

May 1993

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Cerutti, Heriberto D.; Ibrahim, H. Z.; and Jagendorf, A. T., "Treatment of Pea (*Pisum sativum* L.) Protoplasts with DNA-Damaging Agents Induces a 39-Kilodalton Chloroplast Protein Immunologically Related to *Escherichia coli* RecA" (1993). *Faculty Publications from the Center for Plant Science Innovation*. 24.

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Treatment of Pea (*Pisum sativum* L.) Protoplasts with DNA-Damaging Agents Induces a 39-Kilodalton Chloroplast Protein Immunologically Related to *Escherichia coli* RecA

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Abstract:

Organisms must have efficient mechanisms of DNA repair and recombination to prevent alterations in their genetic information due to DNA damage. There is evidence for DNA repair and recombination in plastids of higher plants, although very little is known at the biochemical level. Many chloroplast proteins are of eubacterial ancestry, suggesting that the same could be true for the components of a DNA repair and recombination system. A 39-kD protein, immunologically related to *Escherichia coli* RecA, is present in chloroplasts of pea (*Pisum sativum* L.). Bandshift gel assays suggest that it binds single-stranded DNA. Its steady-state level is increased by several DNA-damaging agents. These results are consistent with it being a plastid homolog of *E. coli* RecA protein, presumably involved in DNA repair and recombination, and with the existence of an SOS-like response in pea leaf cells. Experiments with protein synthesis inhibitors suggest that the 39-kD chloroplast protein is encoded in the nucleus.

Partial support for this research was provided by Hatch grant 0155928 and by grant 91-37301-6421 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture/National Research Initiative Competitive Grants Program. H.C. was supported by a predoctoral fellowship from the Cornell National Science Foundation Plant Science Center, a unit in the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Department of Energy-National Science Foundation Plant Science Centers Program and a unit of the Cornell Biotechnology Program, which is sponsored by the New York State Science and Technology Foundation, a consortium of industries, and the U.S. Army Research Office. H.Z.I. was supported by a Peace Fellowship Award from the Egyptian Cultural and Educational Bureau.

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