



FESPAlert

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FESP B Congress

The **14th FESP B Congress** will be held in the historic and beautiful city of **Krakow, Poland**, and registration for the Congress is now OPEN.

This magical city, on the banks of the Wisla (Vistula) River, has one of the best-preserved medieval city centres in Europe, with dozens of churches covering almost every architectural period and surrounded by monasteries and abbeys



Laid out in 1257, the Main Market Square is one of the largest medieval market squares in Europe. It is dominated by the sixteenth-century Sukiennice (Cloth Hall), which continues to operate as a trading centre with lively market stalls and pavement cafés in and around the building.

Krakow's cultural richness has long been recognized, and quite rightly it was chosen as the European City of Culture in 2000. Almost a quarter of Poland's museum holdings can be found here and the city's cultural scene is without equal.



13th century Basilica of the virgin Mary



11th century Romanesque church of St Andrew

A student population of almost 100,000 ensures a lively atmosphere throughout the city. Added to this are the increasing numbers of tourists who have discovered Krakow; as a result there are even more bars, cafés and restaurants, making the city centre a very attractive place to relax and socialise.



Attractions around the city's main square

As well as a rich cultural heritage, the city has an active intellectual heart, with nine different Universities located here, including the Jagiellonian University - the oldest in Poland, dating from the 14th century. The FESPB congress promises to further enhance the academic profile with a rich programme featuring many international speakers, and plenty of opportunities for presentations from FESPB members.

All information regarding the above can be found at the Congress website:

<http://www.zfr-pan.krakow.pl/konf/>

If you plan to attend, you can download the PRE-REGISTRATION FORM from the website, and after filling in, send by fax or by post to the Congress Secretariat. You can also pre-register ON LINE, although this should be confirmed by sending a form as above. When using the on line facility you will need to give a login name and password. By return email you will receive an authorization code which should be used (only necessary once) to access the Congress web site.

Research news

Cloning of trees in Russia

Genetic engineering of trees focuses on growth rate, wood quality, resistance to pests and diseases, herbicides, salts and other stresses. Specialists of the Siberian Institute of Physiology and Biochemistry of Plants, Northern Branch, Russian Academy of Sciences (Irkutsk), have transformed aspen, poplar and Cembra pine with the corn gene *ugt*, which results in higher levels of auxin. Transformed trees grow more quickly, and it is hoped such plantations will save primeval taiga woods from felling and would allow to reduce transportation costs for wood delivery to woodworking sites. Meanwhile researchers from the Institute of Wood Genetics and Selection (Voronezh) have developed cell cultures of Karelian birch. Long-term field trials have proved that the cloned trees grow well, within 3-4 years their stems become tuberous or ribbed – these are the exterior signs of patterned timber, which does not appear in conventionally grown trees until the age of 10 to 12.

However, accelerated growth trees may exhaust the soil quickly, and genetically modified pollen can change the natural structure of forest population.

Dispersal of GM seeds

One of the potential risks associated with the wider release of genetically modified crops and their use in agriculture is the hybridisation of transgenic plants with their wild relatives. Previously pollen dispersal was seen as the main route, but new work at the Université de Lille in France, highlights the role of seed dispersal - inadvertently assisted by human activity - in the potential dispersal of transgenic material. "Gene flow and interbreeding from cultivated to wild plant populations has important evolutionary and ecological consequences," says Dr. Jean-François Arnaud of Lille University. "This requires detailed investigation to assess the risk of transgene escapes into natural ecosystems." Sugar beets are of particular interest because they are cross compatible with their wild relatives, for example the sea beet, and crop-to-wild gene flow is likely to occur via "weedy" hybrid plants locally infesting fields.

The experiment, conducted near Boulogne in Northern France, investigated the potential for "escape" of transgenic material by analysing a set of molecular markers in a population of weed beets within a field crop of commercially grown sugar beet, a natural coastal population of wild sea beet situated over 1.5 km away and a linking "contact zone" along a river with a possible mixture of wild and weedy beets. DNA from plants harvested in the three areas was extracted and purified and individuals genotyped using eight molecular markers to establish the extent of gene exchange.

There was clear evidence of weedy beets originating from the commercial crop field in the riverside "contact zone" some 1.5 kms away from the field. "Although gene flow through pollen was limited," explains Dr. Arnaud, "we found that weedy beets can act as a crop-to-wild bridge by escaping from commercial beet fields to wild populations via accidental seed flow. Our results highlight the likelihood for transgene escape resulting from seed dispersal events." Dr. Arnaud believes that the main mechanisms for seed flow in the studied area are human activities.

Other news

Nuffield Bioethics contributes to the GM debate

Genetically modified crops could help small-scale farmers in developing countries according to the Nuffield Council on Bioethics in a recent Discussion Paper. In 1999, the Nuffield Council recommended that there was a moral imperative for making GM crops readily and economically available to people in developing countries who want them. “We have reviewed the scientific developments since our last report as well as recent trends in poverty and hunger in developing countries. In the light of this evidence, we have no hesitation in affirming – and expanding – our previous conclusions,” said Dr Sandy Thomas, Director of the Nuffield Council. “However, we recognise that we are discussing only part of a much larger picture,” continued Dr Thomas. Food security and the reduction of poverty in developing countries are extremely complex issues. “We do not claim that GM crops will eliminate the need for economic, political or social change. However, we do believe that GM technology could make a useful contribution, in appropriate circumstances, to improving agriculture and the livelihood of poor farmers in developing countries.”

The draft considers developments in regulation and trade and concludes that European agricultural policy is likely to restrict severely the freedom of choice of farmers in developing countries. Many developing countries do not have the infrastructure to meet strict EU requirements for labelling and traceability of GM crops.

The possible costs, benefits and risks associated with particular GM crops can only be assessed on a case by case basis. “It is important not to generalise,” said Professor Michael Lipton, a member of the Working Group. “However GM crops do, in some cases, have considerable potential to increase crop yields. There is an ethical obligation to explore these benefits responsibly.”

Small-scale farmers in China and South Africa are already benefiting from GM cotton, modified to resist the cotton bollworm. Another example cited is research to genetically modify bananas to resist the Black Sigatoka fungus. Untreated, this fungus can reduce banana yields by as much as 70%. Currently, farmers spend one quarter of the production costs on fungicides, and farm workers may risk their health by applying the spray, up to 40 times per year. A GM banana, resistant to the fungus, could eliminate these problems, reducing the amount of fungicide required and, at the same time, increasing yields.

Genetic modification could also be used to address specific agricultural problems, such as drought and salty soils, where other methods of plant breeding have not proved successful. The Nuffield Council recommends that additional resources should be committed by governments and the EC to fund a major expansion of GM-related research relevant to the needs of small-scale farmers in developing countries.

The Council is inviting views particularly welcome comments from people in developing countries on the draft version of the Discussion Paper, by 8 August 2003.

Journal of Plant Physiology: Volume 160 issue 7
Special issue Biotechnology

Plant Biotechnology: From basic science to industrial applications U.Sonnenewald	723-725
Discussion of current status of commercialization of plant biotechnology in the global marketplace R. Emrich	727-734
Overview of the current status of genetically modified plants in Europe as compared to the USA P. Brandt	735-742
Towards the ideal GMP: Homologous recombination and marker gene excision H. Puchta	743-754
Benefits and risks of antibody and vaccine production in transgenic plants H. Warzecha, H.S. Mason	755-764
Towards a more versatile @-glucan biosynthesis in plants G.A. Kok-Jacon, Q. Ji, J.-P. Vincken, R.G.F. Visser	765-777
Metabolic engineering of fatty acids for breeding of new oilseed crops: strategies, problems and first results H. Drexler, P. Spiekermann, A. Meyer, F. Domergue, T. Zank, P. Sperling, A. Abbadi, E. Heinz	779-802
On the specificity of lipid hydroperoxide fragmentation by fatty acid hydroperoxide lyase from <i>Arabidopsis thaliana</i> R. Kandzia, M. Stumpe, E. Berndt, M. Szalata, K. Matsui, I. Feussner	803-809
Engineering fructan metabolism in plants T. Ritsema, S.C.M. Smeekens	811-820
Vitamin production in transgenic plants K. Herbers	821-829
Synthesis of novel biomaterials in plants L. Moire, E. Rezzonico, Y. Poirier	831-839

Within the next weeks a Special Issue dedicated to "Plant Biotechnology" will be published in the Journal of Plant Physiology. For content details please see the table of contents.

We offer you a special service: for three months after online publication this issue will be freely accessible for every interested customer. You will have direct and free access to this most up-to-date information in the field of plant

biotechnology.

We would like to alert you as soon as the online publication launches. In this case send an email with the subject "JPP-Biotechnology" to a.schmiedeknecht@urbanfischer.de. As soon as the issue is ready for download (in PDF format) you will receive an email quoting the URL.

Join the list, you will appreciate the service!

Positions available

Full details of these positions are posted on the FESPP website on the Jobs and Studentships pages (<http://www.fespp.org/jobs.asp>)

Ozone Effects on Upland Vegetation: water relations and stomata

PhD position, Lancaster, UK

A three-year postgraduate studentship funded by DEFRA is available immediately or from the autumn to work with Prof. Bill Davies (<http://bssv01.lancs.ac.uk/bs/people/teach/wjd.html>) and Dr Gerhard Kerstiens (<http://bssv01.lancs.ac.uk/gk/gk.html>) on the investigation of subtle effects of moderately elevated ozone concentrations on British upland vegetation. The study will involve physiological experiments with selected species that will be grown in the new controlled-environment facilities of the Lancaster Environment Centre (<http://www.lec.lancs.ac.uk/>). This will include characterisation of ozone uptake and plant water relations and the elucidation of the role of ABA and ethylene in the interaction between O₃ and plant water status. The work will be carried out in close collaboration with four other groups, which form part of a consortium.

For an informal discussion please contact Prof. Bill Davies (w.davies@lancaster.ac.uk), Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, Lancaster LA1 4YQ, UK

Details of how to apply for this PhD can be found at:
<http://biol.lancs.ac.uk/bs/admit/PhDStud.htm>

Tonoplast Aquaporins

Postdoctoral Position, University of Bourgogne - Dijon, France

A 12 month postdoctoral position is available starting in September 2003, or at a mutually agreed later date, to join the Cell phytoBiology team of the University of Bourgogne. Using tools from molecular biology to biophysics, the successful applicant will study the involvement of tonoplast aquaporins (Gerbeau *et al*, 1999, *Plant J.* (18) 577-587, Reisen *et al*, 2003, *Plant Mol. Biol.* (52) in press) in plant cell water

homeostasis. The technique of RNAi will be used to switch off the expression of tonoplast aquaporins. Characterization of transformed cell lines will then start by the determination of aquaporin expression level and measuring vacuolar membrane permeability.

The successful applicant will join a team of researchers investigating vacuole functions (Marty, 1999, *Plant Cell* (11) 577-587), sponsored by the CNRS, INRA and the University of Bourgogne and situated in Dijon, a gateway into central Europe. The annual net salary is 22,200 euros (not liable to be taxed).

A Ph.D in Cellular Biology obtained within the last 5 years is required. Applicants should have a background in molecular biology and/or membrane biochemistry. Some knowledge in plant cell physiology would be appreciated. Due to the source of funding, applicants must not be French citizens and must not have received a previous salary in France.

Qualified candidates should send, BY fax or email, as soon as possible, a letter expressing their interest and skills, a curriculum vitae, and the names and e-mail addresses of three referees to Dr P. Gerbeau, UMR 1088 INRA-Université de Bourgogne, FRE/CNRS 2625 Plante-Microbe-Environnement, BP 47 870 Université de Bourgogne, 9 avenue A. Savary - 21 078 Dijon Cedex, France.

Phone : 00 33 (0)3 80 39 39 66 - Fax : 00 33 (0)3 80 39 62 87

e.mail : Patricia.Gerbeau@u-bourgogne.fr

Plant Biology MSc programme

Plant Biology at Utrecht University runs a two-year MSc programme that trains and educates plant biologists at a high academic level. Masters students will, individually or in a team, be challenged to solve fundamental and applied plant biological problems. To this end students are shown the most modern experimental and mathematical methods and techniques. Furthermore, students will also learn to apply molecular and genetical tools to a wide range of biological problems.

All courses and practical training are given in English by a team of internationally distinguished scientists.

More information on the programme and registration can be found on the flyer or on the website www.bio.uu.nl/plantbiology

Molecular Plant Physiology

Postdoctoral position, Cologne, Germany

The Botanical Institute of the University of Cologne invites applications for a PostDoc position in the field of Molecular Plant Physiology. The focus of research will lie on functional genomics of membrane transporter genes from *Arabidopsis thaliana*.

Applicants should have fundamental experience in Molecular Biology, knowledge of plant metabolism and should enjoy working on biochemical and physiological topics. The positions will be confined at first to three years, the salary will be according to

BAT IIa. Please post your applications (including CV and a short description of your working experience) to:

Prof. Dr. U.I. Flügge

Universität zu Köln

Botanisches Institut

Gyrhofstrasse 15

D-50931 Köln

Email: ui.fluegge@uni-koeln.de

<http://www.uni-koeln.de/math-nat-fak/botanik/bot2/agflue/HOME/index.htm>

Carbon and Oxygen Isotopes in Photosynthesis

Post-doctoral position, Italy

A post-doctoral position is available from June 2003 to work at CNR, Porano (TR), Italy in the photosynthesis and stable isotope laboratory on the study of "carbon and oxygen isotope analysis in photosynthetic products, metabolic partitioning and sources and sinks", within the framework of the European Community Program NETCARB. The 1 year position is intended to provide training in physiological ecology of photosynthesis, metabolism and stable isotope techniques. Candidates are expected to possess expertise in photosynthesis, gas exchange, knowledge of IRMS (stable isotope ratio mass spectrometry) techniques. Background in biogeochemical cycles and ecosystem discrimination is also appreciated. For further information and to discuss the program please contact:

Dr. Enrico Brugnoli

CNR, Institute of Agro-Environmental Biology and Forestry

Via Marconi 2

05010 PORANO (TR), Italy

Phone: (+39) 0763-374689

Fax: (+39) 0763-374330

E-mail: brugnoli@ibaf.cnr.it

The age limit for applicants is 35-years or lower. Applicants must be EU citizen or citizen of any EU Associated State or, in alternative have resided in an EU country or Associated State for at least 5 years. Applicants should not be Italian citizen or have resided and worked in Italy for more than 12 months in the last 2 years. Applications (to include a curriculum vitae, summary of research experience and the names, addresses and telephone numbers of three academic referees) should be sent at the earliest convenience to Dr.Enrico Brugnoli at the above address.

Role of Sphingolipids in the Secretory Pathway Of Plants

Postdoctoral position, Bordeaux, France

Available September 2003 for 12 months in the Laboratoire de Biogenèse Membranaire, CNRS-Université Bordeaux II. Extension to 18 months possible. Salary: 2150 euros per month.

Research in UMR 5544 deals with regulation of membrane lipid metabolism in plants and its role in the secretory pathway, membrane homeostasis and wax lipid production. The project will focus on the role of lipids and enzymes of lipid metabolism in the structural organization and function of the ER-Golgi-Plasma membrane pathway of plant cells. We will particularly study Glucosylceramide and the ceramide glucosyltransferase.

Glucosylceramide is a sphingolipid which accumulates in the plasma membrane and can be engaged in specific chemical links with sterols and other membrane components to form membrane domains called lipid rafts. Such domains lead to lipid and protein segregation which is a key step in lipid and protein delivery in the secretory pathway and assembly as functional domains at the cell surface.

The postdoctoral program will concern studies on the physiological role of Glucosylceramide in the secretory pathway through different steps:

- * Development of Glucosylceramide deficient mutants of *Arabidopsis thaliana* (salk mutants, RNAi approach, inducible mutants&).
- * Formation and composition of lipid rafts in these Glucosylceramide deficient mutants.
- * Analysis of the targeting of Golgi and Plasma membrane proteins in Glucosylceramide deficient plants (either by expressing protein markers in the mutants or by blocking glucosylceramide synthesis by specific inhibitors in wild plants).

The postdoctoral candidate is expected to have some experience in transgenic approaches in plants and protein expression, and the classical background in biochemistry and molecular biology.

Contacts:

Patrick Moreau (33 5 57 57 16 81 ; pmoreau@biomemb.u-bordeaux2.fr)

René Lessire (33 5 57 57 10 45 ; Rene.Lessire@biomemb.u-bordeaux2.fr)

Auxin Signalling Pathways

3 years Post-Doc position Gif sur Yvette, France

Position immediately available in the context of the EC-Research Training Network: ACCY

The purpose of ACCY is to unravel the auxin signalling pathways that mediate the control of cell growth. The programme will focus on identifying the molecular mechanisms underlying auxin action on the cell cycle in growing cells as well as quiescent cells which re-enter into division under developmental or environmental constraints. ACCY brings together seven participants which have accumulated a wide

spectrum of complementary tools and expertise for analysing auxin signalling cascades and the plant cell cycle at the molecular, cellular and whole plant levels.

The overall aim of ACCY is to improve our understanding of the genetic and molecular control of cell division by the plant growth substance auxin in various cell and plant systems using a combination of modern biochemical, genetic and molecular cell biology approaches.

Three key objectives can be defined:

Objective 1: Studying the auxin signalling pathway involved in the control of cell growth

Objective 2: Identifying the molecular mechanisms of auxin action on the cell cycle

Objective 3: Investigating the mechanisms promoting the re-entry of quiescent cells into division

The candidate will search for novel auxin targets and will contribute to the functional characterisation of the auxin-binding protein ABP1, following work already in progress in the lab. Background in molecular and cellular biology, genetics and/or plant development is required. An expertise in genomics and bioinformatics would be an advantage but is not conditional. Collaborative work will be developed with most partners of the Research Training Network ACCY and specific training will be proposed in the context of the network.

Location: Gif sur Yvette, 25 km south of Paris, France

Condition: Due to EC-RTN rules, the position is offered to a PhD researcher from the EC or associated States but not France.

Contact:

Dr C. Perrot-Rechenmann

Institut des Sciences Végétales (ISV), CNRS, Avenue de la Terrasse Bat 23, 91198, GIF SUR YVETTE, Cedex

e-mail : catherine.rechenmann@isv.cnrs-gif.fr

phone: 33 1 69 82 35 88

Impacts of CO₂ and Climate on C4 Plant Fitness

PhD position, Sheffield, UK

A NERC-funded postgraduate studentship is available in the Department of Animal and Plant Sciences, University of Sheffield, England, U.K. (Supervisor: Colin Osborne)

Geological evidence has recently cast uncertainty on the long-held theory that C4 plants evolved in response to a decline in atmospheric CO₂. This PhD project will address the problem for the first time using an experimental approach, utilising state-of-the-art growth facilities at Sheffield. It will provide a timely evaluation of the extent to which a photosynthetic benefit of C4 plants over C3 contemporaries in low

CO₂ translates into an increase in fitness. Coupled with field transplant experiments along an altitudinal gradient in South Africa, these experiments will give important insights into the selection pressures acting on C₄ plants. The student will have opportunities for fieldwork in South Africa, and will be based in a department rated 5* in the latest RAE, with a breadth of research in molecular and ecological physiology.

Further information and details of how to apply for this PhD can be found at:
<http://www.shef.ac.uk/aps/graduate-information/graduate-opportunities.html>

Forthcoming meetings

General meeting of the French Society of Plant Physiology

Orsay, 9 - 11 July, 2003

All the main lectures and the poster sessions will be in English. The first and second circulars are also available on the site of the society www.sfpv.org

The 4th conference on Biochemistry, Ecophysiology and Population Biology of Alpine and Polar Plants

Trins near Innsbruck, Tyrol, Austria, 9 - 11 July, 2003

This conference will again offer an opportunity for scientific exchange and collaborations among scientists interested in Alpine and Polar Plant Biology. One aim of the conference is to connect high mountain plant research with studies on polar plants especially in the fields of bio-chemistry, ecophysiology and population biology. Keynote speakers will introduce the scientific themes (preliminary):

1. Stress Physiology (R. Bligny)
2. Ecophysiology (T.A. Day; R. Crawford)
3. Population Biology (U. Molau; I. Till-Bottraud)
4. Community Ecology (R. Callaway)

<http://www.ujf-grenoble.fr/JAL/trins2003/index.htm>

ASPB Annual Meeting

Honolulu, Hawaii. 26 – 30 July, 2003.

<http://www.aspb.org>

The XXI SPPS (Scandinavian Plant Physiology Society) Congress

Allinge-Sandvig, Bornholm, DENMARK 21-24 August 2003

Main topics of the congress:

The Plant Nutriome

Stress Biology

Bioimaging in Plant Biology

Invited Lecturers:

Eduardo Blumwald (USA)

Mary Lou Guerinot (USA)

Stefan Jansson (Sweden)

Jakko Kangasjärvi (Finland)

Satoshi Mori (Japan)

Nick Read (UK)

Mark Stitt (Germany)

Jens Stougaard (Denmark)

Michael F. Thomashow (USA)

Main Organizer:

Prof. Jan K. Schjørring

Department of Agricultural Sciences

Plant Nutrition Laboratory

Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University

DK-1871 Frederiksberg

Denmark

e-mail: jks@kvl.dk

**Joint meeting of the Plant Growth Regulation Society of America and
the Japanese Society for Chemical Regulation of Plants**

Vancouver, British Columbia Canada. August 3-7, 2003

Sessions on: molecular aspects of plant growth regulation, fruit maturation, PGR uses in tree and woody plants, and applied PGR research.

SEB Symposium: membrane Trafficking in Plants

University of Glasgow, UK, 23 – 26 August, 2003

Contact: Mike Blatt. M.blatt@bio.gla.ac.uk

<http://www.sebiology.org/meetings/2003/Glasgow/index.htm>

International Conference on Phloem Transport

Bayreuth, Germany. August 31 - September 5, 2003

Sessions include

1. Development and cell biology of phloem, differentiation, structure, ultrastructure.
Speakers: K. Oparka, Dundee and A. Van Bel, Giessen
2. Source-sink relationships, assimilate metabolism, phloem loading and unloading, regulation, interactions.
Speakers: N. Sauer, Erlangen, J. Patrick, Newcastle
3. Phloem pathogens and parasites affecting phloem performance, viruses, bacteria, endophytes, aphids, phytoparasites.
Speakers: B. Ding, Columbus, J. Pritchard, Birmingham
4. Phloem transport of macromolecules and signalling substances, proteins, nucleic acids, siRNA, SAR, phytohormones, electric signals, pressure signals.
Speakers: W. Lucas, Davis, H. Hayashi, Tokyo
5. New techniques and new tools for phloem research, non-invasive methods, cellular analysis, new data bases, bioinformatic tools.
Speakers: U. Schurr, Jülich, R. Lemoine, Poitiers

Meeting web URL <http://www.phloem2003.de>

Registration at <https://www.bitoeck.uni-bayreuth.de/phloem/>

Plant Genomics European Meeting (GEMs) 2

University of York, UK, 3 – 6 September, 2003

Contact: kvd1@york.ac.uk

<http://www.garnet.arabidopsis.org.uk>

Spanish and Portugese Society of Plant Physiology Reunion meeting

Universitat de les Illes Balears, Palma de Mallorca. 16 - 20 September, 2003

<http://www.sefv.org/www.sefv.org/index.htm>

Chemistry and Biology of Marine Organisms

London, 21- 26 September.

Contact: Dr. V. Roussis. roussis@pharm.uoa.gr

3rd International Symposium on Dynamics of Physiological Processes in Woody Roots

Perth, Australia, 29 September-3 October 2003

Meeting web URL: <http://www.botany.uwa.edu.au/woodyroots/>

Sessions include:

1. Assimilate allocation and partitioning in roots
2. Root growth, development and turnover
3. Water flux
4. Nutrient uptake and utilization
5. Rhizosphere ecology/interactions
6. Root architecture

Keynote speakers:

Frederick (Rick) Meinzer (USDA-FS Corvallis, USA)

Mary Topa (Boyce Institute, USA)

Carol Peterson (Univ. Waterloo, Canada)

Christoph Leuschner (Univ of Gottingen, Germany)

Heinz Rennenberg (Uni of Freiberg, Germany)

Sally Smith (Univ of Adelaide, Australia)

Torgny Nasholm (SUA-Umea, Sweden)

Petra Marschner (Univ of Adelaide, Australia)

David Crowley (UC Riverside, USA)

Margaret McCully (CSIRO Canberra, Australia)

Günter Neumann (Univ. of Hohenheim, Germany)

Meine van Noordwijk (ICRAF, Indonesia)

Stephen Burgess (UC-Berkeley, USA)

Enquiries to: woodroot@cyllene.uwa.edu.au OR Pauline Grierson at
pfgblue@cyllene.uwa.edu.au

NEW!! Woody root meeting : <http://www.botany.uwa.edu.au/woodyroots/index.html>

II Symposium Island Ecosystems and Workshop on “ Island biodiversity and evolution”

5 - 9 October 2003, Funchal, Madeira Island, Portugal

10 October 2003, Funchal, Madeira Island, Portugal

SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT & CALL FOR PAPERS

The Centre for Macaronesian Studies (CEM) has the pleasure of inviting you to the “II Symposium of Island Ecosystems”, to take place in Funchal, Madeira Island, Portugal, October 5 - 9, 2003. Following-up on the success from the previous symposium, held in March 2001, the aim of the present meeting is to review the recent progress on the biodiversity, evolution and ecology of insular ecosystems, as well as on islands geology, paleoenvironments, and ecosystems management.

Deadline for submission of abstracts: **May 31, 2003**

Deadline for submission of full papers: **August 15, 2003**

Deadline for early registration fee: **May 31, 2003**

Registration and further information available at: www.uma.pt/ccbg or www.ccbg.net

Anti-inflammatory and anti-infective natural products

London (UK), 15- 16 December

Contact: Michael Heinrich; heinrich@cua.alsop.ac.uk

7th International Symposium on Inorganic Nitrogen Assimilation in Plants

Wageningen, The Netherlands June 23-27, 2004

The aim of the series of Symposia organised by the European Nitrate and Ammonium Group (ENAAG) is to present our current knowledge and ideas on further development of the molecular, biochemical, physiological, ecophysiological and agronomical aspects of inorganic nitrogen assimilation. The 7th Symposium is aimed at integrating the fundamental disciplines with the more applied aspects.

<http://www.enaag.org>

International Satellite Meeting in honor of Prof. Norio Murata

Trios-Rivieres, Quebec, Canada. August 25-28, 2004

The title of the meeting is: "Photosynthesis and Post-Genomic Era: From Biophysics to Molecular Biology, a Path in the Research of Photosystem II",

The web address is <http://www.nibb.ac.jp/~satellit/top>

10th Cell Wall Meeting

Sorrento, Italy. 29 August – 3 September 2004

This is the first announcement for the 10th Cell Wall Meeting that will be held in Sorrento, Italy, in August-September 2004. 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 organisers are committed to keeping the registration costs as low as possible to encourage especially students and young research scientists to attend the meeting. We also encourage industrial participation in order to establish links between cell wall research and potential downstream applications.

Registration will be on Sunday, August 29; talks will start on Monday.

Poster sessions will be held throughout the meeting.

Evening receptions as well as a banquet will be organised.

Lectures and poster sessions will be held at the "Hilton Sorrento Palace" Conference Centre (Sala Sirene).

A book and/or a disk containing abstracts of lectures and posters will be produced.

The programme will cover all aspects of cell walls from plants, as well as from algae and fungi (structure, biosynthesis, properties, relevance to industries etc.).

The topics will be organised according to the submitted titles.

Useful web sites

Gramene: A Comparative Mapping Resource for Grains

<http://www.gramene.org/>

Gramene is a "Web-accessible data resource for comparative genome analysis in the grasses. Data formerly in RiceGenes is now integrated in Gramene." The rice genome is complete for 9 of 12 chromosomes and nearing completion for the others. This facilitates research on cross-species homologies including interpretation of biochemical pathways, gene and QTL localization and descriptions of phenotypic characters and mutations. Major parts of the site include databases (genome, EST, BLAST, marker, protein, literature), maps & data for downloads, and submissions.

Celebrating 50 Years of DNA

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/photo51/>

Rosalind Franklin was a brilliant scientist who died of cancer before the Nobel Prize was awarded for DNA. Her neglected photo 51 contained all of the secrets of DNA's inner structure: the double helix, its periodicity, the position of base pairs. This site has an excellent summary of the early work on DNA, a scientific biography of Franklin, scientific images of DNA, ribosomes, and RNA, the interpretation of photo 51

<http://www.dna50.org/main.htm>

50 years ago, the belief that DNA was the genetic material was not yet universally accepted. With only 4 bases (ACGT) it was unclear how DNA possibly contain enough information or how could it reliably be replicated for each new cell? These were the questions James Watson and Francis Crick resolved on February 28, 1953. This web site includes the original paper in Nature, a genetics timeline, an archive, more readings in genetics and DNA-inspired artwork, and a summary of social events commemorating the occasion. For full utility, the Macromedia Flash Player is required, but there is a lot of information that even old browsers can access. This site has been created by Cold Spring Harbor, where Watson spent much of his career, as Director from 1968-94 and is still the lab's President.

Crop Description web site

http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/Indices/index_ab.html

This Crop Database from Purdue University in the United States includes both common and obscure plant crop species. Links are presented as an alphabetical list of mixed scientific and common names and can also be accessed with an integral search engine. Each crop plant has its own page.

PlantZAfrica.com

<http://www.plantzafrica.com/>

This site features information about plants native to southern Africa. The site includes: Plants of SA, Vegetation of SA, Using SA Plants, From the Archives, Miscellaneous Info as well as a site search. The plants site includes images, plant information and growing the plant.

Bioinformatics.Org

<http://bioinformatics.org/>

Bioinformatics.Org is an international organization promoting freedom and open exchange of data, databases, software and supporting resources relative to particular types of biological information. Bioinformatics includes all computer and supporting technologies involved in the analysis and use of the complex life sciences data available from molecular biology studies. This website is a central component in Bioinformatics.Org's goal is to provide "...access to cutting-edge resources can be prohibitively expensive for those working individually, in small groups, at poorly-funded institutions or in developing nations."

www.australiangraduate.com

This web site provides an invaluable introduction to students contemplating study at an Australian University.

Ricin Toxin from Castor Bean Plant, *Ricinus communis*

<http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/toxicagents/ricin/ricin.html>

The recent arrest of terrorists in the United Kingdom for trying to isolate ricin from the castor bean (*Ricinus communis*), has raised interest in this species popular with physiologists interested in collecting phloem sap. It is the seeds that carry the toxin. This page explains the chemical basis of poisoning and why it takes days to kill (it inactivates ribosomes). There are medical uses too such as targeting it against cancer cells.

Bio-Web: Resources for Molecular and Cell Biologists

<http://cellbiol.com/>

The Bio-Web is a scientific news/resource site for molecular and cellular biology. With a newspaper-like appearance, the left column leads to major sections, cool sites (including powerhouse sites like Science, Nature, PubMed and others), followed by more news sources.

FESPB News

KEY DATES FOR THE 14th CONGRESS (Krakow, Poland)

February 2003.....First Announcement and registration open

October 2003.....Second Announcement

March 31st, 2004.....Deadline for early Registration

March 31st, 2004.....Deadline for submission of Abstracts

FESPB Web Forum

The FESPB Web Forum is a much neglected feature of the FESPB web site. It has been set up in a way that allows letters to be posted for everyone to read and for any replies to be appended to letter so that again everyone can read it. You may be interested in two letters that have been posted on FESPB Web Forum recently by Mario de Tullio and Geert Potters. They concern the question of the increasing hostility to science by the general public and the need to educate teachers and students at schools to be more enthusiastic about science, especially plant science. To read these letters simply log on to the FESPB web site and click on 'FESPB Web Forum' button on the left side. Both letters make very interesting reading and may provoke you into writing to FESPB Web Forum yourself.

Items for FESPBalert

If you have items, job opportunities or information you think FESPB members would like to see in *FESPBalert* or have any comments on content please e-mail me pjlumsden@uclan.ac.uk

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