

PLANT CELL WALLS

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Cover illustration

A functionally important aspect of the *in muro* modification of the pectic matrix is the regulation of the degree and pattern of methyl esterification of the homogalactouronan (HG) backbone. The image shows a junction between three tobacco stem cortical cells that have been immunolabelled with the monoclonal antibodies LM7 (red) and PAM1 (green) and stained with the cellulose-binding reagent Calcofluor (blue). PAM1 and LM7 are methylester pattern-specific antibodies and bind to unesterified and partially methyl-esterified HG respectively. In this issue, both antibodies bind to a region of cell wall that lines intercellular spaces, but the discrete locations of LM7 and PAM1 labelling indicates that the distribution pattern of methylesters along the HG backbone is differentially regulated within cell wall microdomains. (Courtesy of Willats *et al.*, Centre of Plant Sciences, Leeds, UK)