcriptome Analysis of *Arabidopsis* Clubroots Indicate a Key Role for Cytokinins in Disease Development.

A Rice Calcium- and Calmodulin-Dependent Protein Kinase Restores Nodulation to a Legume Mutant.

Upregulation of Jasmonate-Inducible Defense Proteins and Differential Colonization of Roots of *Oryza sativa* Cultivars with the Endophyte *Azoarcus* sp.

Fusarium Phytotoxin Trichothecenes Have an Elicitor-Like Activity in *Arabidopsis thaliana*, but the Activity Differed Significantly Among Their Molecular Species.

A Symbiont-Independent Endo-1,4- β -Xylanase from the Plant-Parasitic Nematode *Meloidogyne incognita*.

Molecular Analysis of the Rice MAP Kinase Gene Family in Relation to *Magnaporthe grisea* Infection.

Multiple Resistance Traits Control *Plum pox virus* Infection in *Arabidopsis thaliana*.

MPMI Journal Articles continued from page 11

A Putative Role for Fusaric Acid in Biocontrol of the Parasitic Angiosperm *Orobancha ramosa*.

Different Mutations in the Genome-Linked Protein VPg of *Potato virus Y* Confer Virulence on the *pvr2³* Resistance in Pepper.

June 2006, Vol. 19, Issue 6

cDNA-AFLP Combined with Functional Analysis Reveals Novel Genes Involved in the Hypersensitive Response

Arabidopsis Displays Centromeric DNA Hypomethylation and Cytological Alterations of Heterochromatin Upon Attack by *Pseudomonas syringae*

Overexpression of a 3-Ketoacyl-CoA Thiolase in *Leptosphaeria maculans* Causes Reduced Pathogenicity on *Brassica napus*

Induction of Lateral Root Structure Formation on Petunia Roots: A Novel Effect of GMI1000 *Ralstonia solanacearum* Infection Impaired in Hrp Mutants

The Role of Several Multidrug Resistance Systems in *Erwinia chrysanthemi* Pathogenesis

Analysis of Silencing Escape of *Tomato leaf curl virus*: An Evaluation of the Role of DNA Methylation

Cloning and Characterization of a Novel Invertase from the Obligate Biotroph *Uromyces fabae* and Analysis of Expression Patterns of Host and Pathogen Invertases in the Course of Infection

y4xP, an Open Reading Frame Located in a Type III Protein Secretion System Locus of *Sinorhizobium fredii* USDA257 and USDA191, Encodes Cysteine Synthase

The *Erwinia amylovora* *avrRpt2EA* Gene Contributes to Virulence on Pear and *AvrRpt2EA* Is Recognized by *Arabidopsis* RPS2 When Expressed in *Pseudomonas syringae*

Mi-1-Mediated Aphid Resistance Involves Salicylic Acid and Mitogen-Activated Protein Kinase Signaling Cascades

The *Arabidopsis thaliana* Transcriptome in Response to *Agrobacterium tumefaciens*

Calcineurin Is Required for Sclerotial Development and Pathogenicity of *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* in an Oxalic Acid-Independent Manner

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