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LONDON NatureReviews@nature.com The Macmillan Building,
4 Crinan Street, London N1 9XW

Tel: +44 (0)20 7843 3620; Fax: +44 (0)20 7843 3629

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JAPAN: nature@naturejpn.com

Rinoko Asami, Nature Japan KK

Tel: +81 3 3267 8751; Fax: +81 3 3267 8746

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In this month's journal, we feature a Review article about the *Picornaviridae*, viruses that have long posed a significant threat to human and animal health. This virus family includes poliovirus, cocksackievirus, rhinovirus and the agent of foot-and-mouth disease, and consequently its medical and economic impact is far reaching. It is therefore somewhat surprising that so many questions about picornavirus biology remain unanswered. On page 765, J. Lindsay Whitton, Christopher Cornell and Ralph Feuer comprehensively review the *Picornaviridae*, highlighting current knowledge of host-pathogen interactions and debating unresolved issues, such as the propensity of these viruses to establish latent infection and their controversial role in autoimmune disease.

In light of these formidable viral foes, it is comforting to know that the mammalian antiviral arsenal is well equipped. Recently, several new mammalian antiviral restriction factors have been uncovered; among them the tripartite motif protein TRIM5 α , which inhibits retroviral replication. In fact, as Sébastien Nisole, Jonathan Stoye and Ali Saïb propose, the entire TRIM family might well function as antiviral molecules, and in their Review on page 799, the authors outline the many features of the TRIM proteins that implicate them in innate immune defences.

As today's consumers become increasingly discerning about food quality, the search for alternatives to artificial preservatives and flavouring has intensified. The bacteriocins, small antibacterial peptides produced by lactic acid bacteria, provide a biological alternative for use in food microbiology applications. The article by Paul Cotter, Colin Hill and R. Paul Ross, in which they discuss the biology of bacteriocins (page 777), is the first in our Food Microbiology series, which will cover the increasing utility and exploitation of microorganisms in the food industry.



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