

CORRESPONDENCE/

FOR MORE CLARITY

To the editor:

In the paper entitled "Agrobacterium-Mediated Transformation of Rice (*Oryza Sativa* L.)" by D. M. Raineri, P. Bottino, M. P. Gordon, and E. W. Nester (*Bio/Technology* 8:33, Jan. '90), the octopine spot in Figure 2, lane 5, frame B is not clear.

We would be happy to supply any interested reader with glossy prints of the figure in which the octopine spot is clearly visible.

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CONSIDER THE SOURCE

To the editor:

The author of "Biotechnology Falls Foul of the Environment in the USSR" (*Bio/Technology* 7:783, Aug. '89) is right: A powerful movement of the public at large against the construction of plants for single cell protein production as well as other production facilities applying biotechnologies is in full swing in the USSR. At the request of electors as well as on their own initiative, local authorities also do not give their consent to building atomic, thermoelectric, and hydroelectric power stations, chemical plants, etc., on their respective territories. In Moscow, the inhabitants of a district on the outskirts of the city were even against the construction of a zoo. Thus, conflicting situations which upsurge this country do not only involve biotechnology.

Earlier our mass media served for the benefit of the commanding-administrative system trying to justify its unsuccessful or sometimes hazardous decisions. Now the press has gone to another extreme—the so-called "black-and-white" thinking that eliminates the semitones and underhints with which life is so rich. The newspapers issue millions of copies, and compete with each other for the most

emotional and sharpest criticism. Yet neither newspapers nor the authors of the articles bear any responsibility for the consequences. Such irresponsibility stimulates social demagoguery. It is remarkable that persons who actively criticize production facilities that utilize biotechnologies avoid discussions during scientific meetings. And the opinions of scientists either are not published at all or are published in a curtailed, distorted manner.

That is why I think our newspapers are not the best source of information for a journal. It would be much better if knowledge were transferred from journals to newspapers, and not the other way around, as was the case with the above.

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LESS THAN MEETS THE EYE

To the editor:

"The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated," said Mark Twain in his proverbial statement. Apparently, you followed a similar path in reporting on the damage and the alleged consequences the San Francisco earthquake caused to the Richmond operations of Bio-Rad Laboratories (*Bio/Technology* 7:1108, Nov. '89).

Although *Bio/Technology* correctly credited me with information on the relocation of marketing and sales that allowed for uninterrupted operations and shipping from inventories, the rest of the article strikes a rather negative tone on the damages that was certainly not the case and must have originated from other sources. As a result, I would like to set the record straight and answer—at least partially—some of the questions.

Bio-Rad Laboratories vacated the Richmond facility, which is owned by the City of Richmond, on the day of the earthquake due to estimated structural effects of the quake. All employees were relocated to other facilities in the area and shipping

continued uninterrupted from New York. As of this writing (November 28), Bio-Rad has signed the lease on a new building that will house instrument assembly, R&D, and marketing/sales functions for the Research Products Division.

In the interim, Bio-Rad conducted "business as usual," with the added plus of everyone's doing an excellent job of pulling together and turning the event into a triumph of cooperation and creativity. Bio-Rad has suffered no losses in sales as a result of the quake, and the company continues to serve the scientific, research, and industrial community in the tradition of quality, reliability, and efficiency.

Giselle Toth
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ERRATUM

To the editor:

In the paper, "Plant Regeneration and Recovery of Fertile Plants from Protoplasts of Maize" (*Bio/Technology* 7:589, June '89), a factual mistake was introduced. On page 593, the concentration of glycine in the CM-1 medium was erroneously given as 30 mM. The correct concentration of glycine in the CM-1 medium is 30 μ M.

Laudenir M. Prioli, Ph.D.
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GETTING THE GADFLY

To the editor:

Your article "Cave-In" (*Bio/Technology* 7:981, Oct. '89) nailed what's his name, our omni-present industry critic, to the wall and accurately pointed the finger of scorn at those who ran for cover just because he barked.

Bravo and well done!

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