

*PLBhalla et al. Int. Arch. Allergy & Immunology 124(2001) Vol.1-3, p51-4.*

The study concluded that it was possible to selectively switch off allergen production in the pollen of ryegrass by genetic modification. The pollen appeared to remain as viable as the unmodified variety.

#### **Comment**

Although the trial demonstrated a reduction in allergen production, one of the key points in genetic engineering is (apart from the desired transformation) the equivalence of the modified version to the original version, i.e. only the intended change should be effected. This was not entirely demonstrated. Although the pollen viability appeared not to be altered, the commercial properties of the modified ryegrass were not investigated. Breeding studies to determine the long-term stability of the transformation was similarly not performed.

The extension of this procedure to other allergenic plant and products, e.g. peanut products, may be possible.

