

look in Mattoo and Suttle for how to analyze ethylene; Abeles et al. will tell you how! If I were a fresh ethylene researcher, particularly in agriculture, it is this book I would want at my fingertips, for its comprehensive coverage and tips on practical usage, to assist my development and maturation. It is also a valuable resource for researchers and students in any aspect of plant biology or horticulture. However, given the rapid advances in ethylene molecular biology, I hope that a revised version with more molecular biology will be produced in a couple more years' time.

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Letter to the Editor

Function of the *S. cerevisiae* *DST1/PPR2* Gene in Transcription Elongation

Baker (1992) has recently described the identity of the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* *DST1* gene, which encodes strand transfer protein α (Clark et al., 1991), with *PPR2*. In fact, this gene encodes the transcription elongation factor TFIIS (also known as SII; Davies et al., 1990; Kipling and Kearsley, 1991; Nakanishi et al., 1992). TFIIS binds to RNA polymerase II and stimulates transcription elongation in vitro, allowing the polymerase to pass through specific pause sites (reviewed by Kerppola and Kane, 1991). Curiously, this process may involve transcript cleavage (Izban and Luse, 1992; Reines, 1992). *prr2* mutants were originally identified by their sensitivity to 6-azauracil (6-AU), but the claim that this arises from a defect in a transcription factor required for expression of the *URA4* gene (Hubert et al., 1983) has been revised. Instead, it appears that the lack of TFIIS in the *prr2* mutant confers a sensitivity to the reduced cellular GTP level caused by 6-AU (Exinger and Lacroute, 1992). Exinger and Lacroute (1992) have suggested that while absence of TFIIS may be tolerable under normal conditions, elongation by RNA polymerase II becomes very sensitive to low levels of GTP. Thus, the growth inhibition of the *prr2* mutant strain by 6-AU may result from a general deficiency in passing specific blocks to elongation. Mutations in the largest subunit of RNA polymerase II also confer sensitivity to 6-AU, and these can be suppressed by overexpression of TFIIS (Archambault et al., 1992).

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