

JAMES RENNIE BEQUEST

REPORT ON EXPEDITION/PROJECT/CONFERENCE

Expedition/Project/Conference Title: PEDRO LUIZ NURMBERG

Travel Dates: 10th to 15th JULY 2004

Location: BERLIN - GERMANY

Group Member(s): PEDRO LUIZ NURMBERG

Aims: Attending the 15th International Conference on Arabidopsis Research to update with the latest achievements in plant molecular biology and more specifically plant-microbe interaction

OUTCOME (not less than 300 words):- The 15th International Conference on Arabidopsis Research took place in Berlin (Germany) from July 11-14th 2004. The event was organized by the Multinational *Arabidopsis* Steering Committee (MASC) and over 1200 people from over 40 countries were brought together to present their findings and exchange ideas about *Arabidopsis* research, which turned out to be a very exciting and informative conference.

A remarkable talk was given by Dr. Jeffery Dangl from the University of North Caroline, one of the greatest authorities in plant-microbe interactions. During his talk Dr Dangl went through the major landmarks achievements in plant disease resistance during the last few years. For our benefit he highlighted the differences in plant defence responses against biotrophic and necrotrophic pathogens, pointing to what is nowadays considered the model for pathogen recognition and how pathogens have evolved to 'manipulate' steps in the recognition pathway(s).

Another excellent talk was given by Dr Jane E Parker, who spoke about interactions between different components of plant microbe recognition. Dr. Parker's group is mainly interested in two plant defence regulators, *EDS1* and *PAD4*, that encode lipase-like proteins, and are required by a structural subset (so-called-TIR-NB-LRR) of R proteins in local race-specific resistance. These two components are also required for basal resistance against virulent pathogens. During Dr Parker's talk she showed how *EDS1* and *PAD4* are orchestrated in defence response signaling pathway, their interactions and, their

interactions with other components of this complex network, which is becoming more and more refined.

Several other talks and speakers should be mentioned for their contribution to the high quality of the 15th International Conference on *Arabidopsis* Research (Berlin, 2004), but this short report aims to point out some of the contributions and benefits of attending such a conference and not an extensive description of the event. The two talks were taken as examples of the significant contribution given by scientists from different institutes and countries/continents to our understanding of plant sciences.

As important as the talks was the opportunity I had to present my PhD project in the form of a poster and discuss with other researchers and students working in the same/related field the results I got so far. It is also a good opportunity for exchanging information, ideas and views about molecular plant pathology. It was indeed a very exciting and productive event for me, with a considerable contribution to my academic career. Thus, I would like to thank The James Rennie Bequest and MolBio Funding Bodies for supporting my grant applications to attend the 15th International Conference on *Arabidopsis* Research 2004.