

基于纳米递送系统的RNA农药及转基因植物研究进展

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摘要: 近年来, 转基因植物和RNA农药作为绿色可持续发展农业的重要组成部分受到越来越多的关注。传统的基因工程元件和RNA农药递送策略往往会受到多种外界因素的干扰, 造成效率偏低甚至失效, 这也是限制植物基因工程和RNA农药发展的主要技术瓶颈。基于纳米载体的新型递送系统与植物基因工程和RNA干扰技术的结合展现出了广阔的应用前景。本文结合最新研究进展, 重点综述了以纳米科技为核心的植物保护新理念、基于纳米递送系统的RNA农药以及纳米载体在植物基因工程中的应用, 展望了纳米科技在未来植物保护中的应用前景。

关键词: 纳米技术; 纳米载体; RNA农药; 植物基因工程; 转基因植物

Research progress in nano-delivery system-based RNA pesticides and transgenic plants

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Abstract: In recent years, transgenic plants and RNA pesticides have drawn more attention as important components of green and sustainable agriculture. The traditional delivery system for genetic engineering components and RNA pesticides is usually influenced by various external factors, leading to low efficiency or even failure. It is the biggest technical bottleneck for the development of plant genetic engineering and RNA pesticides. The combination of the nanocarrier-based delivery system with plant genetic engineering and RNA interference shows a broad application prospect. Based on the recent researches, this review introduced new strategies of nanotechnology-based plant protection, nano-delivery system-based RNA pesticides and the application of nanocarriers in plant genetic engineering. In particular, we also discussed the application prospects of nanotechnology in future plant protection.

Key words: nanotechnology; nanocarrier; RNA pesticide; plant genetic engineering; transgenic plant

21世纪以来,随着纳米科学的不断发展,作为多学科融合且极具平台性的纳米科技受到科研和产业界学者越来越多的关注。因尺度微小,纳米材料表现出传统材料所不具备的诸多特性,如比表面积大、表面能高、表面原子所占比例大等(何碧程等, 2013)。美国国家纳米技术计划(national nanotech-

nology initiative, NNI)将纳米技术定义为“在纳米尺度上进行的科学、工程和技术,纳米颗粒特有的性质使其在化学、物理、生物医学、工程和电子等领域广泛应用”(Bayda et al., 2020)。纳米医学是一门相对较新但发展迅速的学科,基于纳米载体的药物递送系统可能是解决一系列问题的关键(Kuno & Fujii,

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2011; Jahangirian et al., 2017)。纳米材料被用于靶向给药, 纳米技术在治疗人类慢性疾病方面具有诸多优势。作为核酸载体的纳米材料已广泛用于癌症治疗, 纳米技术在先进的药物配方、靶向领域及药物控制释放和递送方面发挥着重要作用 (Patra et al., 2018; Yuan et al., 2019)。

纳米技术在生物医药领域成功应用之后, 该技术与传统农业的结合也展现出广阔的应用前景, 为现代农业科学发展提供了新思路 (闫硕和沈杰, 2019)。在农业中, 纳米载体主要被用于农药的递送, 高效携带外源杀虫因子, 起到提升毒力, 扩大杀虫谱, 减少使用量, 延长持效期, 减少环境污染等作用。纳米材料制成佐剂辅助化学农药递送可以提高农药的控害效果, 减少化学农药的施用量, Yan et al. (2019) 最近构建的星形阳离子聚合物 (star polycation, SPc) 作为一种植物源农药佐剂, 可以大幅改善药剂的理化性质, 提高苦参碱、d-柠檬烯、除虫菊素对害虫的防治效果, 并且提升药物的持效期。除了作为植物源农药的佐剂, 纳米载体同样可以用于递送双链 RNA (double-stranded RNA, dsRNA)、Bt 毒蛋白等生物农药 (Zheng et al., 2016; 2019)。基于纳米递送系统的 RNA 农药可以提高 dsRNA 穿透害虫体壁的能力和 RNA 干扰 (RNA interference, RNAi) 效率, 并且可以制成更利于田间操作的可喷洒型 RNA 农药, 在害虫防治领域展现出广阔的应用前景 (Yan et al., 2020a)。

植物基因工程是农业可持续发展、天然产物合成和农作物品质改良的核心技术。传统的植物基因工程主要依赖于农杆菌介导转化和基因枪转化, 但农杆菌转化法受到宿主特异性的限制, 基因枪会损害植物组织 (Lv et al., 2020)。在缺乏通用、高通量的运载工具情况下, 将外源生物分子通过刚性的多层细胞壁和细胞器的双层脂质包膜输送到植物细胞中。基于纳米载体的新型递送策略能够克服植物细胞壁障碍, 同时准确地将 DNA 或 RNA 递送入植物体内, 产生瞬时或稳定的转化 (Wang et al., 2019)。如磁性纳米颗粒能够装载质粒 DNA, 在磁场的作用下压入花粉中, 形成纳米粒子-花粉复合物, 通过授粉进入植物并整合到后代的基因组中 (Zhao et al., 2017)。将细胞穿透肽和叶绿体靶向肽与 DNA 融合, 产生肽-DNA 复合物, 该复合物可以穿透细胞膜, 并有效地将 DNA 传递给质体 (Thagun et al., 2019)。用于基因递送的纳米粒子在新一代转基因作物培育领域具有广阔的应用前景。

1 以纳米科技为核心的植物保护新理念

随着农作物播种面积逐年增大、害虫耐药性不断增强, 以传统的乳油、可湿性粉剂等为主的农药制剂逐渐显露其弊端, 这些传统剂型存在需大量使用有机溶剂、粉尘飘移、水分散性差、有效利用率低、生物活性不高等问题 (王安琪等, 2018)。同时, 化学农药的过度使用也带来了环境问题, 威胁着人类和动物的健康, 影响了食品安全、生态安全和农业可持续发展。利用纳米载体可以改善传统化学农药的理化性质, 提升农药利用率, 同时具有一定的缓释效果。例如用乳液和仿生双模板方法制备的二氧化硅纳米胶囊, 可以增强农药氟虫腈的缓释作用, 二氧化硅材料相较于传统聚合物有更稳定的机械结构, 可能会作为一种杀虫剂缓释系统 (Wibowo et al., 2014)。相较于传统杀虫剂, 纳米载体对活性物质的封装递送可以保护内部活性物质不被过早分解和丢失, 提高靶向性, 降低农药施用量, 增强环境的安全性 (Gogos et al., 2012; Athanassiou et al., 2018)。

基于纳米递送系统的 RNA 农药作为绿色抗虫策略逐渐引起了科学家的关注。RNAi 由于其高度的序列特异性而被认为是一种安全的害虫防治策略 (Yan et al., 2020a)。目前在昆虫中已经发现 3 类 RNAi 通路, 包括小干扰 RNA (small interfering RNA, siRNA) 通路、微小 RNA (micro RNA, miRNA) 通路和 Piwi 蛋白互作的 RNA (Piwi interacting RNA, piRNA) 通路 (Zhu & Palli, 2020)。如图 1 所示, 通常利用 siRNA 通路进行昆虫 RNAi, dsRNA 被摄入昆虫细胞后, 首先由 Dicer 酶切割成 siRNA, 随后与 Ago2 蛋白结合形成 RNA 诱导沉默复合物 (RNA-induced silencing complex, RISC), siRNA 的正义链引导 Ago2 识别靶 mRNA, 进一步将其降解, 进而起到基因沉默的效果 (Matranga et al., 2005; Marques et al., 2010)。以害虫生长发育关键基因为靶标, 设计合成外源 dsRNA, 通过纳米载体保护、递送 dsRNA, 干扰害虫生长发育, 导致害虫死亡。目前已经开发出了多种 dsRNA 递送方法 (Zheng et al., 2019), 其中, 浸泡递送法操作简便, 田间应用前景最好, 但害虫体壁构成的物理屏障会阻止 dsRNA 进入目标组织或细胞, 从而降低 RNAi 效率。因此, 传统的递送方法在田间应用中往往难以保障高效的递送效率。纳米载体可以保护 dsRNA 免受环境因子的影响, 提升 dsRNA 的环境稳定性, 同时可以递送 dsRNA, 高效穿透害虫肠道围食膜、细胞膜、甚至体壁等屏障, 大幅提升 RNAi 效率, 获得良好的害

虫控制效果(He et al., 2013; Zheng et al., 2019; Yan et al., 2020a)。

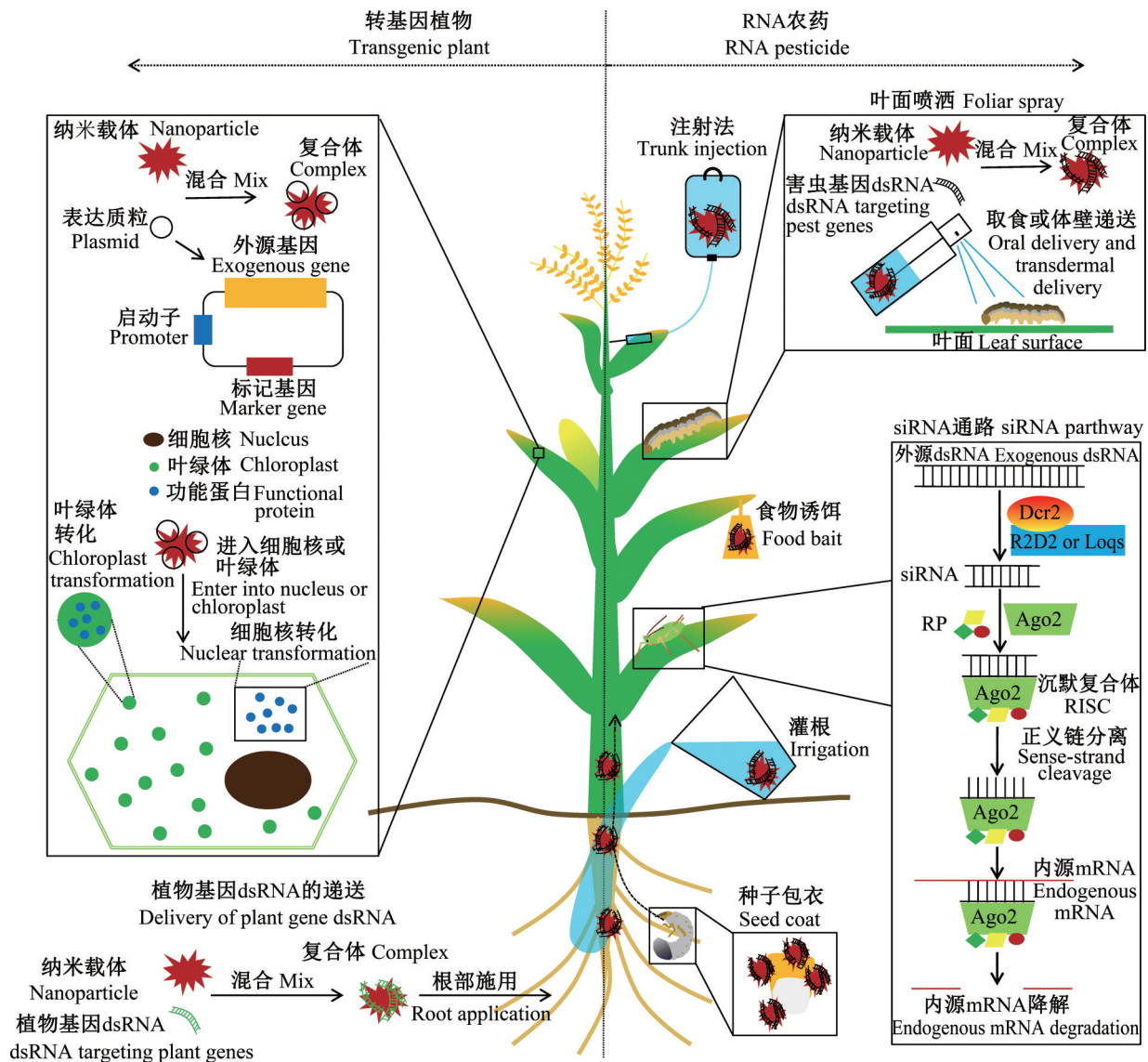


图1 纳米科技在RNA农药和转基因植物领域的应用

Fig. 1 Application of nanotechnology in RNA pesticides and transgenic crops

植物基因工程是植物源天然产物的合成 (Chen & Lai, 2015), 农作物抗虫 (Liu et al., 2015)、抗病 (Li et al., 2012)、抗除草剂 (Daniell et al., 1998)、抗非生物胁迫改良 (Zhang et al., 2009) 以及生产生物燃料 (Himmel et al., 2007) 的核心技术。转基因植物表达病虫害抗性基因, 对于控制病虫害的发生危害具有重要意义, 也是转基因作物培育的一个重要方向。但植物基因工程同样受制于细胞壁等天然的物理屏障, 如何高效将外源基因导入植物细胞仍然是转基因作物培育的主要障碍 (Baltes et al., 2014)。植物基因工程常用的物理转化方法有基因枪法和电穿孔法, 基因枪法可以有效突破细胞壁的屏障, 但其转化效率较低, 存在随机的DNA整合, 需要植物组织暴露于真空下接受高压轰击, 容易造成

组织损伤, 且需要昂贵的设备及材料, 这使得其具有较高的局限性 (Klein et al., 1987)。电穿孔法能够有效针对植物原生质体、分生组织与花粉粒进行遗传转化, 但其运载能力有限, 且对靶组织的穿孔可能导致非特异性转运的发生, 从而产生毒性 (Azencott et al., 2007)。农杆菌转化法是植物基因工程用于基因转化的常用工具之一, 但其只能适用于一些种类的植物, 且无法用于DNA-free编辑、线粒体、叶绿体DNA转化 (Herrera-Estrella et al., 1983; Baltes et al., 2017)。使用病毒也可以进行植物基因转化, 目前多种DNA、RNA病毒均已在模式植物基因中转化成功, 但由于病毒的致病性、载体大小的局限, 其使用依然受限 (Gleba et al., 2007; Shahgolzari et al., 2020)。与其他转化方法相比, 纳米粒子能够在没有

外力的作用下穿越植物细胞壁,且具有高可调谐的理化特性,可用于多种货物的偶联并具有广泛的适用性(Cunningham et al., 2018)。综上所述,基于纳米载体递送系统的RNAi技术和植物基因工程在绿色农业中展现出其特有的优势。

2 基于纳米递送系统的RNA农药

相较于传统的递送策略,纳米载体介导的RNAi递送系统具有高效、稳定、低剂量、缓释等优点。纳米载体介导的dsRNA递送主要包括4个步骤:纳米载体与核酸结合、细胞摄取、核内体逃逸、纳米复合物的解离与核酸的释放。首先,纳米载体通过静电作用与RNA的磷酸基团结合,形成载有核酸的纳米颗粒复合物,核酸纳米颗粒复合物与细胞膜结合后,通过细胞胞吞作用进入细胞并且形成内吞泡,内吞泡在细胞内沿微管运动并与早期核内体结合,因为核内体在成熟后会进入溶酶体,所以核酸纳米颗粒复合物需要及时逃逸出核内体,进入细胞质来避免溶酶体降解。由核内体逃逸后,在细胞中许多阴离子的作用下,阳离子聚合物构成的纳米载体解聚,使得dsRNA/siRNA由纳米载体中释放出来,进入昆虫RNAi途径,抑制害虫特异mRNA的表达(Yan et al., 2021)。

相较传统的给药策略,纳米载体介导的RNA农药递送系统对核酸具有高效的保护性(Christiaens et al., 2018)。使用鸟苷酸聚合物作为载体,可防止dsRNA被鳞翅目昆虫碱性肠溶液降解,饲喂甜菜夜蛾*Spodoptera exigua*纳米颗粒dsRNA复合物后,可有效干扰其体内的几丁质合成酶基因,使得该害虫的死亡率从16%提升至53%(Christiaens et al., 2018)。层状双氢氧化物(layered double hydroxide, LDH)纳米黏土是一类无机层状材料,是由盐水体沉淀或玄武岩的风化而自然形成(Reddy et al., 2006; 2008; Xu et al., 2006)。LDH纳米片可以结合dsRNA形成名为BioClay的dsRNA-LDH复合物,其中dsRNA不受RNA酶影响,局部喷洒30 d后依然可以被检测出。在对拟南芥*Arabidopsis thaliana*叶片抗病毒的喷洒试验中,BioClay的抗病毒效率达到76%(Mitter et al., 2017)。

纳米载体介导的RNA农药递送系统相较于传统的给药策略可以提高dsRNA的干扰效率。Avila et al. (2018)运用一种全肽纳米材料(branched amphiphilic peptide capsules, BAPCs)结合害虫内质网中的热休克蛋白基因*Bip*的dsRNA,饲喂豌豆蚜*Acyrtosiphon pisum*和赤拟谷盗*Tribolium castane-*

um,与摄入相同量的BiP-dsRNA相比,食用BiP-dsRNA-BAPCs复合物可导致豌豆蚜幼虫提前死亡;采用BiP-dsRNA-BAPCs和Armet-dsRNA-BAPCs复合物可有效杀死赤拟谷盗,约75%试虫在幼虫期或羽化期死亡,单独喂养dsRNA死亡率较低。此结果显示通过与纳米材料的有效结合,可以进一步提升基因干扰效率和害虫致死效果。Zheng et al. (2019)在大豆蚜*Aphis glycines*上建立了一种纳米材料(苜蓿亚胺纳米载体)介导的dsRNA体壁递送系统,在大豆蚜背板上点滴纳米载体-dsRNA复合物,对靶标基因干扰效率达95.4%,种群抑制效应达到80.5%。在前期研究的基础上,Yan et al. (2020a)以官能团化的SPc为纳米载体,通过局部体壁点滴施用和喷洒的方式,使得dsRNA有效穿透大豆蚜体壁,其死亡率分别达到了81.67%和78.50%。Guo et al. (2021)以橘小实蝇*Bactrocera dorsalis*翅发育关键基因*wingless*为RNAi靶标基因,利用SPc携带dsRNA制作食物诱饵,使橘小实蝇子代数量从201头降至62头,获得了良好的防控效果。以上研究表明,RNAi与纳米载体的有机融合为害虫防治提供了全新的思路,尤其在鳞翅目、半翅目昆虫中可通过纳米载体提升基因干扰效率,研发的RNA农药可以通过叶面喷洒、树干注射、食物诱集、种子包衣等技术使用(图1)。

虽然RNAi技术在害虫防治领域已取得突破性进展,但由于dsRNA合成成本较高,国际上尚无成熟的产品问世。随着合成生物学的飞速发展,对工程菌进行改造,从而实现低成本、批量化dsRNA合成有望降低RNA农药的生产成本。中国农业大学沈杰教授团队利用大肠杆菌*Escherichia coli* HT115 (DE3)菌株建立了一个高效、经济的害虫靶基因dsRNA合成系统,与商业化dsRNA合成试剂盒相比,该工程菌合成dsRNA的方法能够大幅降低dsRNA的合成成本(马中正等, 2019)。最近,该团队通过敲除大肠杆菌BL21(DE3)中编码核糖核酸内切酶(ribonuclease, RNase) III的*rnc*基因,并与含有单个T7启动子的RNAi表达载体进行组合,构建了一种新型的pET28-BL21 (DE3) RNase III系统,其dsRNA表达效率是L4440-HT115(DE3)的3倍以上,该系统为大规模合成dsRNA提供了一种低成本、高效率的新方法,有望促进大规模基因功能解析及基于RNAi为核心的害虫防控技术的发展(Ma et al., 2020)。

3 纳米载体在植物基因工程中的应用

纳米材料已广泛应用于生物分子的植物递送。目前可用于植物基因工程的纳米载体包括金属纳米

粒子、仿生纳米粒子、碳基纳米粒子、硅基纳米粒子、聚合物纳米粒子、纳米黏土粒子、肽纳米粒子、DNA纳米粒子等,可以通过细胞核转化或叶绿体转化,实现外源基因的高效表达(图1)(Burlaka et al., 2015; Cunningham et al., 2018; Lv et al., 2020)。

在借助基因枪、超声波、涡旋或电穿孔这类机械因子的辅助情况下,金属纳米粒子、硅基纳米粒子、聚合物纳米粒子可以高效地携带基因进行植物转化。硅基-金属纳米粒子,由纳米金共价连接形成顶盖的介孔二氧化硅纳米粒子(mesoporous silica nanoparticle, MSN),在基因枪法的辅助下,将含绿色荧光蛋白(green fluorescent protein, GFP)基因的质粒及其化学表达诱导剂成功递送至烟草 *Nicotiana tabacum* 子叶和玉米 *Zea mays* 胚中,通过化学诱导剂裂解连接纳米金顶帽与MSNs的共价键,以打开用于封顶的纳米金顶盖后实现了基因表达(Torney et al., 2007)。硅基-金属纳米粒子,镀金MSNs在基因枪法的辅助下,将含有增强型GFP基因、mCherry荧光蛋白基因、BSA蛋白基因的质粒成功递送至洋葱 *Allium cepa* 表皮细胞(Martin-Ortigosa et al., 2012),将含有AmCyan1、DsRed2荧光蛋白基因的质粒与Cre重组酶蛋白基因递送至玉米胚中(Martin-Ortigosa et al., 2014)。磁性纳米金粒子在磁性转化法的辅助下,将表达 β -葡萄糖苷酸酶基因的质粒成功递送至甘蓝型油菜 *Brassica napus* 原生质体和壁细胞中,并成功表达(Hao et al., 2013)。磁性Fe₃O₄纳米粒子在磁性转化法的辅助下,将表达选择标记基因的质粒递送至陆地棉 *Gossypium hirsutum* 花粉中,获得了约1%稳定转化的种子(Zhao et al., 2017)。聚合物纳米粒子,甲基丙烯酸二甲胺基乙酯聚合物在聚乙二醇转化试剂的辅助下,将表达黄色荧光蛋白和GFP基因的质粒成功递送至烟草和角齿藓 *Ceratodon purpureus* 原生质体中,并稳定表达(Finiuk et al., 2017)。

在不借助机械因子辅助的情况下,纳米粒子也能有效穿过细胞壁对植物体进行遗传转化。近年来,碳纳米管(carbon nanotubes, CNTs),尤其是单壁碳纳米管(single-walled carbon nanotubes, SWCNTs/SWNTs)异军突起,同时实现了DNA、RNA针对细胞核、线粒体与叶绿体的高效递送。SWCNTs是碳的生物相容同素异形体,其尺寸小,具有高纵横比,能够被动穿透叶绿体包膜和植物细胞膜。细胞核递送的SWCNTs通过羧基化的CNTs(COOH-CNT)与聚乙烯亚胺(polyethyleneimine, PEI)进行修饰以携带正电荷,随后将DNA质粒嫁接在PEI的顶端,被

SWCNTs携带进入细胞核,在本氏烟 *Nicotiana benthamiana* 叶片中成功表达外源基因,同时陆地棉、小麦 *Triticum aestivum*、芝麻菜 *Eruca sativa* 叶片中都显示了较强的外源基因表达(Demirer et al., 2019a,b)。传统细胞核递送会带来许多潜在的生态风险,叶绿体转化遵循母系遗传,不存在花粉介导的基因漂移,且由于其多倍体的特性,叶绿体转化可通过在每个植物细胞中引入数千个外源基因来介导极高水平的蛋白表达(Yan et al., 2015; 2018; 2020b)。经壳聚糖修饰的单壁碳纳米管(chitosan-wrapped SWNT, CS-SWNT)能通过脂交换膜渗透机制进入叶绿体,壳聚糖可通过静电作用与带负电荷的质粒DNA形成复合物,从而保护质粒DNA免受核酸酶降解,CS-SWNT成功介导了对芝麻菜原生质体和叶片的黄色荧光蛋白基因的转化和表达,且相较于聚乙二醇PEG介导的基因转化,CS-SWNT仅需极少量的质粒DNA(Kwak et al., 2019)。SWNTs在RNA沉默中也展现出了极高的效率,在将SWNTs用于递送siRNA沉默本氏烟叶片中被转入的mGFP5、Cy3基因的试验中,在mRNA水平上获得了约95%的沉默效率,在细胞裂解液中培养时,相较于游离的siRNA,SWNTs上的siRNA存在时间延长了12 h(Demirer et al., 2020)。

DNA纳米结构也是近期兴起的新型高效植物基因递送工具。研究学者们已经合成了大量不同大小和形状 of DNA 纳米结构,并已经实现了药物(Li et al., 2013)、RNA(Lee et al., 2012)等多种外源物质的递送应用(Douglas et al., 2009; Lin et al., 2009; Sun et al., 2015)。DNA纳米结构递送siRNA,能够在RNA水平和蛋白水平上达到对GFP基因40%~59%的沉默效率(Zhang et al., 2019; 2020)。聚酰胺-胺聚合物(polyamidoamine, PAMAM)纳米粒子成功介导了表达GFP基因的质粒在愈伤组织中的递送(Pasupathy et al., 2008)。仿生纳米材料,磷酸钙纳米粒子(calcium phosphate nanoparticles, CaP-NPs)成功介导了表达GUS基因的质粒在芥菜 *Brassica juncea* 下胚轴外植体中的递送,且展现出80.7%的稳定转化效率(Naqvi et al., 2012)。碳基纳米粒子,碳纳米点成功介导了对转入本氏烟、番茄 *Solanum lycopersicum* 叶片的GFP基因的沉默(Schwartz et al., 2020)。

4 展望

对于基于纳米科技的新型RNA农药来说,纳米载体的环境安全性一直备受关注,纳米粒子的引入

可能造成其在环境中的扩散,这会导致对人类和环境健康的潜在危害(Kah,2015)。良好的生物相容性是dsRNA载体的重要参数,通常在应用前进行评估(Xu et al.,2014;Gao et al.,2016)。基于纳米科技的新型RNA农药的生产成本关系到其推广前景。纳米粒子可以使用廉价的起始合成底物,例如Li et al.(2019)使用普通商用化学品季戊四醇作为起始合成物,并简化了操作步骤,合成了一种星形阳离子聚合物,其生产成本低至1.5美元/g。同时,通过RNase缺陷型菌株表达dsRNA,可以实现dsRNA的大规模、低成本合成(Ma et al.,2020)。

大多数纳米粒子的瞬时转化特性使其在植物基因编辑方面具有极大优势,但利用纳米粒子构建稳定转化的转基因植物较少(Lv et al.,2020)。目前仅有以 Fe_3O_4 为例的少数几种纳米粒子能够实现稳定的基因转化,因此利用瞬时转化实现永久编辑是植物基因工程的重要发展方向(Zhao et al.,2017)。Jiang et al.(2014)利用一种荧光型苝酰亚胺纳米载体携带植物生长发育关键基因的dsRNA,成功获得植物缺陷表型,证明纳米载体可以携带基因编辑元件,用于植物的基因编辑。同时,使用纳米粒子还可以进行无DNA的递送,可以同时递送Cas蛋白与gRNA,也可以进行基因编辑质粒的瞬时转化和永久编辑,其容易使用,成本低,相对适用于高通量的编辑筛选系统,并具有较低的脱靶率(Liu et al.,2020)。基因编辑技术CRISPR-Cas9已被确认可用于作物改良的多种方面,例如增加产量,提高质量,增强抗病性,抗除草剂等(Zhu et al.,2020)。CRISPR-Cas13已被确认可应用于植物病毒RNA的干扰,且其靶向结合RNA的特性使得其可以运用于植物前体mRNA的剪接调控(Mahas et al.,2019)。CRISPR-Cas12与CRISPR-Cas14因其分别具有的gRNA较小,无需依赖原间隔物相邻基序等优良特性,因此也具有应用于植物基因工程的潜在价值(Manghwar et al.,2019)。

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