Cambridge Society for the Application of Research

RNA Silencing in Plant and Animal Biotechnology

Professor Sir David Baulcombe
Department of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge

WOLFSON LECTURE THEATRE, CHURCHILL COLLEGE

7.30 p.m., Monday 28th November, 2011

Eukaryotes – plants and animals - contain small regulatory RNA that have been referred to as the dark matter of genetics. They are akin to the dark matter in that they are abundant and in that they prevent other components of the (genetic) universe from flying apart. Many of these small RNAs are negative regulators of gene expression. They mediate anti-viral defense and they influence regulatory mechanisms in growth and development. These RNAs may also influence evolutionary mechanisms. The discovery of these small regulatory RNAs has opened up new opportunities for the treatment and diagnosis of disease in people and in animals and for improvement of crop plants.

About the speaker:

Professor Baulcombe was a student of Botany at Leeds (BSc) and Edinburgh (PhD) Universities. After periods in Montreal, the University of Georgia and the Cambridge Plant Breeding Institute he spent 20 years at the Sainsbury Laboratory, Norwich. He joined Cambridge University in 2007 as Royal Society Research Professor and now as Regius Professor of Botany. David is a Fellow of the Royal Society and a foreign associate member of the US National Academy of Sciences. His awards include the 2006 Royal Medal of the Royal Society, the 2008 Lasker Award for basic biomedical sciences and the Wolf Prize for Agriculture in 2010. He was knighted in June 2009.

David Baulcombe is a molecular biologist and his research interest in plants focuses on how genes can be silenced. He has recently moved into the field of epigenetics – the science of how nurture can influence nature. This research links to disease resistant crops and understanding of hybrids. David is a poor field botanist. Extramural activities include membership of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and in 2009 he chaired a Royal Society policy study on the contribution of biological science to food crop productivity.

Additional note
The CSAR Lectures are open to all; CSAR members are admitted free. Non-members are asked to make a nominal donation of £3.00.

Coffee and biscuits will be available in the Wolfson Foyer from around 7pm until the start of the lecture. Location information: http://www.chu.cam.ac.uk/about/visitors/directions.php

The talk will be held in the lecture theatre in Wolfson Hall (4):


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DINING HALL
TIZARD ROOM
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2 CLUB ROOM
3 FELLOWS' GALLERY
COCKCROFT ROOM
FELLOWS' DINING ROOM
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SEMINAR ROOM 1
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