

# CENTRE FOR RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL GENOMICS (CRAG), Barcelona- Spain



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 **CRAG**<sup>R</sup>  
CENTRE FOR RESEARCH  
IN AGRICULTURAL GENOMICS

Plant Health Summit. IQS, 3 de Julio 2024



# EL ROL DE LA I+D EN LA AGRICULTURA SOSTENIBLE

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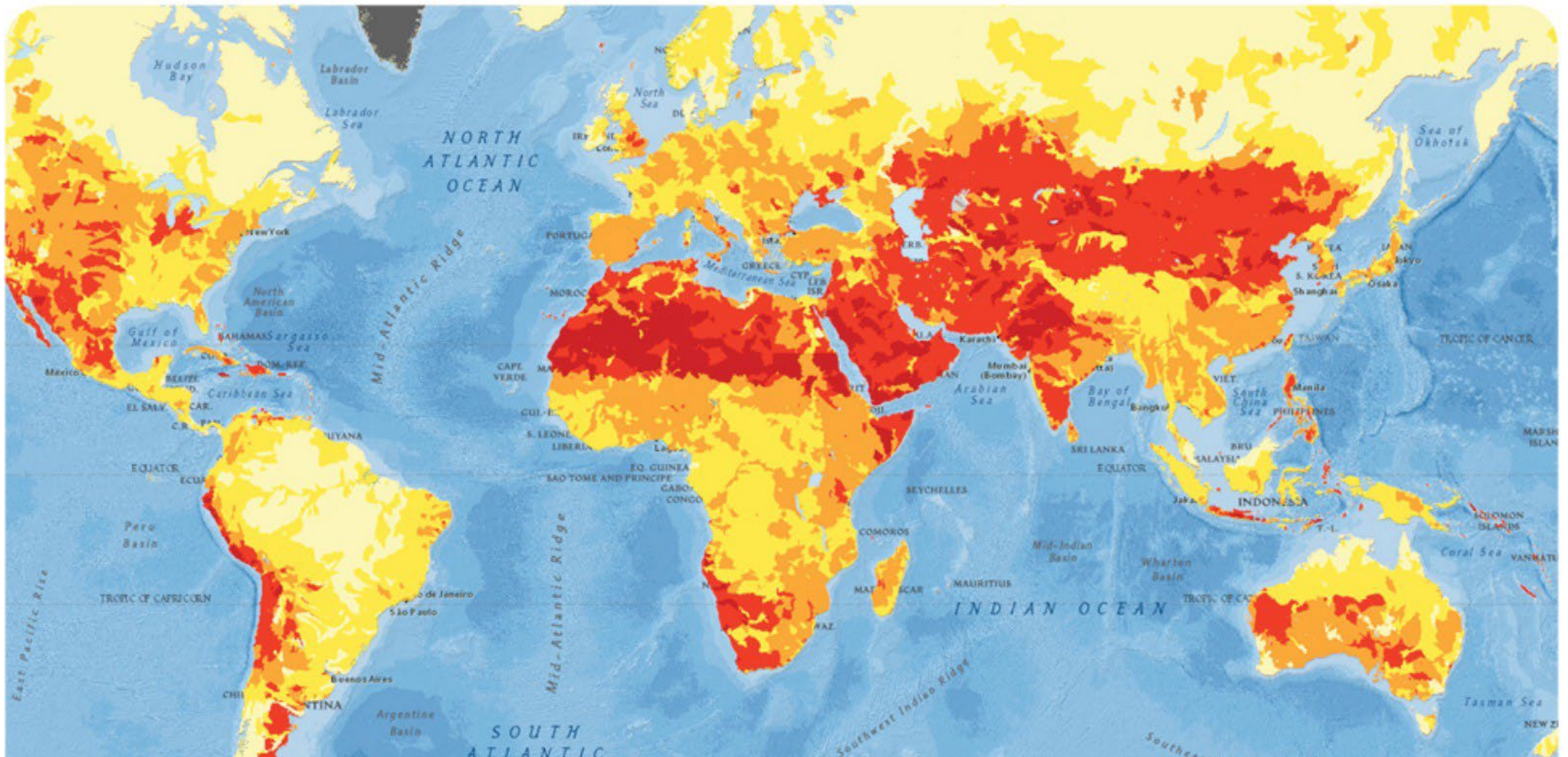
**Ana I. Caño-Delgado**

Centre for Research in Agricultural Genomics  
(CRAG)

Barcelona -Spain-



## RISK OF EXTREME DROUGHT



Global warming is taking a heavy toll on agricultural production



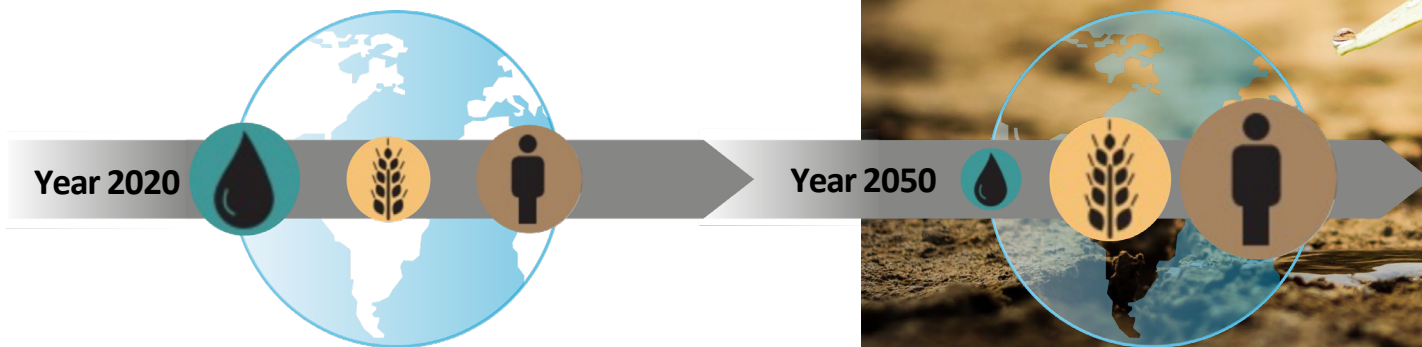
DROUGHTS generate

**+40%**

of worldwide  
agricultural losses  
annually

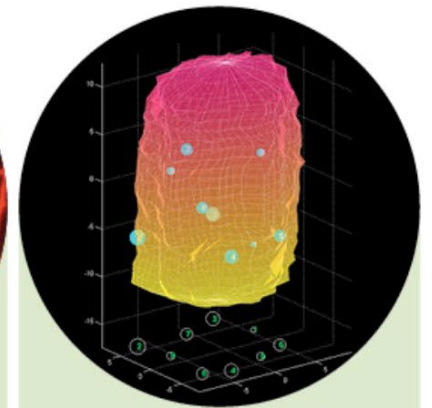
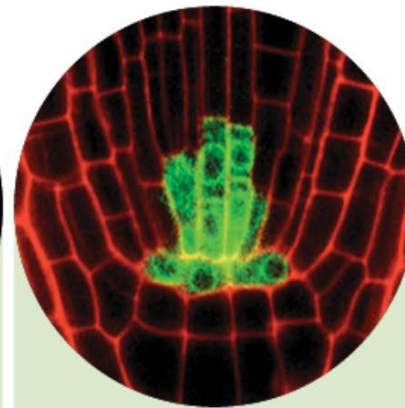
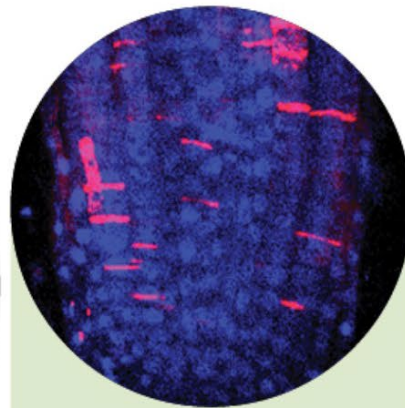
Average Annual Global Cost = **35.000.000.000 €**

**NO efficient technologies available to cope with the growing episodes of droughts in the fields**



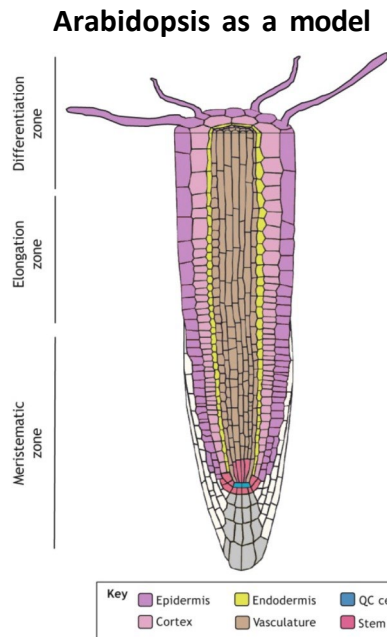
Gupta,Rico and Caño-Delgado. *Science* (2020)



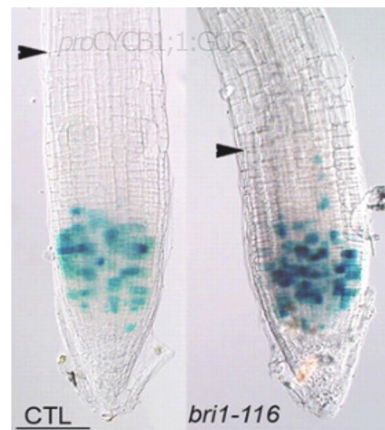


# 20 YEARS OF RESEARCH IN PLANT BIOLOGY

# Brassinosteroid are natural biostimulants for inducing root growth and adaptation to climate

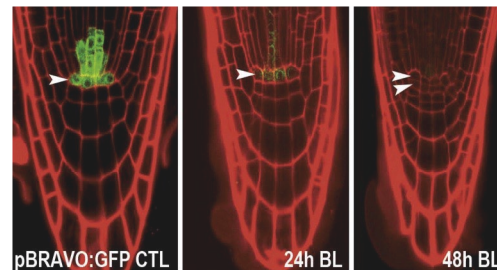


## Cell cycle progression



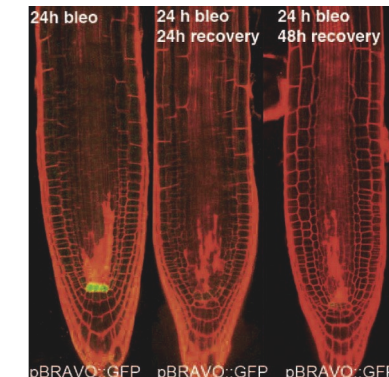
González-García et al., 2011  
 Pavelescu et al., 2017  
 Mecchia et al., 2021

## QC division and stem cell differentiation



Vilarrasa-Blasi et al., 2014  
 Betegón, et al., 2019  
 Planas-Riverola et al., 2019  
 Mercadal et al., 2022

## Response to DNA-damage

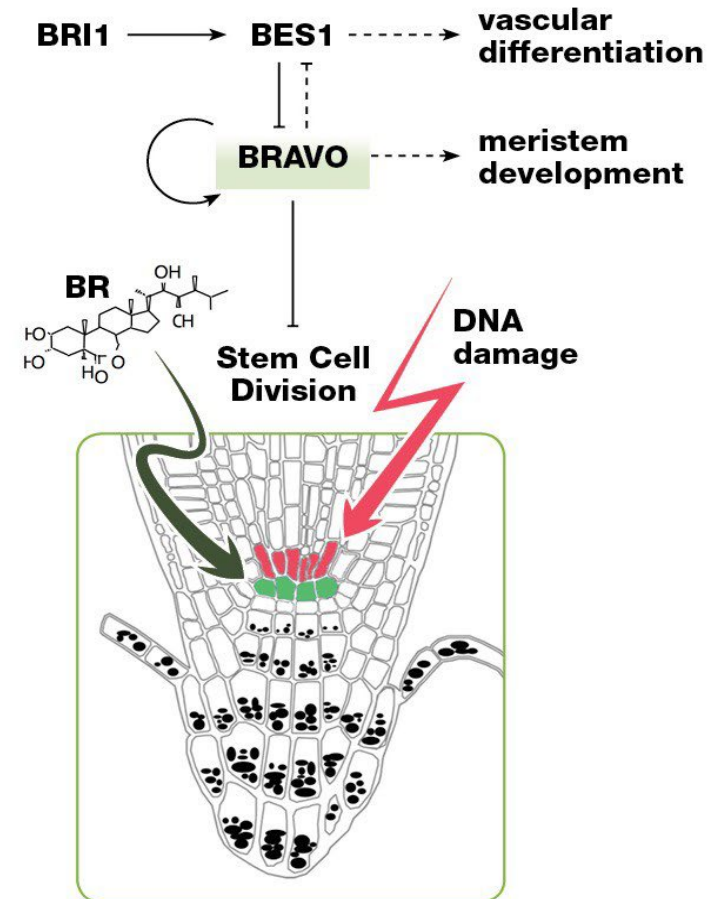


Vilarrasa-Blasi et al., 2014  
 Lozano-Elena et al., 2019  
 Betegón, Mercadal et al., 2021  
 Mercadal et al., 2022

# Decoding the roles of Brassinosteroids in root growth and development



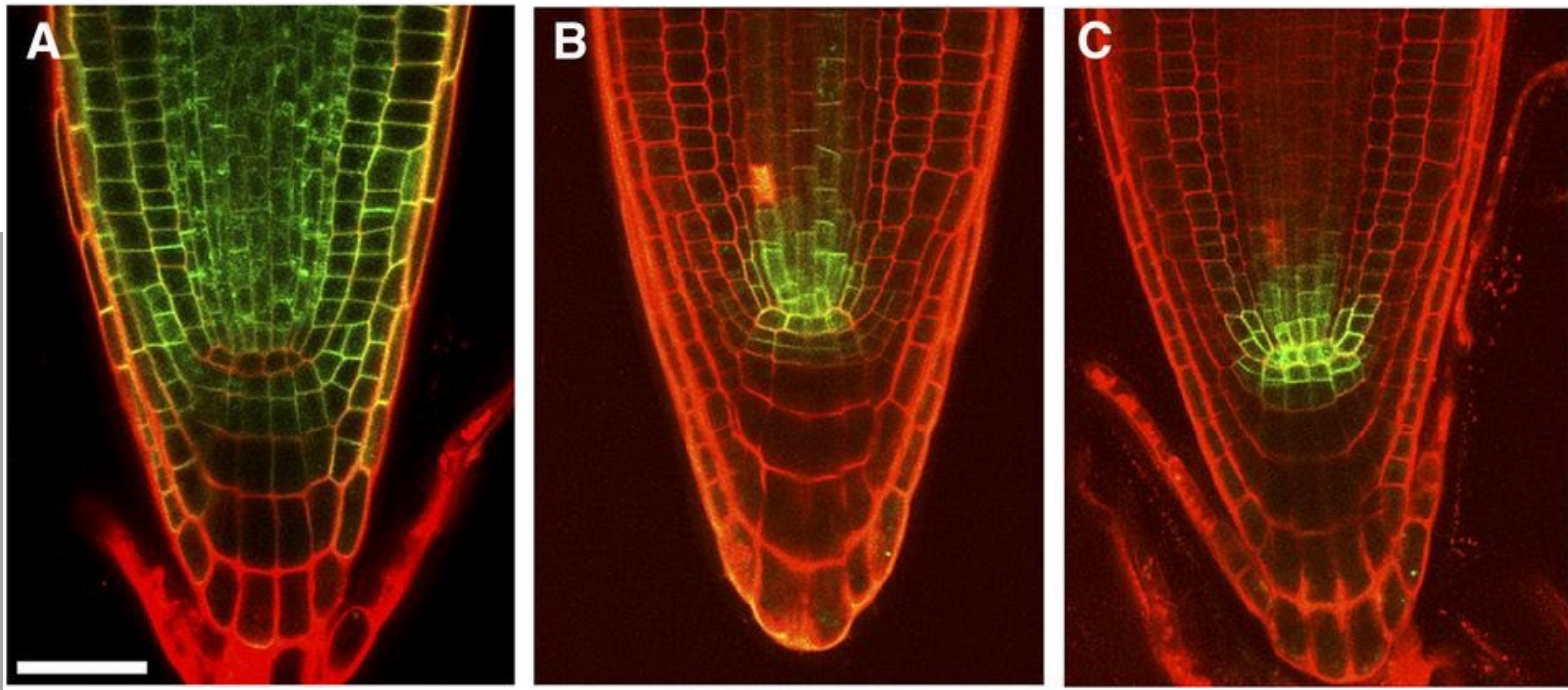
- Ibañes et al., *PNAS*, 2009.
- Caño-Delgado et al., *Ann.Rev.Cell Dev. Biol.*, 2010.
- González-García et al., *Development*, 2011.
- Fabregas et al., *Plant Cell*, 2013.
- Vilarrasa-Blasi et al., *Developmental Cell*, 2014.
- Fábregas et al., *Plos Genetics*, 2015.
- González-García et al., *Cell Reports*, 2015.
- Espinoza et al., *Development*, 2016
- Lozano-Elena, Planas-Riberola et al., *J. Cell Science*, 2017
- Pavelescu et al., *Mol.Sys. Biol.* 2018
- Fàbregas, Lozano et al., *Nat Comms.* 2018
- Betegón et al., *Plant Journal* 2019
- Riberola et al., *Development* 2020
- Betegon et al., *Mol.Sys Bio*, 2021
- Mercadal et al., *Development* 2022



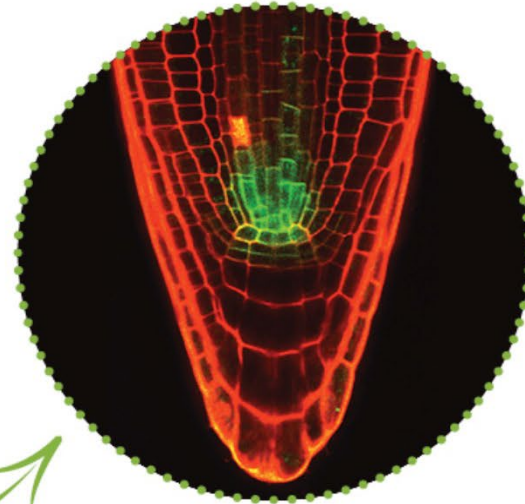
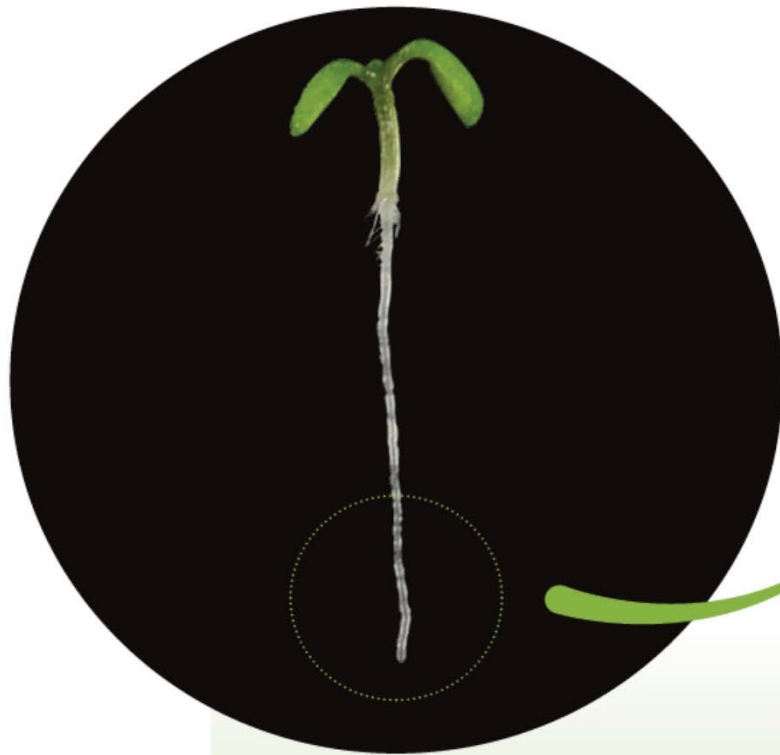


# Cell specificity for the BRI1-like family of receptors

*ProBRI1:BRI1-GFP ProBRL3:BRL3-YFP ProBRL1:BRL1-YFP*

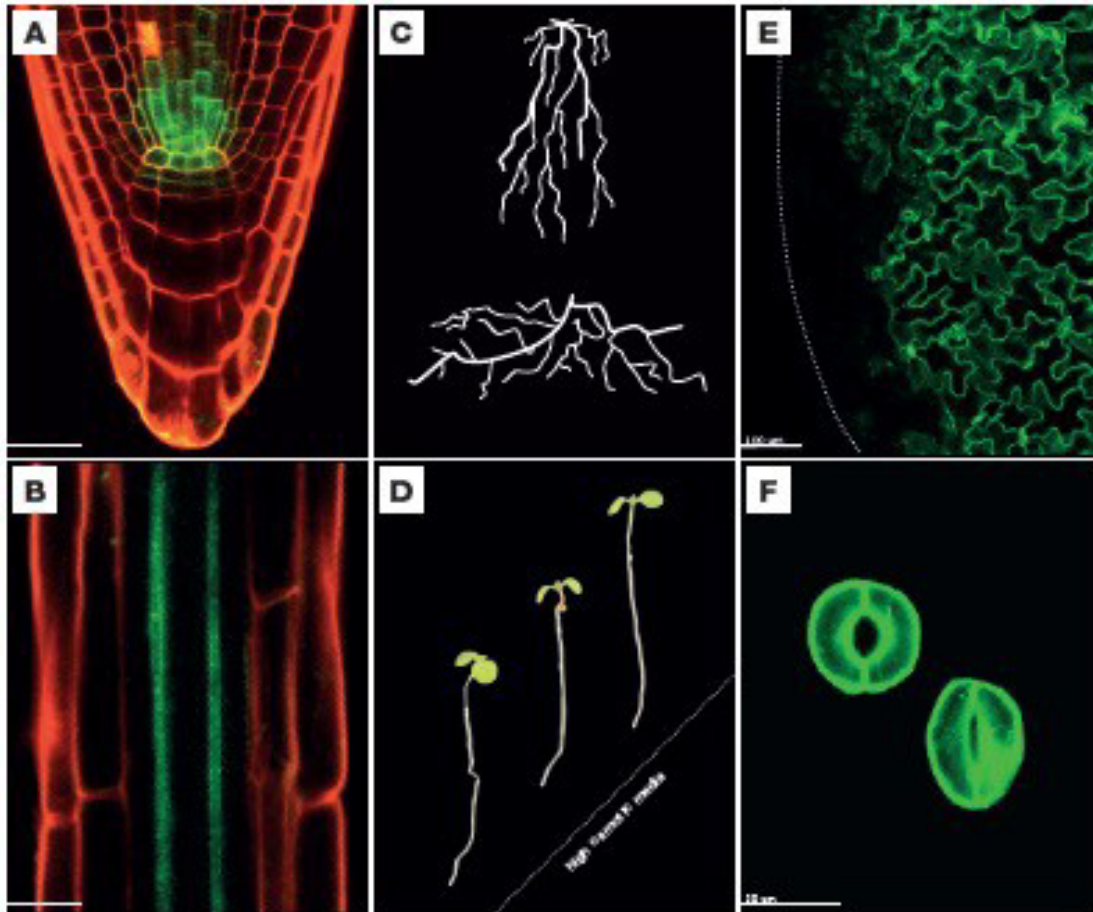


Caño-Delgado et al., 2004; Fàbregas et al., 2013; Salazar-Henao et al., 2016;  
Fàbregas et al., 2018; Planas-Riverola et al., 2019; Gupta et al., 2020



**ENGINEERING  
CELL-SPECIFIC  
SIGNALING TO  
UNDERSTAND  
DROUGHT  
RESISTANCE**



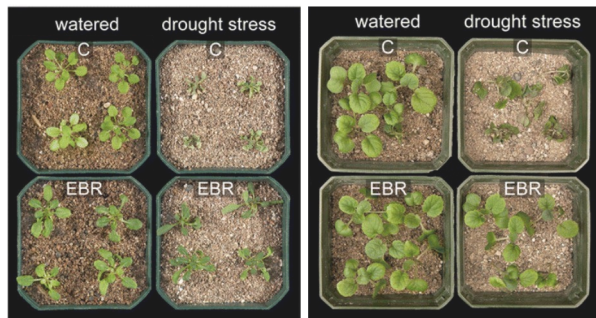


Gupta, Rico-Medina et al., *Science* (2020)

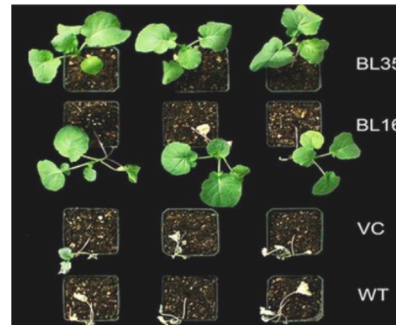
## DROUGHT RESPONSES ARE CELL SPECIFIC

# Previous roles of BRs in abiotic are controversial

+ BL hormone

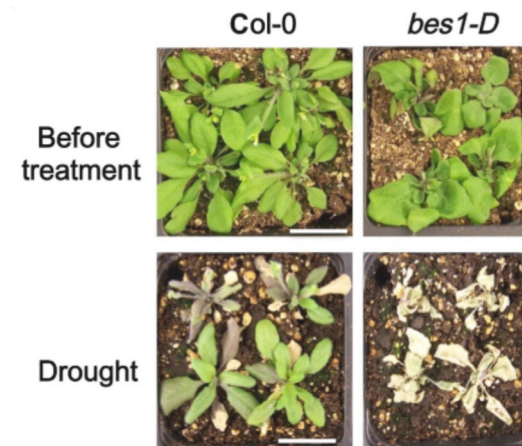


Kagale et al., 2007



Sahni et al., 2016

+ BR Signaling



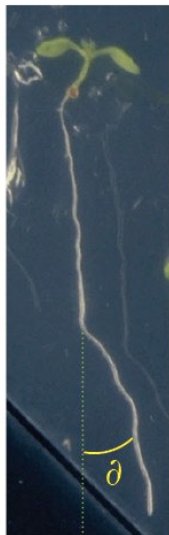
Ye et al., 2017

# Investigating the roles of BRI1-like receptor family in plant abiotic stress

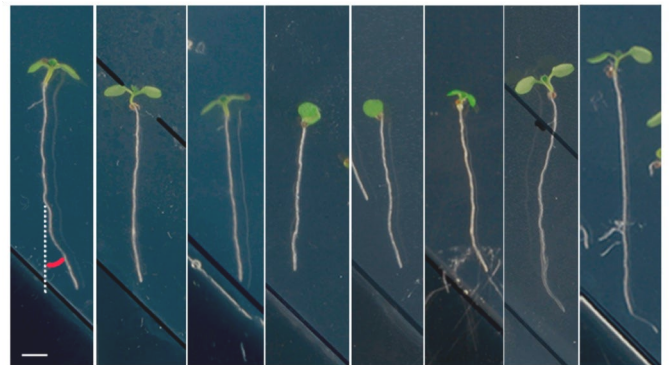


# The BRL3 signalosome accounts for root hydrotropism

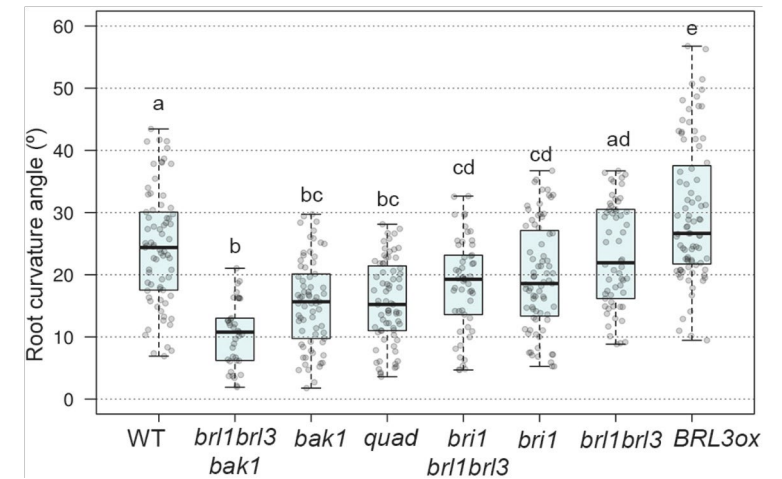
## Root hydrotropism



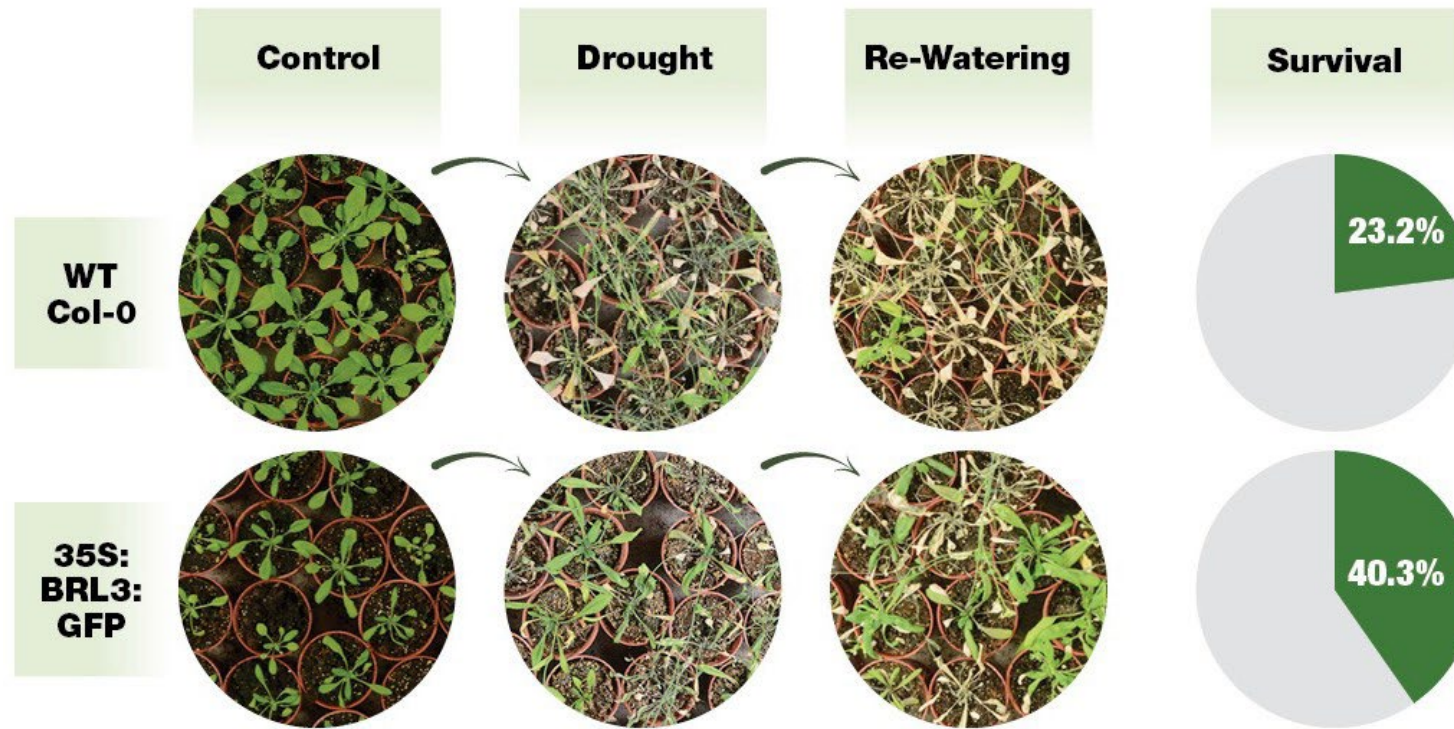
6 day old  
400mM Sorbitol



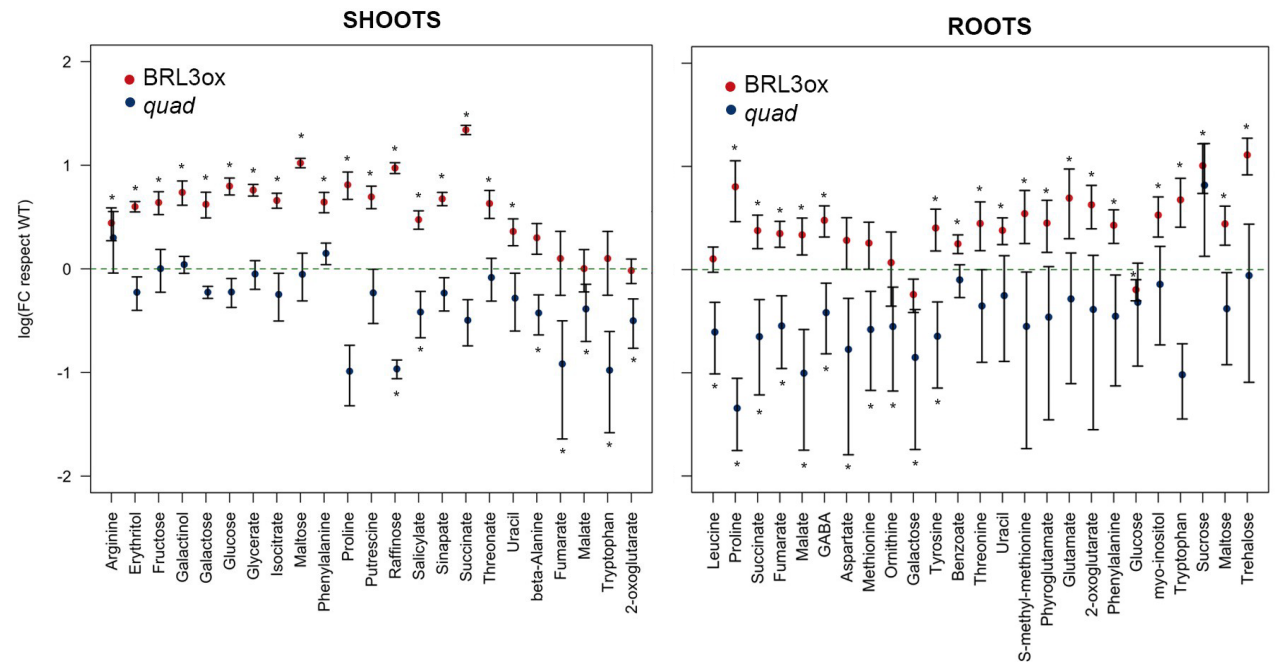
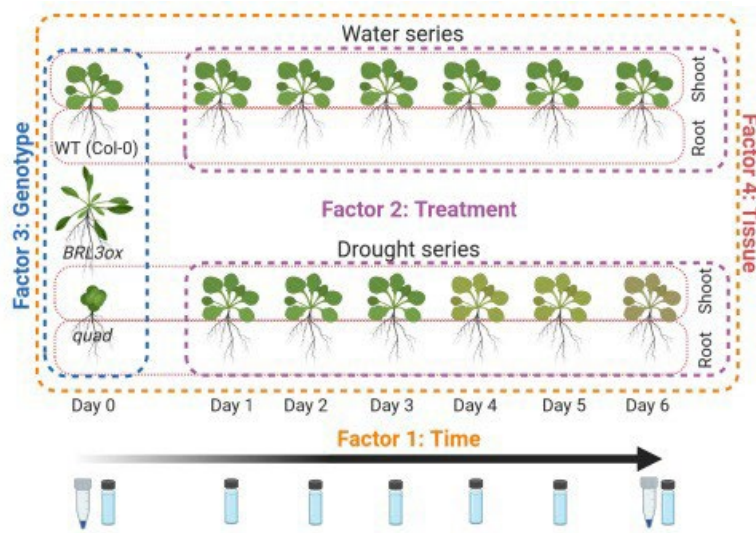
WT *br1brl3* *bak1* *quad* *bri1* *bri1 brl1brl3* BRL3ox



# BRL3 receptors confer drought resistance without penalizing yield



# Why? BRL3OX plants are metabolically primed

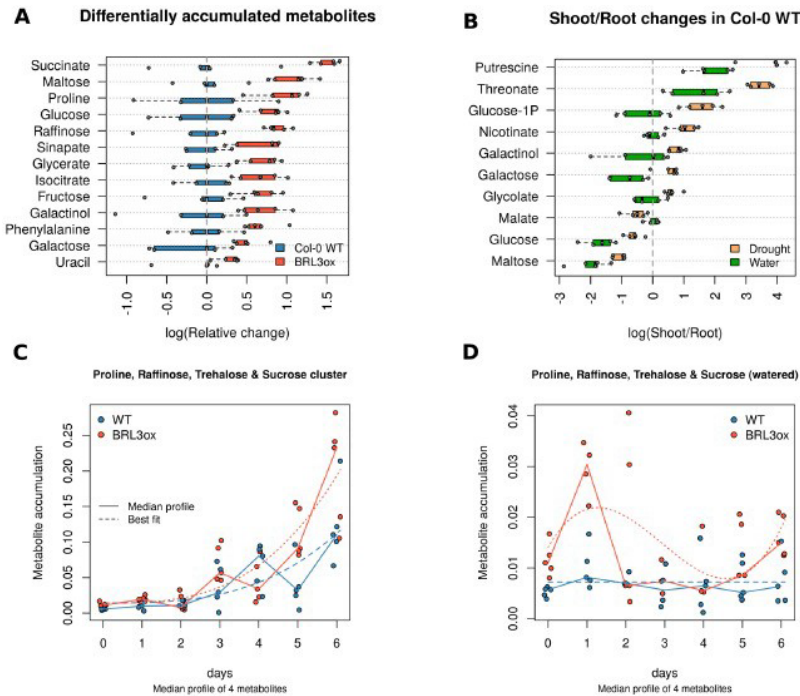


Fàbregas, Lozano-Elena, et al., *Nat Comms.* (2018);  
 Lozano-Elena, et al., *Scientific Data* (2022)

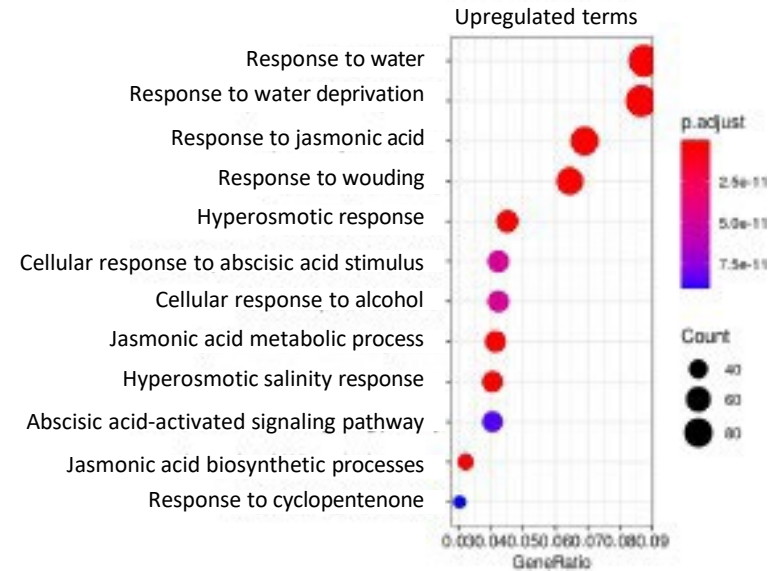


# BRL3 receptors trigger the metabolic adaptation to drought stress

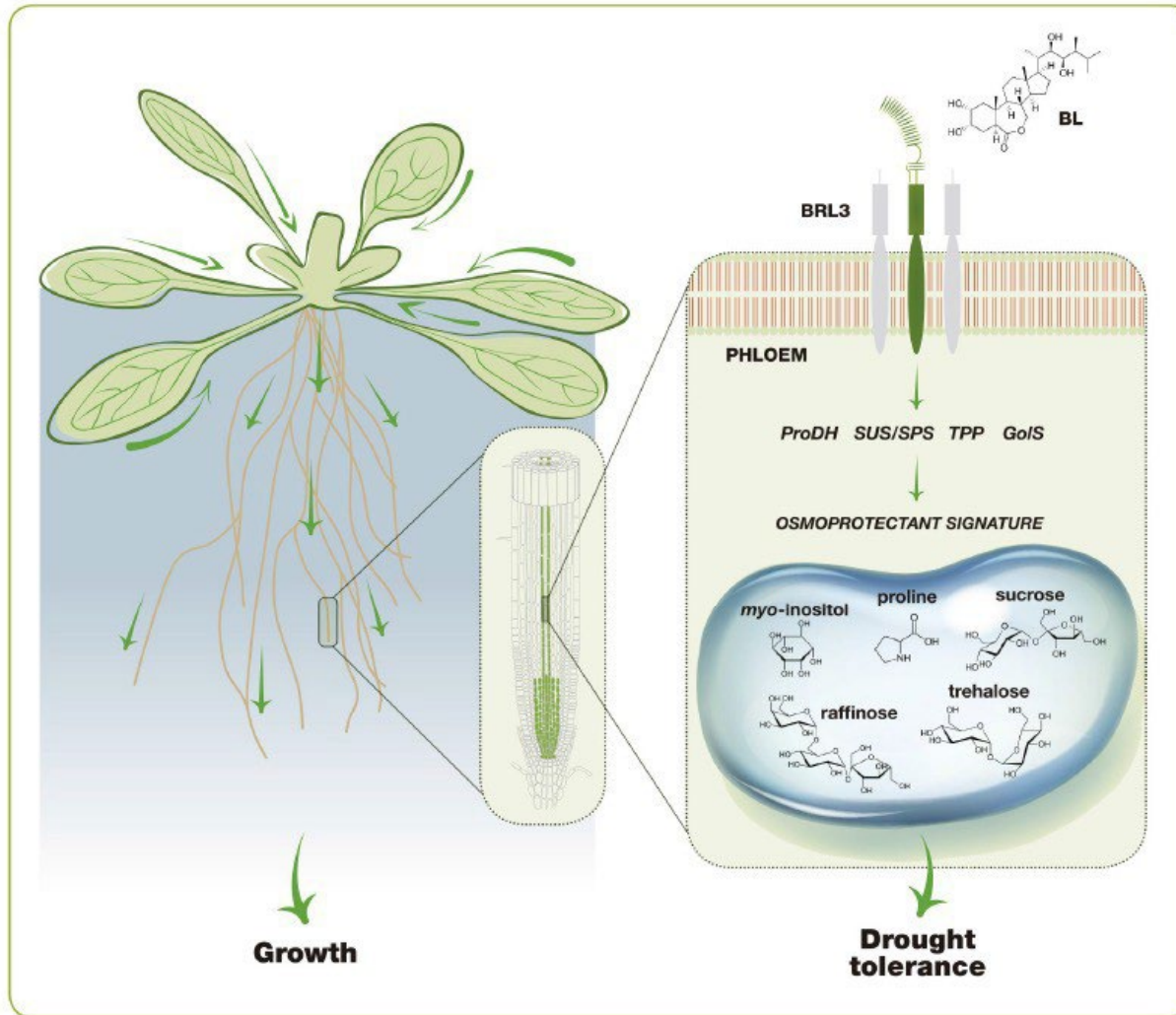
## A metabolic signature for plant adaption to drought



## Transcript to metabolite correlation

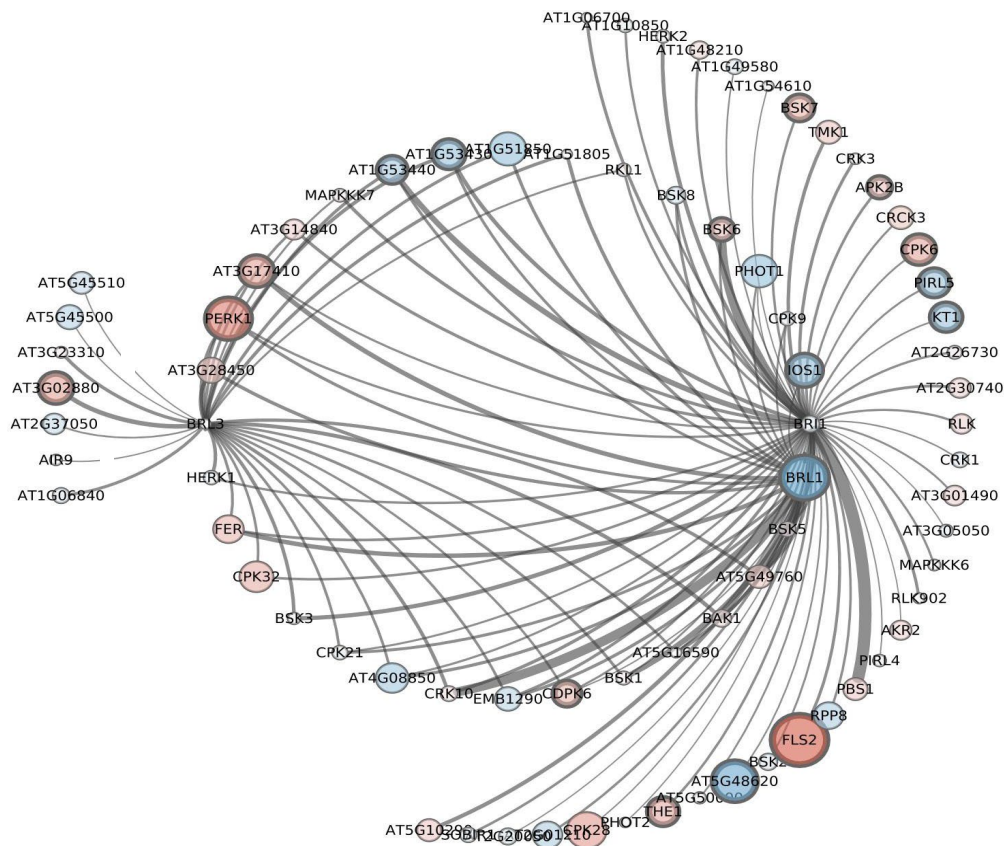


Fàbregas, Lozano-Elena, et al., *Nat Comms.* (2018);  
 Lozano-Elena, et al., *Scientific Data* (2022)



# **Deciphering the components for the BRL3 signaling pathway in drought stress**

# A proteomic network of interactions for BRI1-like family



-Edges: Interaction identified by IP

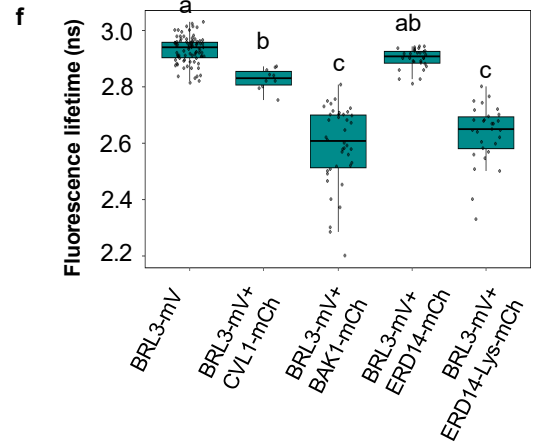
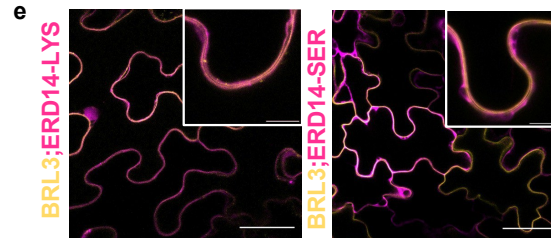
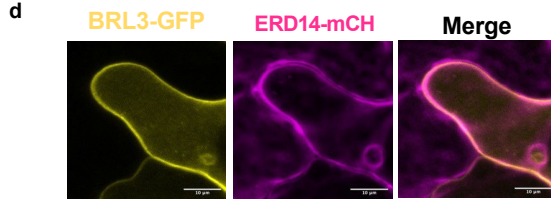
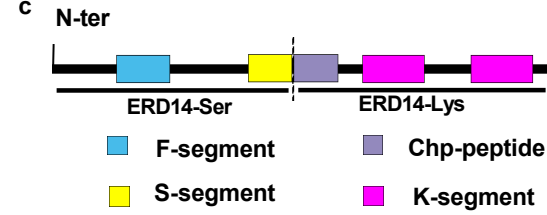
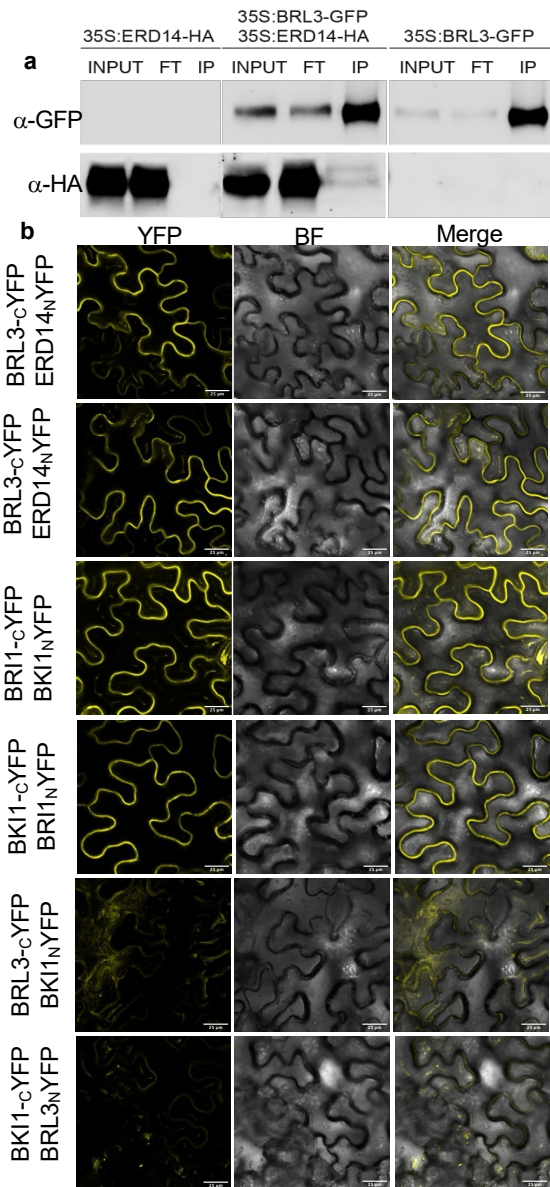
-Edges width: Overall energy (-ddG) of the ppi

-Node size: Fold change of transcript expression under drought (roots)

-Node color: Upregulation (red) or downregulation (blue)



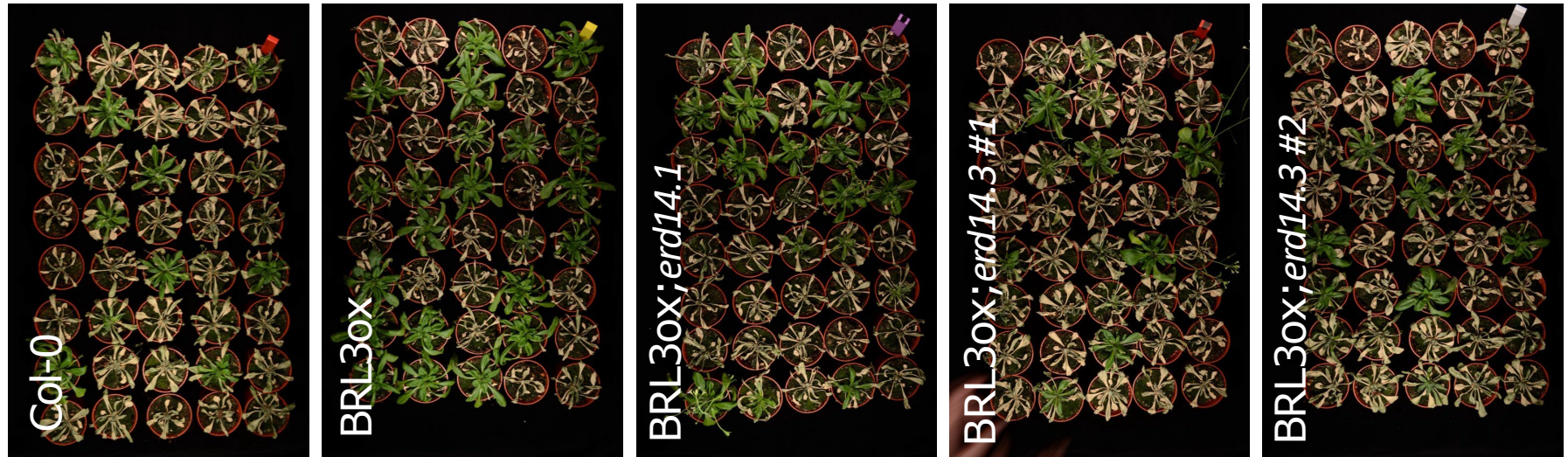
Lozano-Elena, unpublished results with B. Oliva, Computational Structural Biology Dept., UPF, Barcelona, Spain



# BRL3 receptor protein interacts with the dehydrin ERD14 at the plasma membrane



# *erd14* reverts BRL3-OX drought resistance phenotype



Survival  
rate (%)

15 %

50%

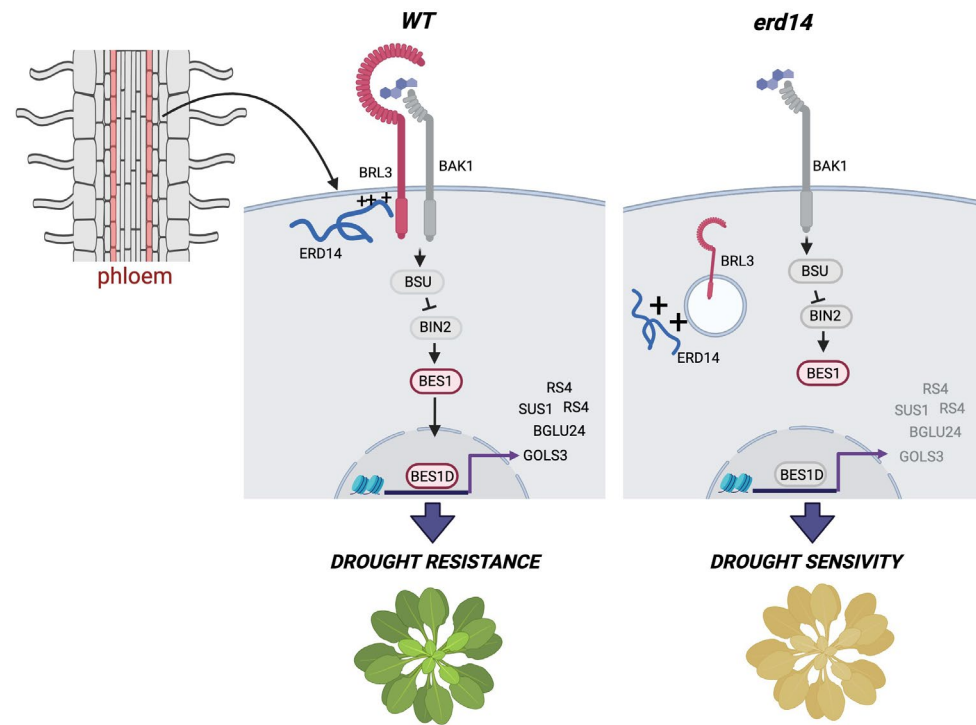
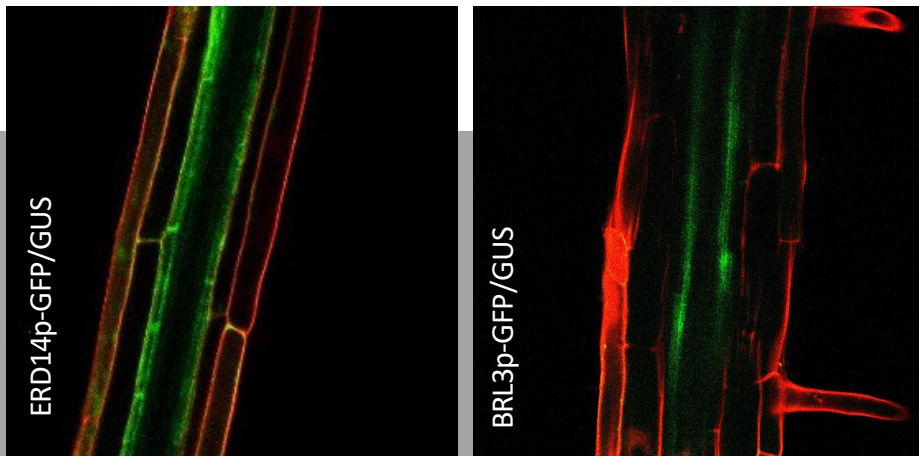
20%

10%

17.5%



# ERD14 chaperones vascular BRL3 receptors at the plasma membrane to confer drought stress adaptation





**BRL3  
ENGINEERED  
PLANTS CAN  
SURVIVE  
DROUGHT  
WITHOUT  
PENALIZING  
GROWTH**





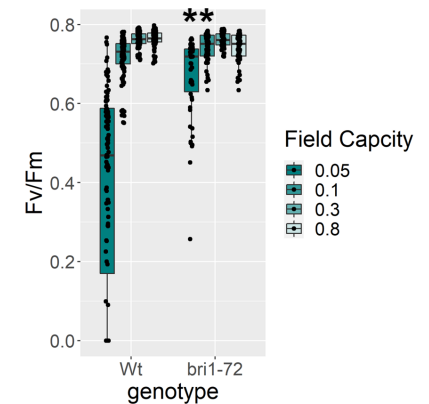
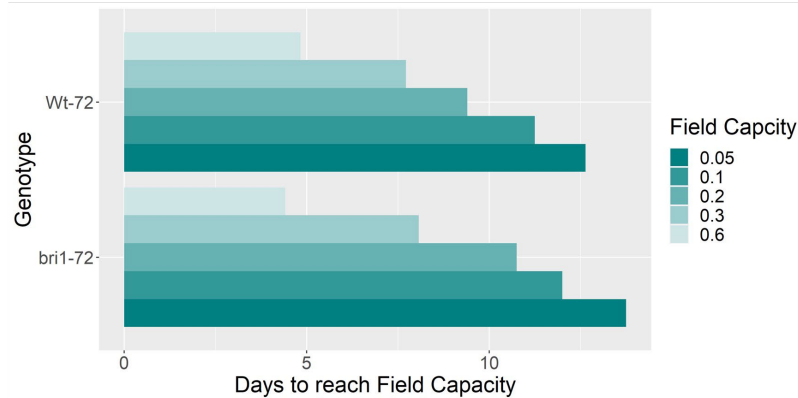
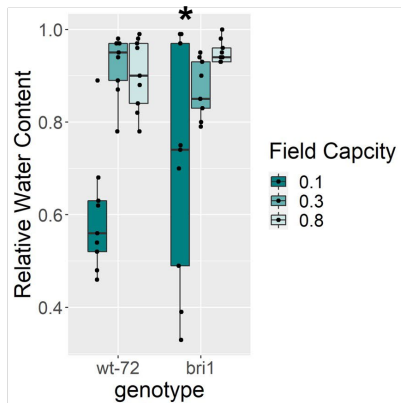
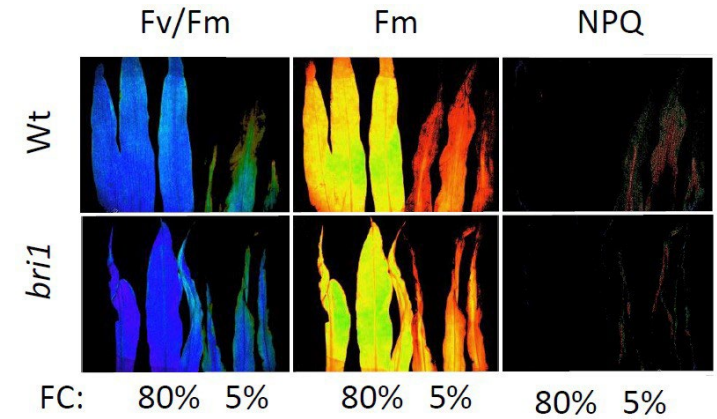
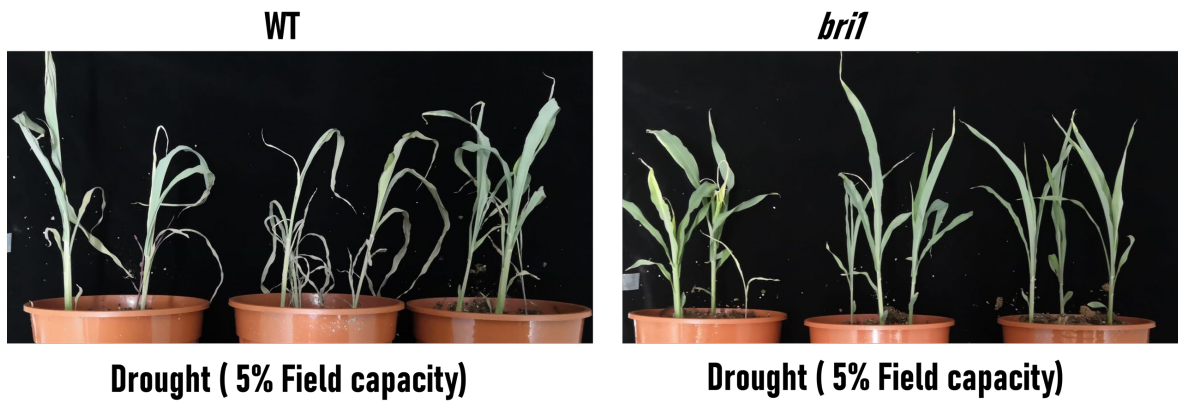
**OPENING A DOOR  
FOR  
AGRICULTURAL  
PRODUCTION ON A  
CLIMATE  
EMERGENCY**

# TRANSLATION TO CEREALS

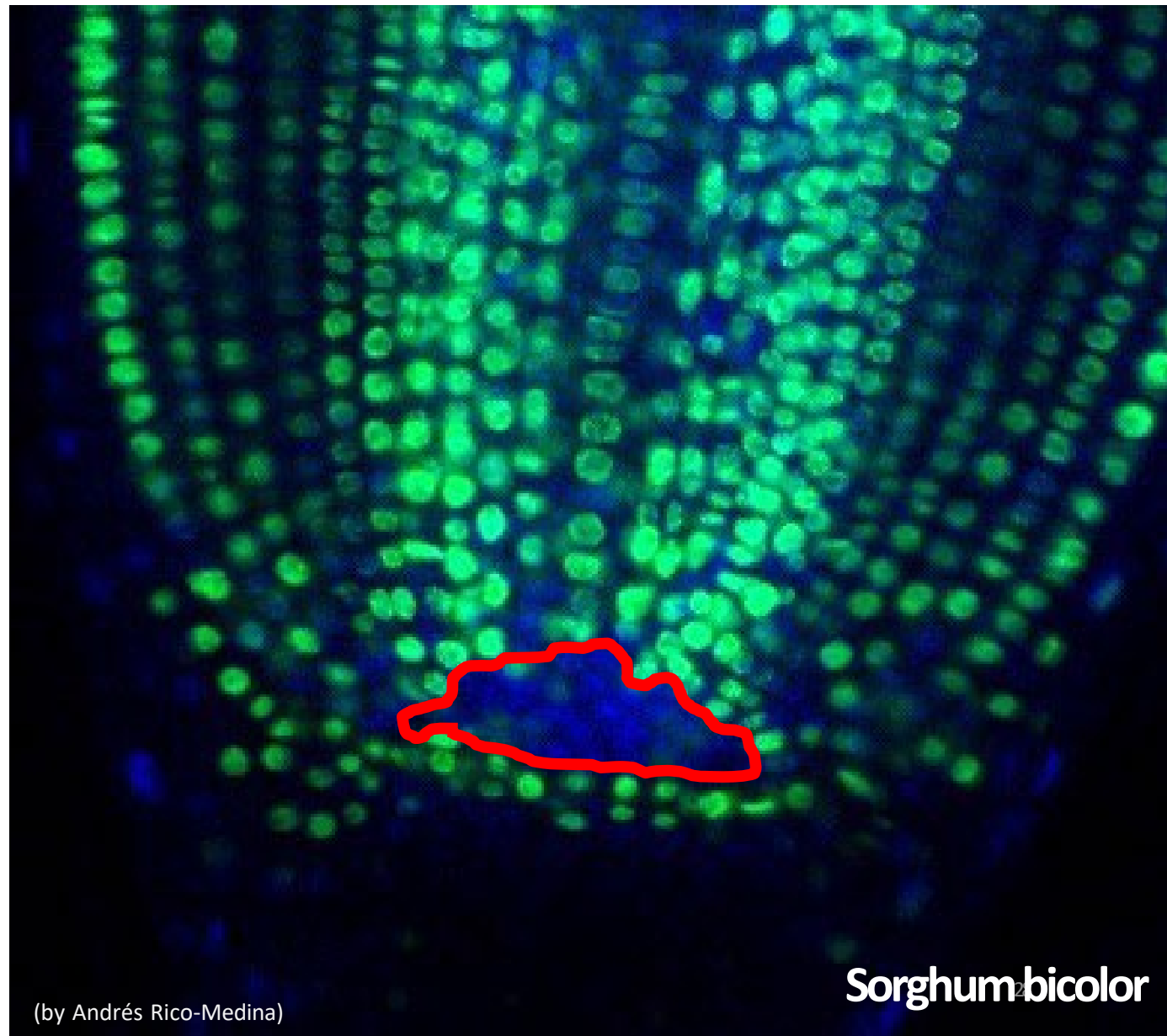


**Sorghum bicolor**

# Sorghum *Sbbri1* mutants display increased tolerance to drought stress



# NEW METHODS FOR SORGHUM





**GENETIC  
EDITION  
THE WAY OUT**



## Lab members:

David Blasco  
Veredas Coleto  
Azahara Rodríguez  
Mar Ferreira Guerra  
Juan Fontanet  
**Aditi Gupta**  
Ivan Herrero  
Natalie Laibach  
Fidel Lozano-Elena  
Mar Marqués Bueno  
Ainoa Planas-Riverola  
Andrés Rico-Medina  
Xabier Simón

## Former members:

Nadja Bosh  
Isabel Betegón Putze  
Mary-Paz González-García  
Norma Fabregas  
Mike Karampelias  
Josep Vilarrasa-Blasi  
Irina Pavelescu  
Martin Mecchia  
Damiano Martignago



## Collaborators:

I. Efroni, Hebrew Univ. of Jerusalem, Israel  
A. Ferrey, Max Planck, Germany  
J. Russinova, PSB, VIB, Ghent, Belgium  
R. Sozzani, NCSU, US  
M. Ibañes, Physics, UB, Barcelona  
B. Oliva, Structural bioinformatics, UPF, Barcelona  
S. Wendeborn, Chemistry, Basel, Switzerland



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# Planet

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[acano@planet-biotech.com](mailto:acano@planet-biotech.com)

Tel +34 646 688 212





**Thank you!**

**Ana I. Caño-Delgado**

**[www.cragenomica.es](http://www.cragenomica.es)**

**Twitter: Ana\_CanoDelgado**

