



News

Newly discovered plant gene could boost phosphorus intake

It is estimated that about 70 percent of phosphorus fertilizer used in Danish agriculture accumulates in soil, whereas only 30 percent of it reaches plants. Quid pro quo -- that's how one might describe the "food community" that the majority of plants have with mycorrhizal fungi. Plants allow fungi to live among their roots, while feeding them fat and sugar. And in return, fungi use their far-reaching hypha (filamentous branches) to capture vital soil nutrients for plants, including the important mineral phosphorus. Now, researchers at the University of Copenhagen's Department of Plant and Environmental Sciences have discovered an extraordinary plant gene, the CLE53 gene, which regulates cooperation between fungi and plants. The gene is central to a mechanism that[Read more...](#)

Date: June 16, 2020**Source:** Science Daily**Ban on toxic mercury looms in sugar cane farming, but Australia still has a way to go**

This month, federal authorities finally announced an upcoming ban on mercury-containing pesticide in Australia. We are one of the last countries in the world to do so, despite overwhelming evidence over more than 60 years that mercury use as fungicide in agriculture is dangerous. Mercury is a toxic element that damages human health and the environment, even in low concentrations. In humans, mercury exposure is associated with problems such as kidney damage, neurological impairment and delayed cognitive development in children. But Australia is yet to ratify an international treaty to reduce mercury emissions from other sources, such as the dental industry and coal-fired power stations. This is our next challenge. The ban will prevent about 5,280 kilograms of mercury entering the Australian[Read more...](#)

Date: June 22, 2020**Source:** Phys.org**Green Deal: Key to a climate-neutral and sustainable EU**

During the coronavirus pandemic economic activity slowed, causing a reduction in carbon emissions but leaving the EU facing recession. In a resolution adopted on 15 May 2020, Parliament called for an ambitious recovery plan with the Green Deal at its core. In response, the European Commission came up with Next Generation EU, a €750 billion recovery plan. The plan, along with the next EU long-term budget which still needs to be approved by member states and Parliament, aims to build a greener, more inclusive, digital and sustainable Europe and increase resilience to future crises such as the climate crisis. In November 2019, the Parliament declared a climate emergency asking the Commission to adapt all its proposals in line with a 1.5 °C target for limiting global warming and ensure that greenhouse gases emissions are significantly reduced.[Read more...](#)

Date: June 28, 2020**Source:** Modern Diplomacy**Covid-19 lockdown cleared up the air, but harmful ozone levels increased. Here's why**

The Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) said since the starting of the national lockdown, pollution from ozone in 22 mega and metropolitan cities in India "increased and even breached standards in several cities". Around the world, Covid-19 lockdowns cleaned up the air as a plethora of economic activities were brought to a standstill. However, new research shows that while NO₂ and PM_{2.5} levels plummeted during this period, pollution from ozone shot up. On Wednesday, the New Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) said since the starting of the national lockdown on March 25, pollution from ozone in 22 mega and metropolitan cities in India "increased and even breached standards in several cities".[Read more...](#)

Date: June 28, 2020**Source:** The Indian Express**Roadside hedges protect human health at the cost of plant health**

Roadside hedges take a hit to their health while reducing pollution exposure for humans, a new study from the University of Surrey finds. According to the European Environmental Agency, air pollution causes 400,000 premature deaths annually. In 2017, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pinpointed pollution generated by traffic as a major contributor to particulate matter. In a new study published by Environmental Pollution, experts from Surrey's Global Center for Clean Air Research (GCARE) set out to quantify the deposition of particles on leaf surfaces of a roadside hedge at child (0.6m) and adult (1.5m) breathing heights. The study, titled "Quantifying particulate matter reduction and their deposition on the leaves of green infrastructure," examined a beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) hedge along a busy two-lane road in Guildford, Surrey. They also monitored a nearby location on the same road with no hedge.[Read more...](#)

Date: June 30, 2020**Source:** Phys.org

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