

need not lead to conflict of interest in bioethics. Responsible research and education is possible only when leaders form responsible partnerships with those whose interests they share, and disclose those partnerships fully.

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Phytohormone-Independent Division of Tobacco Protoplast-Derived Cells: Retractions

In the article "Data in key papers cannot be reproduced" by Michael Balter (News of the Week, 26 Mar., p. 1987), it is said that I had no plans to publish retractions of papers that could not be reproduced in the journals in which they originally appeared. In fact, I want to stress that the first responsibility my colleagues and I in and outside the Max Planck Institute felt was to publish our results showing that the previously published data could not be reproduced by another, more objective, method. Therefore, the members of the in-

vestigating team decided to publish all further data reevaluating this fraudulent work as a regular scientific paper in *The Plant Journal (TPJ)*. After peer review and acceptance of the paper by *TPJ*, it was agreed with by the Editor-in-Chief, Dianna Bowles, that, after publication, short correction statements should be sent to individual journals, which could refer to the *TPJ* paper (1) for full details of new experiments confirming the irreproducibility of the protoplast assays in question. Since the paper in *TPJ* has now appeared (1), and in view of the new results, we hereby officially retract the results regarding phytohormone-independent division of tobacco protoplast-derived cells in the reports by H. Hayashi *et al.* (20 Nov. 1992, p. 1350) (2); H. Röhrig *et al.* (11 Aug. 1995, p. 841) (3); and K. van de Sande *et al.* (19 July 1996, p. 370) (4).

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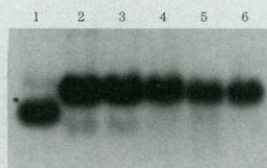
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