This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Drug platforms			
Using cambial meristematic cells (CMCs) to improve large-scale plant natural product production	A new method of undifferentiated plant cell culture could improve the large-scale production of natural products, such as paclitaxel. Isolation and culturing of undifferentiated <i>Taxus cuspidate</i> CMCs in a 3 liter air-lift bioreactor led to the production of about 8–10-fold more paclitaxel than culturing dedifferentiated <i>T. cuspidate</i> plant cells. The CMCs grew stably and rapidly in a three-ton bioreactor. Next steps include increasing production capacity with large-scale bioreactors. SciBX 3(42); doi:10.1038/scibx.2010.1280 Published online Oct. 28, 2010	Patent application filed; available for licensing	Lee, E.-K. <i>et al. Nat. Biotechnol.</i>; published online Oct. 24, 2010; doi:10.1038/nbt.1693 Contact: Gary J. Loake, The University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, U.K. e-mail: gloake@ed.ac.uk