

Special issue “plant science and biotechnology in China”

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Plant science and plant biotechnology are elements of strategic importance in response to the continuously growing demand for adequate nutrition of the world population. Many countries have identified plant science and biotechnology, and their applications in the food production chain, among the priorities for their scientific development; this is the case for China. The recent past decades have witnessed an impressive development of Chinese research efforts in this field, and the growth of the respective Chinese research output has consistently exceeded the world average by a very wide margin. A growing proportion of the fine research papers published in *Plant Cell Reports* is contributed by scientists working in Chinese laboratories. The current special issue pays tribute to this observation: it provides a snapshot view of the research topics that are currently developed in China, in this particular branch of science.

The project of a special issue focusing on plant science and biotechnology in China has met with interest and enthusiasm. A total of 22 contributions—an interesting mix

of review articles and original papers—have been selected for this issue, providing a representative overview of the recent advances. They are put into their more general context by an introductory paper. This impressive response largely exceeds the volume of a regular issue of *Plant Cell Reports* and therefore, the special issue will be published in two parts. The first part is dedicated to different facets of plant biotechnology while the second part will shed a spotlight on more general topics of plant science.

We are indebted to Prof. Zhihong Xu (Academician of CAS, Beijing University) and Prof. Kang Chong (Institute of Botany, Chinese Academy of Sciences, CAS) who served as guest editors for this special issue. The high overall quality of both volumes of the special issue is the result of their dedicated efforts in inviting distinguished authors and accompanying the manuscripts from submission to acceptance. We trust that the readers of *Plant Cell Reports* will appreciate this unique glimpse on the impressively dynamic development of Chinese plant science and biotechnology.

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