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(71) Applicant: **INDIGO AG, INC.** [US/US]; 500 Rutherford Avenue, North Building, Boston, MA 02129 (US).

(72) Inventors: **RILEY, Raymond**; c/o Indigo Ag, Inc., 500 Rutherford Avenue, North Building, Boston, MA 02129 (US). **DJONOVIC, Slavica**; c/o Indigo Ag, Inc., 500 Rutherford Avenue, North Building, Boston, MA 02129 (US). **VOSNIDOU, Nancy**; c/o Indigo Ag, Inc., 500 Rutherford Avenue, North Building, Boston, MA 02129 (US). **BITAS, Vasileios**; c/o Indigo Ag, Inc., 500 Rutherford Avenue, North Building, Boston, MA 02129 (US).

(74) Agent: **HUBL, Susan, T.** et al.; Fenwick & West LLP, Silicon Valley Center, 801 California Street, Mountain View, CA 94041 (US).

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(54) Title: MODULATED NUTRITIONAL QUALITY TRAITS IN SEEDS

(57) Abstract: This invention relates to methods and materials for modulating seed nutritional quality traits of seeds produced by a wheat, cotton, soybean, or maize plant, said plant having been heterologously disposed to, or grown from, a plant element treated with an endophyte.

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MODULATED NUTRITIONAL QUALITY TRAITS IN SEEDS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims priority to Provisional Application No. 62/429,014, filed December 1, 2016; Provisional Application No. 62/429,009, filed December 1, 2016; Provisional Application No. 62/429,007, filed December 1, 2016; Provisional Application No. 62/429,004, filed December 1, 2016; and Provisional Application No. 62/433,095, filed December 12, 2016, the disclosures of which are incorporated by reference in their entirety.

SEQUENCE LISTING

[0002] The instant application contains a Sequence Listing with 62 sequences which has been submitted via EFS-Web and is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety. Said ASCII copy, created on November 29, 2017, is named 39062_10105_Sequence_Listing.txt, and is 83,432 bytes in size.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0003] This invention relates to compositions and methods for improving traits, for example nutritional quality traits, of seeds, particularly seeds of agricultural plants, for example maize, wheat, cotton, soybean. For example, this invention describes microbes that are capable of living within or heterologously disposed to a plant, which are used to impart improved traits to seeds grown from plants with which they are or have been heterologously disposed. The disclosed invention also describes methods of improving seed characteristics by introducing microbes to parental plants. Further, this invention also provides methods of treating seeds and other plant elements with microbes that are capable of living within a plant, particularly maize, spring wheat, cotton, soybean, to impart improved agronomic characteristics, particularly modulated nutritional quality traits, to progeny seeds.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0004] According the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (UN FAO), the world's population will exceed 9.6 billion people by the year 2050, which will require significant improvements in agricultural to meet growing food demands. There is a need for improved agricultural plants that will enable the nearly doubled food production demands with fewer resources and more environmentally sustainable inputs, for plants with improved responses to various biotic and abiotic stresses, as well as improved nutritional composition.

[0005] Today, crop performance is optimized primarily via technologies directed towards the interplay between crop genotype (e.g., plant breeding, genetically-modified (GM) crops) and

its surrounding environment (e.g., fertilizer, synthetic herbicides, pesticides). While these paradigms have assisted in doubling global food production in the past fifty years, yield growth rates have stalled in many major crops and shifts in the climate have been linked to production instability and declines in important crops, driving an urgent need for novel solutions to crop yield improvement. In addition to their long development and regulatory timelines, public fears of GM-crops and synthetic chemicals have challenged their use in many key crops and countries, resulting in a lack of acceptance for many GM traits and the exclusion of GM crops and many synthetic chemistries from some global markets. Thus, there is a significant need for innovative, effective, environmentally-sustainable, and publicly-acceptable approaches to improving the characteristics of crop plants.

[0006] Like humans, who utilize a complement of beneficial microbial symbionts, plants have been purported to derive a benefit from the vast array of bacteria and fungi that live both within and around their tissues in order to support the plant's health and growth. Endophytes are symbiotic organisms (typically bacteria or fungi) that live within plants, and inhabit various plant tissues, often colonizing the intercellular spaces of host leaves, stems, flowers, fruits, seeds, or roots. To date, only a small number of symbiotic endophyte-host relationships have been analyzed in limited studies to provide fitness benefits to model host plants within controlled laboratory settings.

[0007] Efforts to modulate compositions, such as fats or proteins, in seeds of crop plants have been largely unsuccessful, as changes in one specific component are often at the expense of another, or at the expense of total plant yield. Thus, there remains an outstanding need for compositions and methods that can modulate levels of individual seed nutrients (e.g., protein, fat, carbohydrate, fiber, moisture, ash, or Calories) without negatively impacting yield (i.e., no statistical negative impact to yield).

[0008] There remains a great need to develop better plant-endophyte systems to confer benefits to a variety of agriculturally-important plants, for example to provide improved nutritional quality traits in the seeds produced from such plants. Provided herein are methods of improving the nutritional profile of seeds grown from plants heterologously disposed to endophytes.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0009] Figure 1A depicts part 1 of 2 of an exemplary molecular phylogenetic analysis of MIC-07010 and MIC-31593 by the Maximum Likelihood method. Figure 1B depicts part 2

of 2 of an exemplary molecular phylogenetic analysis of MIC-07010 and MIC-31593 by the Maximum Likelihood method.

[0010] Figure 2 shows the pedigree of the wheat variety SDSU Focus.

[0011] Figure 3 shows the pedigree of the wheat variety SDSU Select.

[0012] Figure 4 shows exemplary results of endophyte treatments on the percentage fat composition of soybean seeds; NT represents untreated controls (seeds not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation), also shown are treatments comprising MIC-38013 and MIC-84414. The experimental conditions and methods are described in Example 7.

[0013] Figure 5 shows exemplary results of endophyte treatments on the percentage total digestible nutrient (TDN) composition of corn seeds; NT represents untreated controls (seeds not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation), also shown are treatments comprising MIC-38013, MIC-54707 and MIC-93265. The experimental conditions and methods are described in Example 7.

[0014] Figure 6 shows exemplary results of endophyte treatments on the percentage acid detergent fiber composition of corn seeds; NT represents untreated controls (seeds not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation), also shown are treatments comprising MIC-38013, MIC-54707 and MIC-93265. The experimental conditions and methods are described in Example 7.

[0015] Figure 7 shows exemplary results of endophyte treatments on the percentage fat composition of wheat seeds; NT represents untreated controls (seeds not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation), also shown are treatments comprising MIC-70076, MIC-82330, MIC-84414, and MIC-99849. The experimental conditions and methods are described in Example 7.

[0016] Figure 8 shows exemplary results of endophyte treatments on the percentage ash composition of cotton seeds; NT represents untreated controls (seeds not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation), also shown are treatments comprising MIC-50414, MIC-68178, and MIC-96038. The experimental conditions and methods are described in Example 7.

[0017] Figure 9 shows exemplary results of endophyte treatments on the net energy composition as Mcal/lb of corn seeds; NT represents untreated controls (seeds not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation), also shown are treatments comprising MIC-38013, MIC-54707 and MIC-93265. The experimental conditions and methods are described in Example 7.

[0018] Figure 10 shows exemplary results of endophyte treatments on the percentage carbohydrate composition of soy seeds; Formulation represents formulations controls (seeds treated with a formulation not comprising an endophyte), also shown are treatments comprising MIC-78123, MIC-19621, MIC-89612 and MIC-33228. The experimental conditions and methods are described in Example 7.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0019] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0020] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0021] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[0022] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element

heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0023] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0024] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[0025] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0026] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further

comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0027] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[0028] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0029] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0030] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[0031] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0032] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0033] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a

polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[0034] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0035] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0036] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0037] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element

heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[0038] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0039] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0040] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a

polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[0041] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0042] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0043] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[0044] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as

compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0045] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0046] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0047] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[0048] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant

element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0049] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0050] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[0051] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0052] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn

plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0053] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[0054] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0055] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[0056] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further

comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0057] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 and 19.

[0058] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0059] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0060] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element

not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[0061] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0062] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[0063] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0064] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte,

wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 and 19.

[0065] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0066] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0067] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[0068] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising

the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0069] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[0070] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0071] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 and 19.

[0072] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0073] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0074] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[0075] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0076] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed

produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[0077] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0078] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 and 19.

[0079] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the product is ethanol.

[0080] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the product is ethanol.

[0081] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19, wherein the product is ethanol.

[0082] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the product is ethanol.

[0083] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a

polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19, wherein the product is ethanol.

[0084] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the product is ethanol.

[0085] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 and 19, wherein the product is ethanol.

[0086] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0087] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0088] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 and 23.

[0089] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0090] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0091] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0092] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 and 23.

[0093] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0094] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0095] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously

disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0096] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 and 23.

[0097] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[0098] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[0099] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the

plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00100] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 and 23.

[00101] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00102] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00103] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by

the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00104] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, and 37.

[00105] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00106] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00107] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant

element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, and 37.

[00108] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00109] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00110] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, and 37.

[00111] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00112] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00113] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, and 37.

[00114] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00115] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00116] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a

wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00117] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00118] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element is modified.

[00119] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element is modified.

[00120] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element is modified.

[00121] In one aspect, the invention provides a method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element is modified.

[00122] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element,

wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00123] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00124] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[00125] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00126] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant

element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00127] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[00128] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from a soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00129] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from a soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00130] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from a soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide

sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[00131] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from a soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00132] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from a soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00133] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from a soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[00134] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant

element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00135] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00136] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[00137] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00138] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00139] In one aspect, the invention provides a soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[00140] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00141] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00142] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element,

wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[00143] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00144] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00145] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte,

wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[00146] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00147] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00148] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.

[00149] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously

disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00150] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00151] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.

[00152] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00153] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with

the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00154] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00155] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00156] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00157] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid

detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00158] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00159] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00160] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00161] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a

polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00162] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00163] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00164] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00165] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the

endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00166] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00167] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00168] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00169] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element

relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00170] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00171] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00172] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00173] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00174] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00175] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00176] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00177] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a

corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00178] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00179] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.

[00180] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the product is ethanol.

[00181] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the product is ethanol.

[00182] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19, wherein the product is ethanol.

[00183] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the product is ethanol.

[00184] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a

polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19, wherein the product is ethanol.

[00185] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the product is ethanol.

[00186] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19, wherein the product is ethanol.

[00187] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00188] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00189] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 or 23.

[00190] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, , wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase in fat composition in a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00191] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00192] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00193] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 or 23.

[00194] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, , wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase in fat composition in a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00195] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00196] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with

the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00197] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 or 23.

[00198] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, , wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase in fat composition in a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00199] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00200] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the

endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00201] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 or 23.

[00202] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, , wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase in fat composition in a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.

[00203] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00204] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with

the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00205] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, or 37.

[00206] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00207] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, , wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00208] In one aspect, the invention provides an animal feed derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, , wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a

polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, or 37.

[00209] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00210] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, , wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00211] In one aspect, the invention provides a human food product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, , wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, or 37.

[00212] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00213] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a

cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00214] In one aspect, the invention provides an industrial product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by a synthetic composition, the composition comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, or 37.

[00215] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00216] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00217] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the

endophyte, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00218] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

[00219] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element is modified.

[00220] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element is modified.

[00221] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element is modified.

[00222] In one aspect, the invention provides a synthetic composition, comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte, wherein the plant element is modified.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[00223] Terms used in the claims and specification are defined as set forth below unless otherwise specified.

[00224] It must be noted that, as used in the specification and the appended claims, the singular forms “a,” “an” and “the” include plural referents unless the context clearly dictates otherwise.

[00225] As demonstrated herein, the nutritional composition of seeds of agricultural plants such as maize, wheat, cotton, soybean are altered or modulated by application of a treatment comprising one or more endophytes. In some embodiments, endophytes of the present invention may modulate the nutritional composition of progeny seeds produced by a parental maize, wheat, cotton, or soybean plant. Progeny seeds produced by a parental plant is alternately and equivalently stated as seeds produced by a plant. An “endophyte” is an organism capable of living on a plant element (e.g., rhizoplane or phyllosphere) or within a plant element, or in close physical proximity with a plant element, e.g., the rhizosphere, or e.g., on a seed. Endophytes can occupy the intracellular or extracellular spaces of plant tissue, including the leaves, stems, flowers, fruits, seeds, or roots. A “beneficial” endophytes does not cause disease or harm the host plant otherwise. An endophyte can be a fungus or a bacterium. As used herein, the term “microbe” is sometimes used to describe an endophyte.

[00226] In some embodiments, a treatment is applied to a plant or plant element by heterologously disposing the treatment to the plant or plant element. A “plant element” is intended to generically reference either a whole plant or a plant component, including but not limited to plant tissues and regions thereof, plant parts and regions thereof, and to plant cell types. A plant element is preferably one of the following: whole plant, seedling, meristematic tissue, ground tissue, vascular tissue, dermal tissue, seed, leaf, root, shoot, stem, flower, fruit, stolon, bulb, tuber, corm, keikis, shoot, bud.

[00227] As used herein, an “agricultural seed” is a seed used to grow a plant typically used in agriculture (an “agricultural plant”). The seed may be of a monocot or dicot plant, and may be planted for the production of an agricultural product, for example feed, food, fiber, fuel, industrial uses, etc. As used herein, an agricultural seed is a seed that is prepared for planting, for example, in farms for growing.

[00228] “Agricultural plants,” or “plants of agronomic importance,” include plants that are cultivated by humans for food, feed, fiber, fuel, and/or industrial purposes. Agricultural plants include, but are not limited to, monocotyledonous species such as: maize (*Zea mays* including subspecies such as *Zea mays indenata*, *Zea mays indurata*, *Zea mays amylacea*, *Zea mays saccharata*, and *Zea mays everta*), wheat (genus *Triticum* including species such as *Triticum aestivum*, *Triticum spelta*, *Triticum monococcum*, *Triticum dicoccum*, *Triticum durum*, *Triticum turgidum*, and *Triticum rigidum*), and dicotyledonous species such as:

soybean (*Glycine max*) and cotton (genus *Gossypium* including species such as *Gossypium arboreum*, *Gossypium herbaceum*, *Gossypium hirsutum*, *Gossypium barbadense*). As used herein the terms “maize” and “corn” are equivalent and used interchangeably. A “population of plants” or “plant population” refers to more than one plant, that are of the same taxonomic category, typically be of the same species, and will also typically share a common genetic derivation.

[00229] In one embodiment, it is contemplated that the plant of the present invention is corn (*Zea spp.*), in particular *Zea mays ssp.* such as *Zea mays indenata*, *Zea mays indurata*, *Zea mays amylacea*, *Zea mays saccharata*, and *Zea mays everta*. In one embodiment, it is contemplated that the plant of the present invention is the corn variety Stine 9734, or a closely related variety. In some embodiments, the present invention contemplates the use of endophytes that can confer a beneficial agronomic trait upon a corn plant element or corn plant to which it is heterologously disposed.

[00230] In one embodiment, it is contemplated that the plant of the present invention is wheat (*Triticum spp.*) including species *T. aestivum* and *T. durum*. In one embodiment, it is contemplated that the plant of the present invention is hard red winter (HRW), hard red spring (HRS), hard white (HW), durum, soft white (SW), or soft red winter (SRW). In one embodiment, it is contemplated that the plant of the present invention is the wheat variety SDSU Focus, SDSU Select, or a closely related variety. Figure 2 shows an exemplary pedigree of the wheat variety SDSU Focus. Figure 3 shows an exemplary pedigree of the wheat variety SDSU Select. In some embodiments, the present invention contemplates the use of endophytes that can confer a beneficial agronomic trait upon a wheat plant element or wheat plant to which it is heterologously disposed.

[00231] In one embodiment, it is contemplated that the plant of the present invention is soy (*Glycine max*). In one embodiment, it is contemplated that the plant of the present invention is the soy variety Dairyland DSR1808R2Y, Pfister 38R25, Stine 3920, Stine 33E22, or a closely related variety. In some embodiments, the present invention contemplates the use of endophytes that can confer a beneficial agronomic trait upon a soy plant element or soy plant to which it is heterologously disposed.

[00232] In some embodiments, plant elements of the present invention include wild plants and domesticated varieties of the genera *Zea*, *Triticum*, *Glycine*, *Gossypium*. Plants elements may developed by any technique, including but not limited to directed evolution, selection, marker assisted selection, hybridization, outcrossing, backcrossing, in-breeding,

polyploidization, reverse breeding, doubled haploids, induced mutation, other genetic or epigenetic modifications, and combinations thereof.

[00233] In some embodiments, a treatment may comprise a modified microbe or plant or plant element. A microbe or plant or plant element is “modified” when it comprises an artificially introduced genetic or epigenetic modification. In some embodiments, the modification is introduced by a genome engineering technology. In some embodiments, the modification is introduced by a targeted nuclease. In some embodiments, targeted nucleases include, but are not limited to, transcription activator-like effector nuclease (TALEN), zinc finger nuclease (ZNF), clustered regulatory interspaced short palindromic repeats (CRISPR), CRISPR/Cas9, CRISPR/CPF1, and combinations thereof. In some embodiments, the modification is an epigenetic modification. In some embodiments, the modification is introduced by treatment with a DNA methyltransferase inhibitor such as 5-azacytidine, or a histone deacetylase inhibitor such as 2-amino-7-methoxy-3H-phenoxazin-3-one. In some embodiments, the modification is introduced via tissue culture. In some embodiments, a modified microbe or plant or plant element comprises a transgene.

[00234] A treatment is “heterologously disposed” when mechanically or manually applied, artificially inoculated or disposed onto or into a plant element, seedling, plant or onto or into a plant growth medium or onto or into a treatment formulation so that the treatment exists on or in the plant element, seedling, plant, plant growth medium, or formulation in a manner not found in nature prior to the application of the treatment, e.g., said combination which is not found in nature in that plant variety, at that stage in plant development, in that plant tissue, in that abundance, or in that growth environment (for example, drought). In some embodiments, such a manner is contemplated to be selected from the group consisting of: the presence of the endophyte; presence of the endophyte in a different number of cells, concentration, or amount; the presence of the endophyte in a different plant element, tissue, cell type, or other physical location in or on the plant; the presence of the endophyte at different time period, e.g. developmental phase of the plant or plant element, time of day, time of season, and combinations thereof. In some embodiments, “heterologously disposed” means that the endophyte being applied to a different tissue or cell type of the plant element than that in which the endophyte is naturally found. In some embodiments, “heterologously disposed” means that the endophyte is applied to a developmental stage of the plant element, seedling, or plant in which said endophyte is not naturally associated, but may be associated at other stages. For example, if an endophyte is normally found at the flowering stage of a plant and no other stage, an endophyte applied at the seedling stage may be considered to be

heterologously disposed. In some embodiments, an endophyte is heterologously disposed the endophyte is normally found in the root tissue of a plant element but not in the leaf tissue, and the endophyte is applied to the leaf. In another non-limiting example, if an endophyte is naturally found in the mesophyll layer of leaf tissue but is being applied to the epithelial layer, the endophyte would be considered to be heterologously disposed. In some embodiments, “heterologously disposed” means that the native plant element, seedling, or plant does not contain detectable levels of the microbe in that same plant element, seedling, or plant. In some embodiments, “heterologously disposed” means that the endophyte being applied is at a greater concentration, number, or amount of the plant element, seedling, or plant, than that which is naturally found in said plant element, seedling, or plant. For example, an endophyte is heterologously disposed when present at a concentration that is at least 1.5 times greater, between 1.5 and 2 times greater, 2 times greater, between 2 and 3 times greater, 3 times greater, between 3 and 5 times greater, 5 times greater, between 5 and 7 times greater, 7 times greater, between 7 and 10 times greater, 10 times greater, or even greater than 10 times higher number, amount, or concentration than the concentration that was present prior to the disposition of said endophyte. In another non-limiting example, an endophyte that is naturally found in a leaf tissue of a cupressaceous tree would be considered heterologous to leaf tissue of a maize, wheat, cotton, soybean plant. In another example, an endophyte that is naturally found in leaf tissue of a maize, spring wheat, cotton, soybean plant is considered heterologous to a leaf tissue of another maize, spring wheat, cotton, soybean plant that naturally lacks said endophyte.

[00235] The inventors herein have conceived of using endophytes to modulate (e.g., improve) the nutritional composition of seeds produced by agricultural plants heterologously disposed with one or more endophytes of the present invention. The seed progeny of parental plants that have been heterologously disposed to an endophyte or a plurality of endophytes at some point during said host plant’s life cycle exhibit modulated nutritional composition as compared to seeds produced by reference plants not heterologously disposed to one or more endophytes. In part, the present invention describes methods of improving the nutritional quality trait(s) of seeds obtained from parental plants which have been grown from seeds treated with endophytes.

[00236] A “host plant” includes any plant, particularly a plant of agronomic importance, within which or onto which a microbe, such as an endophyte, is heterologously disposed. As used herein, a microbe is said to colonize a plant, plant element, or seed, when it can exist as an endophyte in relationship with a plant or plant element during at least part of either the

plant's or the microbe's life cycle. In some embodiments, an endophyte is said to "colonize" a plant or plant element when it can be stably detected within the plant or plant element over a period time, such as one or more days, weeks, months or years. Some of the compositions and methods described herein involve a heterologous disposition of a plurality of endophytes or population of endophytes in an amount effective to colonize a plant.

[00237] In some embodiments, the present invention contemplates the establishment of an endophyte in a plant element. In some embodiments, endophyte establishment results in a detectable change to the plant element, in particular the progeny seed of a host plant that itself was heterologously disposed to one or more endophytes at some point in its life cycle. The detectable change can be an improvement in one or more nutritional quality traits of the progeny seed. As used herein, an endophyte is considered to have conferred an improved agricultural trait when the improved trait arose from the plant, the endophyte, concerted action between the plant and endophyte, or combinations thereof.

[00238] It is contemplated that the modulation, or improvement, of nutritional quality trait in the seed may be due to any number of potential mechanisms of action. For example, seed nutritional quality trait may be altered due to the presence of the associated endophyte directly in the seed tissue. In another example, seed nutritional quality trait may be altered due to the direct influence of the endophyte on the host plant's metabolic or other biochemical pathways. In another example, seed nutritional quality trait may be altered due to the indirect action of the endophyte, for example, via production of a substance that induces another endophyte to directly influence the host plant's metabolic or other biochemical pathway, to induce altered seed nutritional composition.

[00239] In some embodiments, the endophyte-associated plant (e.g., one or more endophytes have been heterologously disposed with a plant or plant element) is able to produce a detectable change in the content of at least one nutritional quality trait in the seed produced by the plant. In some embodiments, the endophyte-associated plant or part thereof contains at least one increased nutritional quality trait when compared with reference agricultural plants. In some embodiments, the endophyte-associated plant or part thereof contains at least one decreased nutritional quality trait when compared with reference agricultural plants. In some embodiments, the endophyte modulates the level of the nutritional quality trait directly (e.g., the microbe itself produces the nutritional quality trait, resulting in an overall increase in the level of the nutritional quality trait found in the seed). In other cases, the agricultural plant, as a result of the heterologously disposed endophytic microbe, exhibits a modulated level of the nutritional quality trait (e.g., the plant reduces the

expression of a biosynthetic enzyme responsible for production of the nutritional quality trait as a result of the endophyte inoculation). In still other cases, the modulation in the level of the metabolite is a consequence of the activity of both the endophyte and the plant (e.g., the plant produces increased amounts of the nutritional quality trait when compared with a reference agricultural plant, and the endophytic microbe also produces the metabolite). Therefore, as used herein, a modulation in the level of a metabolite can be an alteration in the metabolite level through the actions of the endophyte and/or the inoculated plant. The levels of a nutritional quality trait can be measured in a seed, and compared with the levels of the nutritional quality trait in a seed from a reference agricultural plant not comprising the endophyte.

[00240] As used herein, the phrase “modulating the composition of a seed” refers to modulating the nutritional composition of a seed or nutrients within a seed. “Nutrient”, “seed nutrient” or “nutritional quality trait” refers to any composition of the associated plant element, most particularly compositions providing benefit to other organisms that consume or utilize said plant element. Seed nutrients, include but are not limited to, protein, fat, fiber, carbohydrate, moisture, ash, total digestible nutrients and Calories. In some embodiments, fiber is acid detergent fiber (ADF). ADF represents the highly indigestible fiber portion of a seed; it includes lignin, cellulose, silica, and insoluble form of Nitrogen (not hemicellulose). Total digestible nutrients is a measure of the sum of nutrients in a seed that are capable of supplying energy, namely the digestible fiber, protein, lipid, and carbohydrate components of seed. Net energy values are calculated based on the variability in energy utilization of mammals that are maintaining their body mass (maintenance), increasing body mass (gain) or lactating (lactation). The net energy values reported herein are net energy values for lactation, and are derived from the calculation described in Example 7. Ash refers to the inorganic residue that remains after either complete oxidation of organic matter or ignition in food material

[00241] “Modulated seeds” are seeds wherein one or more nutrients are increased or decreased by at least 0.1%, at least 0.5%, at least 1%, at least 2%, at least 3%, between 3% and 5%, at least 5%, between 5% and 10%, at least 10%, between 10% and 15%, for example at least 15%, between 15% and 20%, at least 20%, between 20% and 30%, at least 30%, between 30% and 40%, at least 40%, between 40% and 50%, at least 50%, between 50% and 60%, at least 60%, between 60% and 75%, at least 75%, between 75% and 100%, at least 100%, between 100% and 150%, at least 150%, between 150% and 200%, at least 200%, between 200% and 300%, at least 300% or more, when compared with a reference plant. In

some embodiments, the modulated seeds are modulated soybean seeds, modulated maize seeds, modulated wheat seeds, or modulated cotton seeds.

[00242] A “reference plant”, “reference plant element”, “reference agricultural plant” or “reference seed” is a similarly situated plant or seed of the same species, strain, or cultivar to which a treatment, formulation, composition or endophyte preparation as described herein is not administered or contacted. A reference plant, therefore, is identical to the treated plant except for the presence of the active ingredient (e.g. endophyte) to be tested and can serve as a control for detecting the effects of the treatment (e.g. active ingredient) conferred to the plant. A plurality of reference plants may be referred to as a “reference population”.

[00243] A “reference environment” refers to the environment, treatment or condition of the plant in which a measurement is made. For example, production of a compound in a plant heterologously disposed to an endophyte can be measured in a reference environment of drought stress, and compared with the levels of the compound in a reference agricultural plant under the same conditions of drought stress. Alternatively, the levels of a compound in plant heterologously disposed to an endophyte and reference agricultural plant can be measured under identical conditions of no stress.

[00244] In some embodiments, a treatment is heterologously disposed on a plant element in an amount effective to improve plant health. In some embodiments, treatments capable of improving plant health are applied in an amount effective to improve a trait of agronomic importance or tolerance by at least 0.1%, at least 0.5%, at least 1%, at least 2%, at least 3%, between 3% and 5%, at least 5%, between 5% and 10%, least 10%, between 10% and 15%, for example at least 15%, between 15% and 20%, at least 20%, between 20% and 30%, at least 30%, between 30% and 40%, at least 40%, between 40% and 50%, at least 50%, between 50% and 60%, at least 60%, between 60% and 75%, at least 75%, between 75% and 100%, at least 100%, between 100% and 150%, at least 150%, between 150% and 200%, at least 200%, between 200% and 300%, at least 300% or more, as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising said endophyte.

[00245] “Plant health” is demonstrated by the presence or improvement of a trait of agronomic importance found in a plant or plant element as compared to a reference plant or plant element. Traits of agronomic importance include, but are not limited to improved disease resistance, improved drought tolerance, improved heat tolerance, improved cold tolerance, improved salinity tolerance, improved metal tolerance, improved herbicide tolerance, improved water use efficiency, improved nitrogen utilization, improved nitrogen fixation, improved pest resistance, improved herbivore resistance, improved pathogen

resistance, yield improvement, health enhancement, vigor improvement, growth improvement, photosynthetic capability improvement, nutrient use efficiency enhancement, increased biomass, increased shoot length, increased root length, increased root biomass, increased root area, improved root architecture, modulation of a metabolite, modulation of the proteome, increased seed weight, modulation of seed carbohydrate composition, modulation of seed oil composition, modulation of seed protein content, modulation of seed oil content, modulation of seed ash content, modulation of seed net energy content, modulation of seed Caloric content, modulation of seed total digestible nutrient content, modulation of seed fiber composition, modulation of seed acid detergent fiber content, modulation of seed nutrient composition, and combinations thereof.

[00246] The presence or improvement of a trait of agronomic importance can be assessed with physiological parameters including, but not limited to, increased height, overall biomass, root and/or shoot biomass, seed germination, seedling survival, photosynthetic efficiency, transpiration rate, seed/fruit number or mass, plant grain or fruit yield, leaf chlorophyll content, photosynthetic rate, root length, wilt recovery, turgor pressure, or any combination thereof, as compared to a reference plant grown under similar conditions.

[00247] As used herein, the terms “water-limited condition” and “drought condition,” or “water-limited” and “drought,” may be used interchangeably. For example, a method or composition for improving a plant’s ability to grow under drought conditions means the same as the ability to grow under water-limited conditions. In such cases, the plant can be further said to display improved tolerance to drought stress. As used herein, the terms “normal watering” and “well-watered” are used interchangeably, to describe a plant grown under typical growth conditions with no water restriction. High molecular weight polyethylene glycol (PEG) can be used to create highly controlled, water limited experimental conditions that decrease the water potential similarly to drying soils.

[00248] Additionally, “altered metabolic function” or “altered enzymatic function” may include, but not be limited to, the following: altered production of an auxin, altered nitrogen fixation, altered production of an antimicrobial compound, altered production of a siderophore, altered mineral phosphate solubilization, altered production of a cellulase, altered production of a chitinase, altered production of a xylanase, altered production of acetoin, altered utilization of a carbon source.

[00249] “Agronomic trait potential” is intended to mean a capability of a plant element for exhibiting a phenotype, preferably an improved agronomic trait, at some point during its life cycle, or conveying said phenotype to another plant element with which it is associated in the

same plant. For example, a plant element may comprise an endophyte that will provide benefit to leaf tissue of a plant from which the plant element is grown; in such case, the plant element comprising such endophyte has the agronomic trait potential for a particular phenotype (for example, increased biomass in the plant) even if the plant element itself does not display said phenotype.

[00250] “Biomass” means the total mass or weight (fresh or dry), at a given time, of a plant tissue, plant tissues, an entire plant, or population of plants. Biomass is usually given as weight per unit area. The term may also refer to all the plants or species in the community (community biomass).

[00251] As used herein, an endophyte is considered to have conferred an improved agricultural trait when the improved trait arose from the plant, the endophyte, concerted action between the plant and endophyte, or combinations thereof. As used herein an “agricultural trait” and a “trait of agronomic importance” are used interchangeably.

[00252] A “non-host target” means an organism or chemical compound that is altered in some way after contacting a host plant that comprises an endophyte, as a result of a property conferred to the host plant by the endophyte.

[00253] The terms “decreased,” “fewer,” “slower” and “increased”, “faster”, “enhanced”, “improved”, “greater” as used herein refers to a decrease or increase in a characteristic of the endophyte treated plant element or resulting plant compared to a reference plant element or resulting plant. For example, a decrease in a characteristic may be at least 0.1%, 0.5%, at least 1%, at least 2%, at least about 3%, at least 4%, at least 5%, between 5% and 10%, at least 10%, between 10% and 20%, at least 15%, at least 20%, between 20% and 30%, at least 25%, at least 30%, between 30% and 40%, at least 35%, at least 40%, between 40% and 50%, at least 45%, at least 50%, between 50% and 60%, at least about 60%, between 60% and 70%, between 70% and 80%, at least 75%, at least about 80%, between 80% and 90%, at least about 90%, between 90% and 100%, at least 100%, between 100% and 200%, at least 200%, at least about 300%, at least about 400% or more lower than a reference plant and an increase may be at least 0.1%, 0.5%, at least 1%, at least 2%, at least about 3%, at least 4%, at least 5%, between 5% and 10%, at least 10%, between 10% and 20%, at least 15%, at least 20%, between 20% and 30%, at least 25%, at least 30%, between 30% and 40%, at least 35%, at least 40%, between 40% and 50%, at least 45%, at least 50%, between 50% and 60%, at least about 60%, between 60% and 70%, between 70% and 80%, at least 75%, at least about 80%, between 80% and 90%, at least about 90%, between 90% and 100%, at least

100%, between 100% and 200%, at least 200%, at least about 300%, at least about 400% or more higher than a reference plant.

[00254] In some embodiments, the endophyte is capable of effecting changes in a trait of agronomic importance at concentrations detected on the treated plant element of at least 10^2 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^2 and 10^3 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^3 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^3 and 10^4 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^4 CFU or spores per plant element, or between 10^4 , of about 10^5 CFU or spores per plant element, at least 10^5 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^5 and 10^6 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^6 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^6 and 10^7 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^7 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^7 and 10^8 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^8 CFU or spores per plant element, or even greater than 10^8 CFU or spores per plant element. In some embodiments, the plant element is a seed. In some embodiments of any of the methods or compositions described herein, CFU or spores per plant element are determined per unit of surface area or mass of a plant element, as a non-limiting example: at least 10^2 , at least 10^3 , at least 10^4 , about 10^4 , at least 10^5 , about 10^5 , at least 10^6 , about 10^6 , at least 10^7 , about 10^7 , at least 10^8 , or about 10^8 CFU or spores per square inch of leaf area.

[00255] In some embodiments, a treatment is heterologously disposed on a plant element in an amount effective to alter the nutrient composition of a seed produced by the plant element. In some embodiments, treatments capable of altering the nutrient composition of a seed are applied in an amount effective to modulate nutrient composition of a seed by at least 0.1%, at least 0.5%, at least 1%, at least 2%, at least 3%, between 3% and 5%, at least 5%, between 5% and 10%, at least 10%, between 10% and 15%, for example at least 15%, between 15% and 20%, at least 20%, between 20% and 30%, at least 30%, between 30% and 40%, at least 40%, between 40% and 50%, at least 50%, between 50% and 60%, at least 60%, between 60% and 75%, at least 75%, between 75% and 100%, at least 100%, between 100% and 150%, at least 150%, between 150% and 200%, at least 200%, between 200% and 300%, at least 300% or more, as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising said endophyte.

[00256] In some embodiments, the endophyte is capable of effecting changes in seed nutritional quality trait at concentrations detected on or in the treated plant element of at least 10^2 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^2 and 10^3 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^3 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^3 and 10^4 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^4 CFU or spores per plant element, or between 10^4 , of about

10^5 CFU or spores per plant element, at least 10^5 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^5 and 10^6 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^6 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^6 and 10^7 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^7 CFU or spores per plant element, between 10^7 and 10^8 CFU or spores per plant element, about 10^8 CFU or spores per plant element, or even greater than 10^8 CFU or spores per plant element. In some embodiments, the plant element is a seed.

[00257] A surprising aspect of the present invention is that the compositions and methods described herein demonstrate modulated levels of individual seed nutrients with no adverse impact to yield, for example, no statistical negative impact to seed yield. An increased “seed yield” can refer to any increase in seed or fruit weight, size, or abundance per a unit of measure, for example, per plant, per number of plants, per mass of plants, per acre planted, per acre harvested. In some embodiments, seed yield is reported as pounds or bushels of seed produced per acre harvested. The terms seed and grain are used interchangeably herein. Yield may also refer to the recovery of a particular component of a plant tissue upon processing, for example, the amount of oil which can be extracted per unit of seed. Typically, the particular characteristic is designated when referring to increased yield, e.g., increased seed yield or increased oil yield. Where the characteristic is not specified it may be assumed yield refers to seed yield.

[00258] In some embodiments, the seed yield of a plant element is not adversely impacted wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with an endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 90%, 93%, 95%, 96%, at least 97%, 98%, 99%, 100%, at least 100%, 103%, at least 105% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

Colonization

[00259] In some embodiments, the endophytes described herein are capable of colonizing a host plant. Successful colonization can be confirmed by detecting the presence of an endophyte population within the plant. For example, after applying a fungal endophyte to seeds, the endophyte can be detected in one or more plant elements of the plants that germinate from the seeds. Detecting the presence of the endophyte inside the plant can be accomplished by measuring the viability of the endophyte after surface sterilization of the seed or the plant: endophyte colonization results in an internal localization of the endophyte, rendering it resistant to conditions of surface sterilization. The presence and quantity of endophyte can also be established using other means known in the art, for example, immunofluorescence microscopy using endophyte-specific antibodies, or fluorescence in situ

hybridization (see, for example, Amann *et al.* (2001) *Current Opinion in Biotechnology* 12:231-236). Alternatively, specific nucleic acid probes recognizing conserved sequences from an endophyte can be employed to amplify a region, for example by quantitative PCR, and correlated to CFUs by means of a standard curve.

[00260] In some embodiments, the endophytes are selected for their distinct localization in the plant after colonization. For example, an endophyte may preferentially colonize in the host plant reproductive tissue, the root tissue, the leaf tissue, the stem tissue, or the progeny seed. In some cases, different populations of endophytes may selectively or preferentially colonize different plant elements. In particular, an endophyte or combination of endophytes is selected to confer improved nutritional composition levels in seeds of a host plant that has been associated at some point during its life cycle with said endophyte(s).

[00261] In another embodiment, the endophyte is disposed, for example, on the surface of a seed of an agricultural plant, in an amount effective to be detectable in the mature agricultural plant. In some embodiments, the endophyte is disposed in an amount effective to be detectable in an amount of at least about 100 CFU or spores, between 100 CFU or spores and 200 CFU or spores, at least about 200 CFU or spores, between 200 CFU or spores and 300 CFU or spores, at least about 300 CFU or spores, between 300 CFU or spores and 500 CFU or spores, at least about 500 CFU or spores, between 500 CFU or spores and 1,000 CFU or spores, at least about 1,000 CFU or spores, between 1,000 CFU or spores and 3,000 CFU or spores, at least about 3,000 CFU or spores, between 3,000 CFU or spores and 10,000 CFU or spores, at least about 10,000 CFU or spores, between 10,000 CFU or spores and 30,000 CFU or spores, at least about 30,000 CFU or spores, between 30,000 CFU or spores and 100,000 CFU or spores, at least about 100,000 CFU or spores or more in the mature agricultural plant.

[00262] In some embodiments, the endophyte is capable of colonizing particular plant elements or tissue types of the plant. In some embodiments, the endophyte is heterologously disposed on the seed or seedling in an amount effective to be detectable within a target tissue of the agricultural plant selected from a fruit, a seed, a leaf, or a root, or portion thereof. For example, the endophyte can be detected in an amount of at least about 100 CFU or spores, between 100 CFU or spores and 200 CFU or spores, at least about 200 CFU or spores, between 200 CFU or spores and 300 CFU or spores, at least about 300 CFU or spores, between 300 CFU or spores and 500 CFU or spores, at least about 500 CFU or spores, between 500 CFU or spores and 1,000 CFU or spores, at least about 1,000 CFU or spores, between 1,000 CFU or spores and 3,000 CFU or spores, at least about 3,000 CFU or spores,

between 3,000 CFU or spores and 10,000 CFU or spores, at least about 10,000 CFU or spores, between 10,000 CFU or spores and 30,000 CFU or spores, at least about 30,000 CFU or spores, between 30,000 CFU or spores and 100,000 CFU or spores, at least about 100,000 CFU or spores or more, in the target tissue of the agricultural plant.

[00263] As used herein, a “colony-forming unit” (“CFU”) is used as a measure of viable microorganisms in a sample. A CFU is an individual viable cell capable of forming on a solid medium a visible colony whose individual cells are derived by cell division from one parental cell.

[00264] A “spore” or a population of “spores” refers to bacteria or fungi that are generally viable, more resistant to environmental influences such as heat and bactericidal or fungicidal agents than other forms of the same bacteria or fungi, and typically capable of germination and out-growth. Bacteria and fungi that are “capable of forming spores” are those bacteria and fungi comprising the genes and other necessary abilities to produce spores under suitable environmental conditions.

[00265] As demonstrated herein, the nutritional composition of seeds are altered or modulated by application of a treatment comprising one or more bacterial or fungal endophytes. In some embodiments of the present invention, the endophyte is a bacterium. In some embodiments of the present invention, the endophyte is a fungus.

[00266] As used herein, the term “bacterium” or “bacteria” refers in general to any prokaryotic organism, and may reference an organism from either Kingdom Eubacteria (Bacteria), Kingdom Archaeobacteria (Archae), or both. In some cases, bacterial genera have been reassigned due to various reasons (such as, but not limited to, the evolving field of whole genome sequencing), and it is understood that such nomenclature reassignments are within the scope of any claimed genus.

[00267] As used herein, the term “fungus” or “fungi” refers in general to any organism from Kingdom Fungi. Historical taxonomic classification of fungi has been according to morphological presentation. Beginning in the mid-1800’s, it was recognized that some fungi have a pleomorphic life cycle, and that different nomenclature designations were being used for different forms of the same fungus. With the development of genomic sequencing, it became evident that taxonomic classification based on molecular phylogenetics did not align with morphological-based nomenclature (Shenoy BD, Jeewon R, Hyde KD. Impact of DNA sequence-data on the taxonomy of anamorphic fungi. *Fungal Diversity* 26(10) 1-54. 2007). Systematics experts have not aligned on common nomenclature for all fungi, nor are all existing databases and information resources inclusive of updated taxonomies. As such, many

fungi referenced herein may be described by their anamorph form but it is understood that based on identical genomic sequencing, any pleomorphic state of that fungus may be considered to be the same organism. In some cases, fungal genera have been reassigned due to various reasons, and it is understood that such nomenclature reassignments are within the scope of any claimed genus.

[00268] In some embodiments of the present invention, the endophyte is a fungi obtained from one of the following Classes: *Dothideomycetes*, *Sordariomycetes*, *Eurotiomycetes*, or *Leotiomycetes*; or one of the following Orders: *Pleosporales*, *Hypocreales*, *Capnodiales*, *Eurotiales*, or *Sordariales*; or one of the following Families: *Pleosporaceae*, *Cladosporiaceae*, *Didymosphaeriaceae*, *Aspergillaceae*, *Pseudeurotiaceae*, or *Cephalothecaceae*; or one of the following Genera: *Curvularia*, *Epicoccum*, *Periconia*, *Acremonium*, *Cladosporium*, *Exserohilum*, *Paraconiothyrium*, *Penicillium*, *Pseudeurotium*, or *Phialemonium*. In some cases, fungal genera have been reassigned due to various reasons, and it is understood that such nomenclature reassignments are within the scope of any claimed genus. For example, the genus *Bipolaris* and the genus *Curvularia* are closely related, but separate anamorphs, although the genus *Cochliobolus* has been described as the teleomorph for both. Figure 1A and Figure 1B represents an exemplary description of the phylogenetic relationship between the microbes MIC-07010 and MIC-31593 represented by SEQ ID NO: 53 and SEQ ID NO: 54. It is understood that the genus *Acremonium* is also reported in the literature as genus *Sarocladium* as well as genus *Tilachilidium* (Summerbell R. C., C. Gueidan, H-J. Schroers, G.S. de Hoog, M. Starink, Y. Arocha Rosete, J. Guarro and J.A. Scott. *Acremonium* phylogenetic overview and revision of *Gliomastix*, *Sarocladium*, and *Trichothecium*. *Studies in Mycology* 68: 139–162. 2011). Exemplary endophytes of the genus *Acremonium* include endophytes comprising one or more sequences at least 97% identical to SEQ ID NOs: 48 or 49. Further, it is understood that the genus *Cladosporium* is an anamorph of the teleomorph genus *Davidiella* (Bensch K, Braun U, Groenewald JZ, Crous PW. The genus *Cladosporium*. *Stud Mycol.* 2012 Jun 15; 72(1): 1–401.), and is understood to describe the same organism. Exemplary endophytes of the genus *Cladosporium* include endophytes comprising one or more sequences at least 97% identical to SEQ ID NOs: 50, 51, or 52.

[00269] In some embodiments of the present invention, the endophyte is a bacteria obtained from one of the following Phyla: *Firmicutes*, *Proteobacteria*, *Actinobacteria*, or *Bacteroidetes*; or one of the following Classes: *Bacilli*, *Betaproteobacteria*, *Actinobacteria*, *Gammaproteobacteria*, *Flavobacteriia*, or *Alphaproteobacteria*; Orders: *Bacillales*,

Burkholderiales, *Micrococcales*, *Enterobacterales*, *Streptomycetales*, *Pseudomonadales*, *Flavobacteriales*, *Rhizobiales*, or *Sphingomonadales*; or one of the following Families: *Bacillaceae*, *Burkholderiaceae*, *Microbacteriaceae*, *Enterobacteriaceae*, *Erwiniaceae*, *Streptomycetaceae*, *Moraxellaceae*, *Flavobacteriaceae*, *Micrococcaceae*, *Brucellaceae*, *Paenibacillaceae*, or *Sphingomonadaceae*; or one of the following Genera: *Bacillus*, *Burkholderia*, *Curtobacterium*, *Enterobacter*, *Pantoea*, *Streptomyces*, *Acinetobacter*, *Chryseobacterium*, *Micrococcus*, *Ochrobactrum*, *Paenibacillus*, or *Sphingomonas*.

[00270] Endophytes of the present invention can be described by genetic sequences.

Marker genes are genetic sequences that are particularly useful in classifying organisms. The 16S and ITS polynucleotide sequences are two marker gene sequences by which bacteria (16S) and fungi (ITS) may be specifically identified and assigned taxonomic nomenclature. Additional genomic regions that are useful marker genes include the Beta-tubulin and second largest subunit of RNA polymerase II.

[00271] As used herein “polynucleotide sequence”, “nucleotide sequence”, “nucleic acid sequence”, and “sequence” are equivalent and used interchangeably.

[00272] The term 16S refers to the DNA sequence of the 16S ribosomal RNA (rRNA) sequence of a bacterium. 16S rRNA gene sequencing is a well-established method for studying phylogeny and taxonomy of bacteria.

[00273] “Internal Transcribed Spacer” (ITS) refers to the spacer DNA (non-coding DNA) situated between the small-subunit ribosomal RNA (rRNA) and large-subunit (LSU) rRNA genes in the chromosome or the corresponding transcribed region in the polycistronic rRNA precursor transcript. ITS gene sequencing is a well-established method for studying phylogeny and taxonomy of fungi. In some cases, the “Large SubUnit” (LSU) sequence is used to identify fungi.

[00274] As used herein, a nucleic acid has “homology” or is “homologous” to a second nucleic acid if the nucleic acid sequence has a similar sequence to the second nucleic acid sequence. The terms “identity”, “percent identity”, “percent sequence identity” or “identical” in the context of nucleic acid sequences refer to the nucleotides in the two sequences that are the same when aligned for maximum correspondence. There are different algorithms known in the art that can be used to measure nucleotide sequence identity. Nucleotide sequence identity can be measured by a local or global alignment, preferably implementing an optimal local or optimal global alignment algorithm. For example, a global alignment may be generated using an implementation of the Needleman-Wunsch algorithm (Needleman, S.B. & Wunsch, C.D. (1970) *Journal of Molecular Biology*. 48(3):443-53). For example, a local

alignment may be generated using an implementation of the Smith-Waterman algorithm (Smith T.F & Waterman, M.S. (1981) Journal of Molecular Biology. 147(1):195-197). Optimal global alignments using the Needleman-Wunsch algorithm and optimal local alignments using the Smith-Waterman algorithm are implemented in USEARCH, for example USEARCH version v8.1.1756_i86osx32.

[00275] A gap is a region of an alignment wherein a sequence does not align to a position in the other sequence of the alignment. In global alignments, terminal gaps are discarded before identity is calculated. For both local and global alignments, internal gaps are counted as differences. A terminal gap is a region beginning at the end of a sequence in an alignment wherein the nucleotide in the terminal position of that sequence does not correspond to a nucleotide position in the other sequence of the alignment and extending for all contiguous positions in that sequence wherein the nucleotides of that sequence do not correspond to a nucleotide position in the other sequence of the alignment. An internal gap is a gap in an alignment which is flanked on the 3' and 5' end by positions wherein the aligned sequences are identical.

[00276] In some embodiments, the nucleic acid sequence to be aligned is a complete gene. In some embodiments, the nucleic acid sequence to be aligned is a gene fragment. In some embodiments, the nucleic acid sequence to be aligned is an intergenic sequence. In a preferred embodiment, inference of homology from a sequence alignment is made where the region of alignment is at least 85% of the length of the query sequence.

[00277] The term "substantial homology" or "substantial similarity," when referring to a nucleic acid or fragment thereof, indicates that, when optimally aligned with appropriate nucleotide insertions or deletions with another nucleic acid (or its complementary strand), there is nucleotide sequence identity in at least about 76%, 80%, 85%, or at least about 90%, or at least about 95%, 96%, at least 97%, 98%, 99% or 100% of the positions of the alignment, wherein the region of alignment is at least about 50%, 60%, 70%, 75%, 85%, or at least about 90%, or at least about 95%, 96%, 97%, 98%, 99% or 100% of the length of the query sequence. In a preferred embodiment, the region of alignment contains at least 100 positions inclusive of any internal gaps. In some embodiments, the region of alignment comprises at least 100 nucleotides of the query sequence. In some embodiments, the region of alignment comprises at least 200 nucleotides of the query sequence. In some embodiments, the region of alignment comprises at least 300 nucleotides of the query sequence. In some embodiments, the region of alignment comprises at least 400 nucleotides of the query sequence. In some embodiments, the region of alignment comprises at least 500 nucleotides

of the query sequence. In some embodiments, the query sequence is selected from the SEQ ID Nos in Table 6.

[00278] In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 95% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18-62. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 96% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18-62. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18-62. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 98% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18-62. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 99% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18-62. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is 100% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18-62. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises at least one, at least two, at least three, at least four, at least five, at least six nucleotide sequences that are at least 97% identical at least one, at least two, at least three, at least four, at least five, at least six nucleotide sequences that are selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18-62. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33. In some embodiments, the endophyte is deposited as NRRL-67467. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to SEQ ID NO. 23. In some embodiments, the endophyte is deposited as NRRL-B67465. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 26 and 27. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to SEQ ID NO. 22. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, and 37. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 and 19. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 24 and 25. In some embodiments, the endophyte comprises a nucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to

a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20 and 21. In some embodiments, the endophyte is deposited as Deposit ID: NRRL-67466. In some embodiments, the endophyte is deposited as Deposit ID: NRRL-67467, Deposit ID: NRRL-B67465, or Deposit ID: NRRL-67466, and thereafter modified. In some embodiments, the modified endophyte retains the ability to modulate the nutrient composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the modified endophyte.

Pluralities and populations of endophytes

[00279] As demonstrated herein, the nutritional composition of seeds are altered or modulated by application of a treatment comprising one or more endophytes.

[00280] In some embodiments, the one or more endophytes are a “plurality of endophytes”. A “plurality of endophytes” means two or more genetically distinct endophytes, e.g., of bacteria or fungi, or combinations thereof. In some embodiments, the two or more genetically distinct endophytes comprise a first and second endophyte. In other embodiments, the two or more genetically distinct endophytes are two or more species of endophytes. In yet other embodiments, the two or more genetically distinct endophytes are two or more genera of endophytes. In yet other embodiments, the two or more genetically distinct endophytes are two or more families of endophytes. In yet other embodiments, the two or more types of endophyte entities are two or more orders of endophytes. In some embodiments, the plurality of endophytes comprises a first bacterial endophyte and a second bacterial endophyte, wherein the second endophyte comprises a 16S sequence less than 97% identical to a 16S sequence of the first endophyte. In some embodiments, the plurality of endophytes comprises a first fungal endophyte and a second fungal endophyte, wherein the second endophyte comprises a ITS sequence less than 97% identical to a ITS sequence of the first endophyte. In some embodiments, the 16S or ITS sequence of the second endophyte is less than 95% identical to the 16S or ITS sequence of the first endophyte.

[00281] In some embodiments, the one or more endophytes are a “population of endophytes” or an “endophyte population”. A “population of endophytes” or an “endophyte population” is a plurality of endophytes that share a common genetic derivation, i.e., a plurality of endophytes of identical taxonomy. In some embodiments, a population of endophytes refers to a plurality of endophytes of the same genus. In some embodiments, a population of endophytes refers to a plurality of endophytes each comprising 16S or ITS sequences having at least 97% identity to the other, or each having at least 97% identity to a third 16S or ITS sequence.

[00282] In some embodiments of the present invention, it is contemplated that combinations of endophytes can provide an increased benefit or different benefits to the host plant, as compared to that conferred by a single endophyte, by virtue of additive effects. For example, one endophyte that induces a benefit in the host plant may induce such benefit equally well in a plant that is also colonized with a different endophyte that also induces the same benefit in the host plant. The host plant thus exhibits the same total benefit from the plurality of different endophytes as the additive benefit to individual plants colonized with each individual endophyte of the plurality. In one example, a plant is colonized with two different endophytes: one provides a 1X increase in seed protein content when heterologously disposed to the plant, and the other provides a 2X increase in seed protein content when heterologously disposed to a different plant. When both endophytes are heterologously disposed to the same plant, that plant would experience a 3X (additive of 1X + 2X single effects) increase in seed protein content. Additive effects are a surprising aspect of the present invention, as non-compatibility of endophytes may result in a cancelation of the beneficial effects of both endophytes.

[00283] In some embodiments, it is contemplated that a combination of endophytes can provide an increased benefit to the host plant, as compared to that conferred by a single endophyte, by virtue of synergistic effects. For example, one endophyte that induces a benefit in the host plant may induce such benefit beyond additive effects in a plant that is also colonized with a different endophyte that also induces that benefit in the host plant. The host plant thus exhibits the greater total benefit from the plurality of different endophytes than would be expected from the additive benefit of individual plants colonized with each individual endophyte of the plurality. In one example, a plant is colonized with two different endophytes: one provides a 1X increase in seed protein content when heterologously disposed to a plant, and the other provides a 2X increase in seed protein content when heterologously disposed to a different plant. When both endophytes are heterologously disposed to the same plant, that plant would experience a 5X (greater than an additive of 1X + 2X single effects) increase in seed protein content. Synergistic effects are a surprising aspect of the present invention.

Beneficial Attributes of Synthetic Combinations of Plant Elements and Endophytes

[00284] The trait of the seed can be altered without known genetic modification of the plant genome, and comprises the following steps. First, a preparation of an isolated endophyte that is heterologous to the seed of the host plant is provided, and optionally processed to produce an endophyte formulation. The endophyte formulation is then contacted

with the host plant. The plants are then allowed to go to seed, and the progeny seeds are collected.

[00285] The term “isolated” is intended to specifically reference an organism, cell, tissue, polynucleotide, or polypeptide that is removed from its original source and purified from additional components with which it was originally associated. For example, an endophyte may be considered isolated from a seed if it is removed from that seed source and purified so that it is isolated from any additional components with which it was originally associated. Similarly, an endophyte may be removed and purified from a plant or plant element so that it is isolated and no longer heterologously disposed to its source plant or plant element.

[00286] As used herein, an isolated endophyte or microbe is an endophyte or microbe that has been removed from its natural milieu. “Pure cultures” or “isolated cultures” are cultures in which the organisms present are only of one particular genus and species. This is in contrast to “mixed cultures,” which are cultures in which more than one genus and/or species of microorganism are present. As such, the term “isolated” does not necessarily reflect the extent to which the microbe has been purified. A “substantially pure culture” of the microbe refers to a culture which contains substantially no other endophytes or microbes than the desired endophyte or microbe. In other words, a substantially pure endophyte or microbe culture is substantially free of other contaminants, which can include microbial contaminants. Further, as used herein, “biologically pure” is intended to mean the endophyte or microbe separated from materials with which it is normally associated in nature. A microbe or endophyte heterologously disposed to other microbes or endophytes, or with compounds or materials that it is not normally found with in nature, is still defined as “biologically pure.” A monoculture is, of course, “biologically pure.” As used herein, the term “enriched culture” of an isolated microbe or endophyte refers to a culture that contains more than 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90%, or 95% of the isolated endophyte or microbe.

Uses of modulated seed

[00287] Modulated seeds of the present invention may be used to improve the composition or production of a food product for human consumption, a feed for animal consumption, a fuel, a fiber, or other food or industrial product. In some embodiments, use of a modulated seed in a food or feed product improves the nutrition available to the organism directly or indirectly metabolizing the modulated seed. In some embodiments, the organism metabolizing the modulated seed is a mammal, fish, bird, amphibian, reptile, crustacean, mollusc, aquatic plant, algae, bacteria, fungi, or other living organism. In some embodiments, use of a modulated seed in a food or feed product improves the efficiency or reduces the cost

of producing the food or feed. In some embodiments, use of a modulated seed in a food or feed product enhances the value of a by-product of production of the food, feed or industrial product.

[00288] Human food products include but are not limited to vegetable oils (including oils for baking, cooking, frying, flavoring, and storing foods), extracted or enriched plant proteins (including tofu, protein powders, and protein flakes), milled products and derivatives thereof (including flours, meals, germs, and brans).

[00289] Animal feeds include, but are not limited, to whole, crushed and rolled seeds, and more highly processed seeds such as oilseed meals, dried distillers grains, and middlings.

[00290] A seed for oil extraction is a seed comprising fatty acids which can be extracted. Methods of oil extraction include, but are not limited to, mechanical pressing and solvent extraction. In preferred embodiments, seeds for oil extraction are soybean seeds, corn seeds, cotton seeds, or wheat seeds. As used herein, “oil” and “fat” are used interchangeably.

[00291] Industrial products are manufactured products not primarily intended for consumption by a living organism. Industrial products include, but are not limited to, biocomposites, adhesives, lubricants, solvents, waxes, oils, foams, and biofuels such as ethanol and biodiesel.

Synthetic compositions and treatment formulations

[00292] A “synthetic composition” comprises one or more endophytes combined by human endeavor with a heterologously disposed plant element or a heterologously disposed treatment formulation, said combination which is not found in nature. In some embodiments, a synthetic composition comprises both one or more plant elements and one or more formulation components combined by human endeavor with an isolated, purified endophyte composition. In some embodiments, said purified endophyte composition is mechanically or manually applied, artificially inoculated or disposed on a plant element in a manner that is not found on or in the plant element before application of the purified endophyte composition, e.g., said combination or association which is not found in nature.

[00293] The synthetic compositions provided herein are preferably stable. The endophyte may be shelf-stable, where at least 0.01%, of the CFUs are viable after storage in desiccated form (i.e., moisture content of 30% or less) for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 or greater than 10 weeks at 4°C or at room temperature. Optionally, a shelf-stable formulation is in a dry formulation, a powder formulation, or a lyophilized formulation. In some embodiments, the formulation is formulated to provide stability for the population of endophytes. In an embodiment, the formulation is substantially stable at temperatures between about -20°C and

about 50°C for at least about 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 days, or 1, 2, 3 or 4 weeks, or 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 or 12 months, or one or more years. In another embodiment, the formulation is substantially stable at temperatures between about 4°C and about 37°C for at least about 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 or greater than 30 days.

[00294] A “treatment formulation” refers to a mixture of chemicals that facilitate the stability, storage, and/or application of the endophyte composition(s). Treatment formulations may comprise any one or more agents such as: surfactant, a buffer, a carrier, a tackifier, a microbial stabilizer, a fungicide, an anticomplex agent, an herbicide, a nematocide, an insecticide, a plant growth regulator, a rodenticide, a desiccant, a nutrient, an excipient, a wetting agent, a salt.

[00295] In some embodiments, an “agriculturally compatible carrier” can be used to formulate a treatment formulation or other composition that includes a purified endophyte preparation. As used herein an “agriculturally compatible carrier” refers to any material, other than water, that can be added to a plant element without causing or having an adverse effect on the plant element (e.g., reducing seed germination) or the plant that grows from the plant element, or the like.

[00296] The carrier can be a solid carrier or liquid carrier, and in various forms including microspheres, powders, emulsions and the like. The carrier may be any one or more of a number of carriers that confer a variety of properties, such as increased stability, wettability, or dispersability. Wetting agents such as natural or synthetic surfactants, which can be nonionic or ionic surfactants, or a combination thereof can be included in a composition of the invention. Water-in-oil emulsions can also be used to formulate a composition that includes the purified population (see, for example, U.S. Patent No. 7,485,451). Suitable formulations that may be prepared include wettable powders, granules, gels, agar strips or pellets, thickeners, biopolymers, and the like, microencapsulated particles, and the like, liquids such as aqueous flowables, aqueous suspensions, water-in-oil emulsions, etc. The formulation may include grain or legume products, for example, ground grain or beans, broth or flour derived from grain or beans, starch, sugar, or oil. When such formulations are used as wettable powders, biologically compatible dispersing agents such as non-ionic, anionic, amphoteric, or cationic dispersing and emulsifying agents can be used.

[00297] In some embodiments, the agricultural carrier may be soil or a plant growth medium. Other agricultural carriers that may be used include water, fertilizers, plant-based oils, humectants, or combinations thereof. Liquid carriers include vegetable oils such as soybean oil, neem oil, cottonseed oil, and other compositions such as glycerol, ethylene

glycol, polyethylene glycol, propylene glycol, polypropylene glycol, etc. In some embodiments, the agricultural carrier may be a solid, such as diatomaceous earth, loam, silica, alginate, clay, bentonite, vermiculite, seed cases, peat, wheat, bran, talc, fuller's earth, pasteurized soil, other plant, animal, or abiogenic products, or combinations thereof, including granules, pellets, or suspensions. In some embodiments, the solid carriers of a treatment formulation include, for example, mineral carriers such as kaolin clay, pyrophyllite, bentonite, montmorillonite, diatomaceous earth, acid white soil, vermiculite, and perlite, and inorganic salts such as ammonium sulfate, ammonium phosphate, ammonium nitrate, urea, ammonium chloride, and calcium carbonate. Also, organic fine powders such as wheat flour, wheat bran, and rice bran may be used solid carriers. Mixtures of any of the aforementioned ingredients are also contemplated as carriers, such as but not limited to, pesta (flour and kaolin clay), agar or flour-based pellets in loam, sand, or clay, etc. Formulations may include food sources for the cultured organisms, such as barley, rice, wheat or other biological materials such as seed, plant elements, sugar cane bagasse, hulls or stalks from grain processing, ground plant material or wood from building site refuse, sawdust or small fibers from recycling of paper, fabric, or wood. Other suitable formulations will be known to those skilled in the art.

[00298] In some cases, a flowability polymer, also referred to as a plantability polymer such as Flo Rite[®] e.g., Flo-Rite[®] 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany). In some embodiments, a flowability or plantability polymer is DISCO[™] AG (Incotec, Enkhuizen, the Netherlands). In some embodiments, a flowability or plantability polymer is Kannar[®] Universal Wonder (Kannar Earth Science, Ltd., Buford, GA).

[00299] In an embodiment, the formulation can include a tackifier or adherent. Such agents are useful for combining the complex population of the invention with carriers that can contain other compounds (e.g., control agents that are not biologic), to yield a coating composition. Such compositions help create coatings around the plant or plant element to maintain contact between the endophyte and other agents with the plant or plant element. In some embodiments, adherents are selected from the group consisting of: alginate, gums, starches, lecithins, formononetin, polyvinyl alcohol, alkali formononetinate, hesperetin, polyvinyl acetate, cephalins, Gum Arabic, Xanthan Gum, carragennan, PGA, other biopolymers, Mineral Oil, Polyethylene Glycol (PEG), Polyvinyl pyrrolidone (PVP), Arabino-galactan, Methyl Cellulose, PEG 400, Chitosan, Polyacrylamide, Polyacrylate, Polyacrylonitrile, Glycerol, Triethylene glycol, Vinyl Acetate, Gellan Gum, Polystyrene, Polyvinyl, Carboxymethyl cellulose, Gum Ghatti, and polyoxyethylene-polyoxybutylene

block copolymers. Other examples of adherent compositions that can be used in the synthetic preparation include those described in EP 0818135, CA 1229497, WO 2013090628, EP 0192342, WO 2008103422 and CA 1041788.

[00300] It is also contemplated that the formulation may further comprise an anti-caking agent.

[00301] The formulation can also contain a surfactant, wetting agent, emulsifier, stabilizer, or anti-foaming agent. Non-limiting examples of surfactants include nitrogen-surfactant blends such as Prefer 28 (Cenex), Surf-N(US), Inhance (Brandt), P-28 (Wilfarm) and Patrol (Helena); esterified seed oils include Sun-It II (AmCy), MSO (UAP), Scoil (Agasco), Hasten (Wilfarm) and Mes-100 (Drexel); and organo-silicone surfactants include Silwet L77 (UAP), Silikin (Terra), Dyne-Amic (Helena), Kinetic (Helena), Sylgard 309 (Wilbur-Ellis) and Century (Precision), polysorbate 20, polysorbate 80, Tween 20, Tween 80, Scattics, Alktest TW20, Canarcel, Peogabsorb 80, Triton X-100, Conco NI, Dowfax 9N, Igebapl CO, Makon, Neutronyx 600, Nonipol NO, Plytergent B, Renex 600, Solar NO, Sterox, Serfonic N, T-DET-N, Tergitol NP, Triton N, IGEPAL CA-630, Nonident P-40, Pluronic. In some embodiments, the surfactant is present at a concentration of between 0.01% v/v to 10% v/v. In another embodiment, the surfactant is present at a concentration of between 0.1% v/v to 1% v/v. An example of an anti-foaming agent would be Antifoam-C.

[00302] In certain cases, the formulation includes a microbial stabilizer. Such an agent can include a desiccant. As used herein, a “desiccant” can include any compound or mixture of compounds that can be classified as a desiccant regardless of whether the compound or compounds are used in such concentrations that they in fact have a desiccating effect on the liquid inoculant. Such desiccants are ideally compatible with the population used, and should promote the ability of an endophyte population to survive application on the seeds and to survive desiccation. Examples of suitable desiccants include one or more of trehalose, sucrose, glycerol, and methylene glycol. Other suitable desiccants include, but are not limited to, non-reducing sugars and sugar alcohols (e.g., mannitol or sorbitol). The amount of desiccant introduced into the formulation can range from about 5% to about 50% by weight/volume, for example, between about 10% to about 40%, between about 15% and about 35%, or between about 20% and about 30%. In some embodiments, components of a sugar-based microbial stabilizer include, but are not limited to, glucose, sucrose, polyvinylpyrrolidone K 30 (PVP30K), mineral oil, soy lecithin, peptone, monopotassium phosphate (KH₂PO₄) and dipotassium phosphate (K₂HPO₄). In an alternate embodiment, components of a non-sugar based microbial stabilizer include, but are not limited to,

polyvinylpyrrolidone K 30 (PVP30K), polyvinylpyrrolidone/vinyl acetate (PVP-VA), soy lecithin, peptone, mineral oil, hydroxypropyl-guar (HP-Guar), monopotassium phosphate (KH_2PO_4) and dipotassium phosphate (K_2HPO_4). Components of exemplary microbial stabilizers for use with the invention described herein are depicted in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1: Exemplary sugar based microbial stabilizer

Component	Percentage (%), by weight
Glucose	11.4
Sucrose	11.4
PVP30K	2.8
Mineral oil	5.7
Soy lecithin	0.3
Peptone	11.4
KH_2PO_4	0.78
K_2HPO_4	0.99
Non-chlorinated water	55

Table 2: Exemplary non-sugar based microbial stabilizer

Component	Percentage (%), by weight
PVP30K	3.8
PVP-VA	3.8
Soy lecithin	0.4
Peptone	15.4
Mineral oil	6.0
HP-Guar	0.2
KH_2PO_4	0.96
K_2HPO_4	1.23
Non-chlorinated water	68

[00303] In some cases, it is advantageous for the formulation to contain agents such as a fungicide, an anticomplex agent, an herbicide, a nematocide, an insecticide, a plant growth regulator, a rodenticide, a bactericide, a virucide, or a nutrient. Such agents are ideally compatible with the agricultural plant element or seedling onto which the formulation is applied (e.g., it should not be deleterious to the growth or health of the plant). Furthermore, the agent is ideally one which does not cause safety concerns for human, animal or industrial

use (e.g., no safety issues, or the compound is sufficiently labile that the commodity plant product derived from the plant contains negligible amounts of the compound).

[00304] The endophyte populations herein can be combined with one or more of the agents described above to yield a treatment formulation suitable for combining with an agricultural plant element, seedling, or other plant element. Endophyte populations can be obtained from growth in culture, for example, using a synthetic growth medium. In addition, endophytes can be cultured on solid media, for example on petri dishes, scraped off and suspended into the preparation. Endophytes at different growth phases can be used. For example, endophytes at lag phase, early-log phase, mid-log phase, late-log phase, stationary phase, early death phase, or death phase can be used. Endophytic spores may be used for the present invention, for example but not limited to: arthrospores, sporangiospores, conidia, chlamadospores, pycnidiospores, endospores, zoospores.

[00305] The formulations comprising endophyte populations typically contains between about 0.1 to 95% by weight, for example, between about 1% and 90%, between about 3% and 75%, between about 5% and 60%, between about 10% and 50% in wet weight of the population. It is preferred that the formulation contains at least about 10^3 CFU per ml of formulation, for example, at least about 10^4 , at least about 10^5 , at least about 10^6 , at least about 10^7 CFU, at least about 10^8 CFU per ml of formulation. It is preferred that the formulation be applied to the plant element at about 10^2 CFU/seed, between 10^2 and 10^3 CFU, at least about 10^3 CFU, between 10^3 and 10^4 CFU, at least about 10^4 CFU, between 10^4 and 10^5 CFU, at least about 10^5 CFU, between 10^5 and 10^6 CFU, at least about 10^6 CFU, between 10^6 and 10^7 CFU, at least about 10^7 CFU, between 10^7 and 10^8 CFU, or even greater than 10^8 CFU per seed.

[00306] In some cases, the present invention contemplates the use of compositions that are “compatible” with agricultural chemicals, including but not limited to, a fungicide, an anti-complex compound, a bactericide, a virucide, an herbicide, a nematocide, a parasiticide, a pesticide, or any other agent widely used in agriculture which has the effect of killing or otherwise interfering with optimal growth of another organism. As used herein, a composition is “compatible” with an agricultural chemical when the organism is modified, such as by genetic modification, e.g., contains a transgene that confers resistance to an herbicide, or is adapted to grow in, or otherwise survive, the concentration of the agricultural chemical used in agriculture. For example, an endophyte disposed on the surface of a plant element is compatible with the fungicide metalaxyl if it is able to survive the concentrations that are applied on the plant element surface.

[00307] In some embodiments, the endophytes display tolerance to an agrichemical selected from the group consisting of: Aeris®, Avicta® DuoCot 202, Cruiser®, Syntenta CCB ® (A), Clariva®, Albaugh, Dynasty®, Apron®, Maxim®, Gaucho®, Provoke® ST, Syngenta CCB®, Trilex®, WG Purple, WG Silver, Azoxystrobin, Carboxin, Difenconazole, Fludioxonil, fluxapyroxad, Ipconazole, Mefenoxam, Metalaxyl, Myclobutanil, Penflufen, pyraclostrobin, Sedaxane, TCMTB, Tebuconazole, Thiram, Triadimenol (Baytan®), Trifloxystrobin, Triticonazole, Tolclofos-methyl, PCNB, Abamectin, Chlorpyrifos, Clothianidin, Imidacloprid, Thiamethoxam, Thiodicarb.

[00308] Agricultural chemical compatible endophytes can also be isolated by selection on liquid medium. The culture of endophytes can be plated on petri dishes without any forms of mutagenesis; alternatively, endophytes can be mutagenized using any means known in the art. For example, endophyte cultures can be exposed to UV light, gamma-irradiation, or chemical mutagens such as ethylmethanesulfonate (EMS), ethidium bromide (EtBr) dichlofos (DDVP), methyl methane sulphonate (MMS), triethylphosphate (TEP), trimethylphosphate (TMP), nitrous acid, or DNA base analogs, prior to selection on fungicide comprising media. Finally, where the mechanism of action of a particular chemical is known, the target gene can be specifically mutated (either by gene deletion, gene replacement, site-directed mutagenesis, etc.) to generate an endophyte that is resilient against that particular chemical.

[00309] Compatibility with an antimicrobial agent can be determined by a number of means known in the art, including the comparison of the minimal inhibitory concentration of the unmodified and modified endophytes. In some embodiments, the present invention discloses an isolated modified endophyte, wherein the endophyte is modified such that it exhibits at least 3 fold greater, for example, at least 5 fold greater, between 5 and 10 fold greater, at least 10 fold greater, between 10 and 20 fold greater, at least 20 fold greater, between 20 and 30 fold greater, at least 30 fold greater or more minimal inhibitory concentration to an antimicrobial agent when compared with the unmodified endophyte.

[00310] Candidate isolates can be tested to ensure that the selection for agrichemical compatibility did not result in loss of a desired bioactivity. Isolates of endophytes that are compatible with commonly employed agents can be selected as described above. The resulting compatible endophyte can be compared with the parental endophyte on plants in its ability to promote germination.

[00311] The agrichemical compatible endophytes generated as described above can be detected in samples. For example, where a transgene was introduced to render the endophyte

compatible with the agrichemical(s), the transgene can be used as a target gene for amplification and detection by PCR. In addition, where point mutations or deletions to a portion of a specific gene or a number of genes results in compatibility with the agrichemical(s), the unique point mutations can likewise be detected by PCR or other means known in the art. Such methods allow the detection of the endophyte even if it is no longer viable. Thus, commodity plant products produced using the agrichemical compatible endophytes described herein can readily be identified by employing these and related methods of nucleic acid detection.

In some embodiments, a synthetic composition is applied mechanically or manually or artificially inoculated to a plant element in a seed treatment, root wash, seedling soak, foliar application, soil inocula, in-furrow application, sidedress application, soil pre-treatment, wound inoculation, drip tape irrigation, vector-mediation via a pollinator, injection, osmopriming, hydroponics, aquaponics, aeroponics, and combinations thereof. Application to the plant may be achieved, for example, as a powder for surface deposition onto plant leaves, as a spray to the whole plant or selected plant element, as part of a drip to the soil or the roots, or as a coating onto the plant element prior to or after planting. Such examples are meant to be illustrative and not limiting to the scope of the invention.

[00312] The invention will be further described in the following examples, which do not limit the scope of the invention described in the claims.

EXAMPLES

[00313] Below are examples of specific embodiments for carrying out the present invention. The examples are offered for illustrative purposes only, and are not intended to limit the scope of the present invention in any way. Efforts have been made to ensure accuracy with respect to numbers used (e.g., amounts, temperatures, etc.), but some experimental error and deviation should, of course, be allowed for.

Example 1. Isolation and Identification of Endophytes

[00314] Isolation and cultivation of endophytic microbes from agricultural plants was performed using methods well known in the art. MIC- was isolated from the [tissue] of [*Genus species variety*]. DNA was extracted from the ground tissues using the DNeasy DNA extraction kit (Qiagen, Hilden, Germany) according to the manufacturer's instructions. The endophytes were characterized by the sequences of genomic regions, these sequences include SEQ ID NOs: 18-62. Primers that amplify genomic regions of the endophytes of the present invention are listed in Table 3. Additional isolation and cultivation of endophytic microbes from agricultural plants was performed using methods well known in the art.

Table 3. Primer sequences useful in identifying microbes of the present invention

Primers	Genomic locus
27f (5' - AGAGTTTGATYMTGGCTCAG - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 1) 1492r (5' - GGTTACCTTGTTACGACTT - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 2)	16S
515f (5' - GTGYCAGCMGCCGCGGTAA - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 3) 806r (5' - GGACTACNVGGGTWTCTAAT - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 4)	16S
ITS_1 (5' - CTTGGTCATTTAGAGGAAGTAA - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 5) LR5 (5' - TCCTGAGGGAACTTCG - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 8)	ITS
ITS_2 (5' - GCTGCGTTCTTCATCGATGC - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 6) ITS_3 (5' - GCATCGATGAAGAACGCAGC - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 7)	ITS
Btub2Fd, beta -tubulin, primer - amplicon F (5' - GTBCACCTYCARACCGGYCARTG - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 9) Btub4Rd, beta-tubulin, primer - amplicon R (5' - CCRGAYTGRCCRAARACRAAGTTGTC - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 10)	Beta-tubulin
fRPB2-5F (5' - GAYGAYMGWGATCAYTTYGG - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 13) bRPB2-7.1R (5' - CCCATRGCTGYTTMCCCATDGC - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 11)	second largest subunit of RNA polymerase II
fRPB2-5F (5' - GAYGAYMGWGATCAYTTYGG - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 13) bRPB2-7R (5' - CCCATRGCTGYTTMCCCATDGC - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 12)	second largest subunit of RNA polymerase II
MIC-15870-F01, unique genomic region, primer - amplicon F (5' - TGGTCAACTAGCGAACGTGT - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 14) MIC-15870-R01, unique genomic region, primer - amplicon R (5' - AGAGGCGAACGGGTACACT - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 15)	unique genomic region
MIC-84414-F01, unique genomic region, primer - amplicon F (5' - AAATGTTGTTTCATGCGACCA - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 16) MIC-84414-R01, unique genomic region, primer - amplicon R (5' - TCTCCAGGAGCTTTCGTTA - 3') (SEQ ID NO: 17)	unique genomic region

[00315] MIC-15870 was deposited with the Agricultural Research Service Culture Collection (NRRL), at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1815 North University Street, Peoria, Illinois 61604, under the terms of the Budapest Treaty, as Deposit ID: NRRL-67466.

[00316] MIC-84414 was deposited with the Agricultural Research Service Culture Collection (NRRL), at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1815 North University Street, Peoria, Illinois 61604, under the terms of the Budapest Treaty, as Deposit ID: NRRL-67467.

[00317] MIC-82330 was deposited with the Agricultural Research Service Culture Collection (NRRL), at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1815 North University Street, Peoria, Illinois 61604, under the terms of the Budapest Treaty, as Deposit ID: NRRL-B67465.

Example 2: Identification of Endophytes Using Marker Gene Sequences

[00318] The fungal endophytes of the present invention can be identified by the sequence of one or more of the following loci: second largest subunit of RNA polymerase II (RPB2), beta-tubulin. PCR amplification of second largest subunit of RNA polymerase II (RPB2) using primer sequences fRPB2-5F (SEQ ID NO: 13) and bRPB2-7.1R (SEQ ID NO: 11) is described in Riess K, Oberwinkler F, Bauer R, Garnica S. High genetic diversity at the regional scale and possible speciation in *Sebacina epigaea* and *S. incrustans*. BMC Evolutionary Biology. 2013;13:102. doi:10.1186/1471-2148-13-102. PCR amplification of second largest subunit of RNA polymerase II (RPB2) using primer sequences fRPB2-5F (SEQ ID NO: 13) and fRPB2-7R (SEQ ID NO: 12) is described in Liu Y, Whelen S, Hall B. Phylogenetic relationships among ascomycetes: evidence from an RNA polymerase II subunit. Mol. Biol. Evol. 1999. 16(12): 1799-1808. PCR amplification of beta-tubulin using primer sequences Btub2Fd (SEQ ID NO: 9) and Btub4Rd (SEQ ID NO: 10) is described in Aveskamp et al. (2009) DNA phylogeny reveals polyphyly of *Phoma* section *Peyronellaea* and multiple taxonomic novelties Mycologia, 101(3):363–382.

[00319] MIC-84414 can be identified by the sequence of one or more of the following: its RPB2 sequence (SEQ ID NO: 28), RPB2 sequence (SEQ ID NO: 29), beta-tubulin sequence (SEQ ID NO: 30).

[00320] MIC-68178 can be identified by the sequence of its beta-tubulin sequence (SEQ ID NO: 37).

Example 3: Identification of Bacterial and Fungal Endophytes Using 16S and ITS Sequences

Classification of the bacterial strains using 16S sequence

[00321] To accurately characterize isolated bacterial endophytes, colonies were submitted for marker gene sequencing, and the sequences were analyzed to provide taxonomic classifications. Colonies were subjected to 16S rRNA gene PCR amplification using a primer pair 27f (5'- AGAGTTTGATYMTGGCTCAG-3') (SEQ ID NO: 1) and 1492r (5'- GGTTACCTTGTTACGACTT-3') (SEQ ID NO: 2). Sequencing reactions were performed using primers: 27f (5'- AGAGTTTGATYMTGGCTCAG -3') (SEQ ID NO: 1), 515f (5' – GTGYCAGCMGCCGCGGTAA- 3') (SEQ ID NO: 3), 806r (5'- GGACTACNVGGGTWTCTAAT- 3') (SEQ ID NO: 4), and 1492r (5'- GGTTACCTTGTTACGACTT -3') (SEQ ID NO: 2). Preferably sequencing primers are chosen so that overlapping regions are sequenced. Sanger sequencing of was performed at Genewiz (South Plainfield, NJ). Raw chromatograms were converted to sequences, and corresponding quality scores were assigned using TraceTuner v3.0.6beta (US 6,681,186). These sequences were quality filtered, aligned and a consensus sequence generated using Geneious v 8.1.8 (Biomatters Limited, Auckland NZ).

[00322] Taxonomic classifications were assigned to the sequences using the highest probability of assignment based on the results of industry standard taxonomic classification tools: LCA (runs USEARCH (Edgar, R. C., 2010) with option search_global, then for all best match hits, returns lowest taxonomic rank shared by all best hits for a query), RDP Naive Bayesian rRNA Classifier version 2.11, September 2015 (Wang et al., 2007), SPINGO version 1.3 (32 bit) (Allard et al. (2015) BMC Bioinformatics 16:324 DOI: 10.1186/s12859-015-0747-1), and UTX version v8.1.1861_i86linux64 (Edgar, R.C. (2016) available online at drive5.com/usearch/manual/utax_algo.html), using reference databases: RDP 16S rRNA training set 15 (Cole et al., 2014), and SILVA version 119 (Quast et al., 2013). The classifier and database combinations listed in Table 4 were used to assign taxonomy to bacterial sequences.

Table 4: The classifier and database combinations used to classify 16S sequences

<i>Classifier</i>	<i>Database</i>
LCA	SILVA, version 119
RDP	RDP, 16S rRNA training set 15
SPINGO	RDP, 16S rRNA training set 15
UTAX	RDP, 16S rRNA training set 15
	SILVA, version 119

Classification of the fungal strain using ITS sequences

[00323] Total genomic DNA was extracted from individual fungal isolates, using the DNeasy Plant Mini Kit (Qiagen, Germantown, MD). Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) was used to amplify a genomic region including the nuclear ribosomal internal transcribed spacers (ITS) using a primer pair ITS_1 (5'-CTTGGTCATTTAGAGGAAGTAA-3') (SEQ ID NO: 5) and LR5 (5'-TCCTGAGGGAACTTCG-3') (SEQ ID NO: 8). Each 25 microliter-reaction mixture included 22.5 microliters of Invitrogen Platinum Taq supermix, 0.5 microliter of each primer (10 uM), and 1.5 microliters of DNA template (~2-4 ng). Cycling reactions were run with MJ Research PTC thermocyclers and consisted of 94°C for 5 min, 35 cycles of 94°C for 30 s, 54°C for 30 s, and 72°C for 1 min, and 72°C for 10 min. Sanger sequencing of was performed at Genewiz (South Plainfield, NJ) using primers: ITS_1 (5'-CTTGGTCATTTAGAGGAAGTAA-3') (SEQ ID NO: 5), ITS_2 (5'-GCTGCGTTCTTCATCGATGC-3') (SEQ ID NO: 6), ITS_3 (5'-GCATCGATGAAGAACGCAGC-3') (SEQ ID NO: 7), and LR5 (5'-TCCTGAGGGAACTTCG-3') (SEQ ID NO: 8). Sequencing primers were chosen so that overlapping regions were sequenced. Raw chromatograms were converted to sequences, and corresponding quality scores were assigned using TraceTuner v3.0.6beta (US 6,681,186). These sequences were quality filtered, aligned and a consensus sequence generated using Geneious v 8.1.8 (Biomatters Limited, Auckland NZ).

[00324] Taxonomic classifications were assigned to the sequences using the highest probability of assignment based on the results of industry standard taxonomic classification tools: LCA (runs USEARCH (Edgar, R. C., 2010) with option search_global, then for all best match hits, returns lowest taxonomic rank shared by all best hits for a query), SPINGO (Allard et al., 2015), and UTAX (Edgar, R.C., 2016), using the WARCUP Fungal ITS trainset 1 (Deshpande et al. (2016) Mycologia 108(1):1-5) and UNITE (Koljal et al., 2013). The classifier and database combinations listed in Table 5 were used to assign taxonomy to fungal sequences.

Table 5: The classifier and database combinations used to classify ITS sequences.

<i>Classifier</i>	<i>Database</i>
LCA	UNITE, Fungal ITS trainset 07/04/2014
RDP	UNITE, Fungal ITS trainset 07/04/2014
	WARCUP, Fungal ITS trainset 1
SPINGO	UNITE, Fungal ITS trainset 07/04/2014
UTAX	UNITE, Fungal ITS trainset 07/04/2014
	WARCUP, Fungal ITS trainset 1

Table 6. Taxonomic classification of endophytes of the present invention

SEQ ID NOs	MIC ID	Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family	Genus	Species
18, 19	MIC-93265	Bacteria	Firmicutes	Bacilli	Bacillales	Bacillaceae	<i>Bacillus</i>	<i>simplex</i>
20, 21	MIC-19621	Bacteria	Proteobacteria	Betaproteobacteria	Burkholderiales	Burkholderiaceae	<i>Burkholderia</i>	
22	MIC-99849	Bacteria	Actinobacteria	Actinobacteria	Micrococcales	Microbacteriaceae	<i>Curvibacterium</i>	
23	MIC-82330	Bacteria	Proteobacteria	Gammaproteobacteria	Enterobacteriales	Enterobacteriaceae	<i>Enterobacter</i>	<i>cowanii</i>
24, 25	MIC-78123	Bacteria	Proteobacteria	Gammaproteobacteria	Enterobacteriales	Erwiniaceae	<i>Pantoea</i>	
26, 27	MIC-38013	Bacteria	Actinobacteria	Actinobacteria	Streptomycetales	Streptomycetaceae	<i>Streptomyces</i>	<i>kathirae</i>
28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33	MIC-84414	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Pleosporales	Pleosporaceae	<i>Curvularia</i>	<i>spicifera</i>
34, 35, 36, 37	MIC-68178	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Pleosporales	Pleosporaceae	<i>Epicoccum</i>	<i>nigrum</i>
38, 39	MIC-15870	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Pleosporales	Pleosporaceae	<i>Periconia</i>	<i>macrospinos</i>
40	MIC-43662	Bacteria	Proteobacteria	Gammaproteobacteria	Pseudomonadales	Moraxellaceae	<i>Acinetobacter</i>	<i>hwoffii</i>
41	MIC-56418	Bacteria	Bacteroidetes	Flavobacteriia	Flavobacteriales	Flavobacteriaceae	<i>Chryseobacterium</i>	
42	MIC-69189	Bacteria	Actinobacteria	Actinobacteria	Micrococcales	Microbacteriaceae	<i>Curvibacterium</i>	
43, 44	MIC-01424	Bacteria	Actinobacteria	Actinobacteria	Micrococcales	Micrococcaceae	<i>Micrococcus</i>	
45	MIC-14459	Bacteria	Proteobacteria	Alphaproteobacteria	Rhizobiales	Brucellaceae	<i>Ochrobactrum</i>	
46	MIC-54707	Bacteria	Firmicutes	Bacilli	Bacillales	Paenibacillaceae	<i>Paenibacillus</i>	<i>taichungensis</i>
47	MIC-14715	Bacteria	Proteobacteria	Alphaproteobacteria	Sphingomonadales	Sphingomonadaceae	<i>Sphingomonas</i>	
48	MIC-89612	Fungi	Ascomycota	Sordariomycetes	Hypocreales	incertae sedis	<i>Acremonium</i>	<i>strictum</i>
49	MIC-96038	Fungi	Ascomycota	Sordariomycetes	Hypocreales	incertae sedis	<i>Acremonium</i>	<i>alternatum</i>
50, 51	MIC-61256	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Capnodiales	Cladosporiaceae	<i>Cladosporium</i>	
52	MIC-50414	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Capnodiales	Cladosporiaceae	<i>Cladosporium</i>	<i>oxysporum</i>
53	MIC-07010	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Pleosporales	Pleosporaceae	<i>Curvularia</i>	
54	MIC-31593	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Pleosporales	Pleosporaceae	<i>Curvularia</i>	<i>spicifera</i>
55, 56	MIC-68390	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Pleosporales	Pleosporaceae	<i>Exserohilum</i>	
57	MIC-40075	Fungi	Ascomycota	Dothideomycetes	Pleosporales	Pleosporaceae	<i>Paraconiothyrium</i>	
58, 59	MIC-33228	Fungi	Ascomycota	Eurotiomycetes	Eurotiales	Aspergillaceae	<i>Penicillium</i>	
60	MIC-72917	Fungi	Ascomycota	Leotiomycetes	incertae sedis	Pseudeurotiaceae	<i>Pseudeurotium</i>	<i>bakeri</i>
61	MIC-50989	Fungi	Ascomycota	Sordariomycetes	Sordariales	Cephalothecaceae	<i>Phialemonium</i>	<i>inflatum</i>
62	MIC-70076	Bacteria	Proteobacteria	Gammaproteobacteria	Enterobacteriales	Enterobacteriaceae	<i>Enterobacter</i>	<i>cowanii</i>

Example 4. Assessment of Improved Plant Characteristics, Seedling Vigor*Assay of soy seedling vigor*

[00325] *Seed preparation:* The lot quality of soybean seeds is first assessed by testing germination of 100 seeds. Seeds are placed, 8 seeds per petri dish, on filter paper in petri dishes, 12 mL of water is added to each plate and plates are incubated for 3 days at 24°C. The percent germination is greater than 95%. One thousand soybean seeds are then surface sterilized by co-incubation with chlorine gas in a 20 x 30 cm container placed in a chemical fume hood for 16 hours. Percent germination of 50 seeds, per sterilization batch, is tested as above and confirmed to be greater than 95%.

[00326] *Preparation and heterologous disposition of endophytes:* Spore solutions are made by rinsing and scraping spores from agar slants which have been growing for about 1 month. Rinsing is done with 0.05% Silwet. Solutions are passed through Miracloth to filter out mycelia. Spores per ml are counted under a microscope using a hemocytometer. The stock suspension is then diluted into 10^6 spores/ml utilizing water. 3 μ l of spore suspension is used per seed ($\sim 10^3$ CFUs/seed is obtained). Control treatments are prepared by adding equivalent volumes of sterile water to seeds.

[00327] *Assay of seedling vigor:* Two rolled pieces of germination paper are placed in a sterile glass jar with 50 mL sterile water, then removed when completely saturated. Then the papers are separated and inoculated seeds are placed at approximately 1 cm intervals along the length of one sheet of moistened germination paper, at least 2.5 cm from the top of the paper and 3.8 cm from the edge of the paper. The second sheet of is placed on top of the seeds and the layered papers and seeds are loosely rolled into a tube. Each tube is secured with a rubber band around the middle and placed in a single sterile glass jar and covered loosely with a lid. For each treatment, three jars with 15 seeds per jar are prepared. The position of jars with the growth chamber is randomized. Jars are incubated at 60% relative humidity, and 22°C day, 18°C night with 12 hours light and 12 hours dark for 4 days and then the lids are removed and the jars incubated for an additional 7 days. Then the germinated seedlings are weighed and photographed and root length and root surface area scored as follows.

[00328] Dirt, excess water, seed coats and other debris is removed from seedlings to allow accurate scanning of the roots. Individual seedlings are laid out on clear plastic trays and trays are arranged on an Epson Expression 11000XL scanner (Epson America, Inc., Long

Beach CA). Roots are manually arranged to reduce the amount of overlap. For root measurements, shoots are removed if the shape of the shoot causes it to overlap the roots.

[00329] The WinRHIZO software version Arabidopsis Pro2016a (Regents Instruments, Quebec Canada) is used with the following acquisition settings: greyscale 4000 dpi image, speed priority, overlapping (1 object), Root Morphology: Precision (standard), Crossing Detection (normal). The scanning area is set to the maximum scanner area. When the scan is completed, the root area is selected and root length and root surface area are measured.

[00330] Statistical analysis is performed using R (R Core Team, 2016. R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. R-project.org/).

Assay of corn seedling vigor

[00331] *Seed preparation:* The lot quality of corn seeds is first evaluated for germination by transfer of 100 seeds and with 3.5 mL of water to a filter paper lined petri dish. Seeds are incubated for 3 days at 24°C, and to ensure that percent germination is greater than 95%. One thousand corn seeds are then surface sterilized by co-incubation with chlorine gas in a 20 x 30 cm container in a chemical fume hood for 12 hours. Percent germination of 50 seeds, per sterilization batch, is tested as above and confirmed to be greater than 95%.

[00332] *Optional reagent preparation:* 7.5% PEG 6000 (Calbiochem, San Diego, CA) is prepared by adding 75 g of PEG to 1000 mL of water, then stirred on a warm hot plate until the PEG is fully dissolved. The solution is then autoclaved.

[00333] *Preparation and heterologous disposition of endophytes:* Spore solutions are made by rinsing and scraping spores from agar slants which have been growing for about 1 month. Rinsing is done with 0.05% Silwet. Solutions are passed through Miracloth to filter out mycelia. Spores per ml are counted under a microscope using a hemocytometer. The stock suspension is then diluted into 10^6 spores/ml utilizing water. 3 μ l of spore suspension is used per seed ($\sim 10^3$ CFUs/seed is obtained). Control treatments are prepared by adding equivalent volumes of sterile water to seeds.

[00334] *Assay of seedling vigor:* Either 25 ml of sterile water (or optionally, 25 ml of PEG solution as prepared above) is added to each CygTM germination pouch (Mega International, Newport, MN) and place into pouch rack (Mega International, Newport, MN). Sterile forceps are used to place seeds prepared as above into every other perforation in the germination pouch. Seeds are fitted snugly into each perforation to ensure they did not shift when moving the pouches. Before and in between treatments forceps are sterilized using ethanol and flame

and workspace wiped down with 70% ethanol. For each treatment, three pouches with 15 seeds per pouch are prepared. The germination racks with germination pouches are placed into plastic tubs, and covered with perforated plastic wrap to prevent drying. Tubs are incubated at 60% relative humidity, and 22°C day, 18°C night with 12 hours light and 12 hours dark for 6 days to allow for germination and root length growth. Placement of pouches within racks and racks/tubs within the growth chamber is randomized to minimize positional effect. At the end of 6 days the seeds are scored manually for germination, root and shoot length.

[00335] Statistical analysis is performed using R (R Core Team, 2016. R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. R-project.org/).

Assay of wheat seedling vigor

[00336] *Seed preparation:* The lot of wheat seeds is first evaluated for germination by transfer of 100 seeds and with 8 mL of water to a filter paper lined petri dish. Seeds are incubated for 3 days at 24°C, and percent germination was greater than 95%. Wheat seeds are then surface sterilized by co-incubation with chlorine gas in a 20 x 30 cm container in a chemical fume hood for 12 hours. Percent germination of 50 seeds, per sterilization batch, is tested as above and confirmed to be greater than 95%.

[00337] *Optional reagent preparation:* 7.5% polyethylene glycol (PEG) is prepared by adding 75 g of PEG to 1000 mL of water, then stirring on a warm hot plate until the PEG is fully dissolved. The solution is then autoclaved.

[00338] *Preparation and heterologous disposition of endophytes:* Spore solutions are made by rinsing and scraping spores from agar slants which have been growing for about 1 month. Rinsing is done with 0.05% Silwet. Solutions are passed through Miracloth to filter out mycelia. Spores per ml are counted under a microscope using a hemocytometer. The stock suspension is then diluted into 10^6 spores/ml utilizing water. 3 μ l of spore suspension is used per seed ($\sim 10^3$ CFUs/seed is obtained). Seeds and spores are combined a 50 mL falcon tube and gently shaken for 5-10 seconds until thoroughly coated. Control treatments are prepared by adding equivalent volumes of sterile water to seeds.

[00339] *Assay of seedling vigor:* Petri dishes are prepared by adding four sheets of sterile heavy weight seed germination paper, then adding 50 mL sterile water (or optionally, 50 ml of PEG solution as prepared above) to each plate then allowing the liquid to thoroughly soak into all sheets. The sheets are positioned and then creased so that the back of the plate and

one side wall are covered, two sheets are then removed and placed on a sterile surface. Along the edge of the plate across from the covered side wall 15 inoculated seeds are placed evenly at least one inch from the top of the plate and half an inch from the sides. Seeds are placed smooth side up and with the pointed end of the seed pointing toward the side wall of the plate covered by germination paper. The seeds are then covered by the two reserved sheets, the moist paper layers smoothed together to remove air bubbles and secure the seeds, and then the lid is replaced. For each treatment, at least three plates with 15 seeds per plate are prepared. The plates are then randomly distributed into stacks of 8-12 plates and a plate without seeds is placed on the top. The stacks are incubated at 60% relative humidity, and 22°C day, 18°C night with 12 hours light and 12 hours dark for 24 hours, then each plate is turned to a semi-vertical position with the side wall covered by paper at the bottom. The plates are incubated for an additional 5 days, then scored manually for germination, root and shoot length.

[00340] Statistical analysis is performed using R (R Core Team, 2016. R: A language and environment for statistical computing. R Foundation for Statistical Computing, Vienna, Austria. R-project.org/).

Example 5. Assessment of Improved Plant Characteristics, Field Trials

Preparation of bacterial endophytes

[00341] An agar plug of each bacterial strain was transferred using a transfer tube to 4 mL of potato dextrose broth (PDB) in a 24 well plate and incubated at room temperature at 675 rpm on a shaker for 3 days. After growth of bacteria in broth, 200 µl was transferred into a spectrophotometer reading plate and bacteria OD was read at 600 nm absorbance. All bacteria strains were then normalized to 0.05 OD utilizing PBS 1x buffer. Once desired dilutions were made, 3 µl of the bacteria solution was applied per seed, and mixed well by shaking in a sterile Falcon tube for 5-10 seconds.

Preparation of fungal endophytes

[00342] Preparation of molasses broth and potato dextrose agar: Molasses broth was prepared by dissolving 30 g molasses and 5 g yeast extract per liter deionized water in an autoclavable container and autoclaving (15 psi, 121°C) for 45 min. Potato dextrose agar (PDA) plates were prepared by dissolving 39.0 g PDA powder per liter deionized water in an autoclavable container and autoclaving (15 psi, 121°C) for 45 min. The agar was allowed to cool to 50-60°C, before pouring into sterile petri plates (30 mL per 90 mm plate).

[00343] Liquid biomass: All equipment and consumables were thoroughly sterilized and procedures performed in a biosafety cabinet. The inoculant is prepared by placing 1 plug

from a cryopreserved stock on a fresh PDA plate, sealing the plate with Parafilm® and incubating at room temperature in the dark for 5-10 days. Then ~5x5 mm plugs were cut from the PDA plates and 10-12 plugs were transferred into flasks containing the sterile molasses broth, covered, secured in a shaker and incubated for at least 10 days with shaking at ~130 rpm. Then the culture was placed in a blender for 5 seconds and 1 mL of the blended was centrifuged and the supernatant was discarded and the pellet resuspended in 0.5 mL 1x Phosphate Buffered Saline (PBS) to generate inoculum.

[00344] Dry biomass: All equipment and consumables were thoroughly sterilized and procedures performed in a biosafety cabinet. The inoculant is prepared by placing 1 plug from a cryopreserved stock on a fresh PDA plate, sealing the plate with Parafilm® and incubating at room temperature in the dark for 5-10 days. Then ~5x5 mm plugs were cut from the PDA plates and 10-12 plugs were transferred into flasks containing the sterile molasses broth, covered, secured in a shaker and incubated for at least 10 days with shaking at ~130 rpm. In sterile conditions, the liquid culture was carefully decanted using 150 mm sterile filter paper on a sterilized Buchner funnel over a sterile flask. Once all liquid had passed through the funnel, the pellet was rinsed with sterile water until the filtrate ran clear. When dry, the pellet was transferred to a drying cabinet and dried until brittle. The pellet was then ground into a fine powder, and sample used to generate CFU counts.

Preparation of sodium alginate and talc for seed treatments

[00345] A 2% weight/volume solution of sodium alginate for the seed coatings is prepared by the following method. An Erlenmeyer flask is filled with the appropriate volume of deionized water and warmed to 50 degrees Celsius on a heat plate with agitation using a stir bar. The appropriate mass of sodium alginate powder for the desired final concentration solution is slowly added until dissolved. The solution is autoclaved at 121 degrees Celsius at 15 PSI for 30 minutes to sterilize.

[00346] Talcum powder for the powdered seed coatings is prepared by the following method. Talcum powder is aliquoted into Ziploc bags or 50 mL Falcon tubes, and autoclaved in dry cycle (121 degrees Celsius at 15 PSI for 30 minutes) to sterilize.

Heterologous disposition of endophytes on wheat seeds

[00347] Endophyte treatment was heterologously disposed to wheat seeds according to the following seed treatment protocols for liquid or dry formulation.

[00348] Liquid formulation: The 2% sodium alginate solution prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 15 ml per kg of seeds. Liquid fungal culture as prepared in above was added to the seeds at a rate of 8.3 ml per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using

equivalent volumes of sterile broth. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds.

[00349] Then 12.5 g of talc powder per kg of seed was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. Then 17 ml per kg of seed of Flo-Rite® 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

[00350] Dry formulation: The 2% sodium alginate solution prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 20 ml per kg of seeds. Equal parts of the fungal dry biomass prepared above and the talc prepared above were mixed. The solution is applied to the prepared seeds so that an equivalent of 12.5 g of fungal dry biomass was applied per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of talc. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds.

[00351] Then 17 ml per kg of seed of Flo-Rite® 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

Heterologous disposition of endophytes on soy seeds

[00352] Endophyte treatment was heterologously disposed to soy seeds according to the following seed treatment protocols for liquid or dry formulation.

[00353] Liquid formulation: The 2% sodium alginate solution prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 8.3 ml per kg of seeds. Liquid fungal culture as prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 8.3 (fungal endophytes) or 8.4 (bacterial endophytes) ml per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of sterile broth. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds. For fungal endophytes, 15 g per kg of seed of the talc powder prepared above was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. Then 13.3 (for fungal endophyte treatments) or 2.7 (for bacterial endophyte treatments) ml per kg of seed of Flo-Rite® 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

[00354] Dry fungal formulation: The 2% sodium alginate solution prepared in Example 8 was added to the seeds at a rate of 16.6 ml per kg of seeds. Equal parts of the dry fungal

biomass prepared above and the talc prepared in above were mixed. The solution was applied so that an equivalent of 10 g of dry fungal biomass was applied per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of talc. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds.

[00355] Then 13.3 ml per kg of seed of Flo-Rite® 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

Heterologous disposition of endophytes on corn seeds

[00356] Endophyte treatment was heterologously disposed to corn seeds according to the following seed treatment protocol.

[00357] Dry fungal formulation: The 2% sodium alginate solution prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 23 ml per kg of seeds. Equal parts of the dry fungal biomass prepared in above and the talc prepared above were mixed. The solution was applied so that an equivalent of 10 g of fungal powder was applied per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of talc. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds.

[00358] Then 16.6 ml per kg of seed of Flo-Rite® 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

[00359] Liquid formulation: Liquid culture as prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 23 (for fungal endophyte treatments) or 8.4 (for bacterial endophyte treatments) ml per kg of seeds, with equivalent volumes of the prepared sodium alginate. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of sterile broth. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds. For fungal endophytes, 15 g per kg of seed of the talc powder prepared in sterile was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. Then 16.6 ml (for fungal endophyte treatments) or 2.4 ml (for bacterial endophyte treatments) per kg of seed of Flo-Rite® 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

Assay of seed yield under field conditions, wheat

[00360] Field trials were conducted under non-irrigated (dryland) conditions at multiple locations, preferably in diverse geographic regions. Wheat seeds were treated with commercial fungicidal and insecticidal treatment. Seeds were heterologously disposed with the endophyte formulations described above and untreated seeds (lacking formulation and endophyte) were also planted. Seeds were sown in regularly spaced rows in soil at 1.2 million seeds/acre seeding density. At each location, at least 3 replicate plots were planted for each endophyte or control treatment in a randomized complete block design. Each plot consisted of seven, 15.24 m (40 ft.) rows.

[00361] At the end of the field trial employing endophyte treatment and control treatment plants, plots were machine harvested with a 5-ft research combine and yield calculated by the on-board computer.

[00362] The endophyte treatments, each comprising one of the following microbes: MIC-68390, MIC-68178, MIC-07010, MIC-31593, MIC-96038, or MIC-50414, resulted in average increases in yield of 7-15% in the wheat variety SDSU Focus. The endophyte treatments, each comprising one of the following microbes: MIC-68390, MIC-68178, MIC-07010, MIC-31593, MIC-96038, or MIC-50414, resulted in average increases in yield of 15-22% in the wheat variety SDSU Select.

Table 7: Average yield of wheat treated with endophytes in field trials

	SDSU Focus, Variety 3		SDSU Select, Variety 4	
	Average yield (BU/acre)	% difference Untreated	Average yield (BU/acre)	% difference Untreated
Untreated control	36.9	0	37.7	0%
MIC-68390	39.3	7%	45.0	19%
MIC-68178	40.9	11%	46.1	22%
MIC-07010	41.1	11%	43.9	16%
MIC-31593	42.1	14%	44.3	18%
MIC-96038	42.6	15%	43.4	15%
MIC-50414	40.0	8%	45.7	21%

Assay of seed yield under field conditions, corn

[00363] Field trials were conducted at multiple locations, preferably in diverse geographic regions. Plots were non-irrigated (dryland) or maintained with suboptimal irrigation at a rate to target approximately 25% reduction in yield. Seeds were prepared with the endophyte formulations (dry) and formulation control (dry, lacking any endophyte) as described in Example 11, untreated seeds (lacking formulation and endophyte) were also planted. Seeds were sown in regularly spaced rows in soil at planting densities typical for each region. At

each location 3 replicate plots were planted per endophyte or control treatment in a randomized complete block design. Each plot consisted of four 15.24 m (40 ft.) rows, each separated by 76.2 cm (30 in).

[00364] At the end of the field trial employing endophyte treatment and control treatment plants, plots were machine harvested with a 5-ft research combine and yield calculated by the on-board computer. Only the middle two rows of the 4 row plots were harvested to prevent border effects.

[00365] The endophyte treatments comprising MIC-68390 resulted in average increases in yield of 0.9% relative to formulation control and average increases in yield of 1.0% relative to the untreated control, in the corn variety Stine 9734.

Table 8: Average yield of corn variety Stine 9734 treated with endophytes in field trials

	Stine 9734, Variety 2		
	Average yield (BU/acre)	% difference Formulation control	% difference Untreated control
Untreated	185.5		0.0%
Formulation control (dry)	185.7	0.0%	
MIC-68390	187.4	0.9%	1.0%

Assay of seed yield under field conditions, soy

[00366] Field trials were conducted under non-irrigated (dryland) conditions at multiple locations, preferably in diverse geographic regions. Seeds were prepared with the endophyte formulations as described above and untreated seeds (lacking formulation and endophyte) were also planted. MIC-68178 was formulated with the dry formulation; MIC-68390, MIC-07010, MIC-96038, and MIC-50414 were formulated with the liquid formulation.

[00367] Seeds were sown in regularly spaced rows in soil at 40,000 seeds/acre seeding density. At each location, at least 3 replicate plots were planted per endophyte or control treatment in a randomized complete block design. Each plot consisted of four 15.24 m (40 ft.) rows, each separated by 76.2 cm (30 in).

[00368] At the end of the field trial employing endophyte treatment and control treatment plants, plots were machine harvested with a 5-ft research combine and yield calculated by the on-board computer. Only the middle two rows of the 4 row plots were harvested to prevent border effects.

[00369] The endophyte treatment comprising MIC-68390 resulted in average increases in yield of 3.5% in the soy variety Dairyland DSR1808R2Y. The endophyte treatments, each

comprising one of the following microbes: MIC-68390, MIC-68178, MIC-07010, MIC-31593, MIC-96038, or MIC-50414 resulted in average increases in yield of 3.5-10.2% in the soy variety Pfister 38R25. The endophyte treatments, each comprising one of the following microbes: MIC-68390, MIC-68178, MIC-07010, or MIC-50414, resulted in average increases in yield of 1.1-4.9% in the soy variety Stine 3920.

Table 9: Average yield of soy variety Dairyland DSR1808R2Y treated with endophytes in field trials

	Dairyland DSR1808R2Y, Variety 1	
	Average yield (pounds/acre)	% difference Untreated control
Untreated control	33.9	0.0%
MIC-68390	35.1	3.5%

Table 10. Average yield of soy variety Pfister 38R25 treated with endophytes in field trials

	Pfister 38R25, Variety 2	
Row Labels	Average yield (pounds/acre)	% difference Untreated control
Untreated control	56.8	0%
MIC-68390	58.8	3.5%
MIC-68178	60.0	5.6%
MIC-07010	60.0	5.6%
MIC-96038	61.2	7.7%
MIC-50414	62.6	10.2%

Table 11. Average yield of soy variety Stine 3920 treated with endophytes in field trials

	Stine 3920, Variety 4	
Row Labels	Average yield (pounds/acre)	% difference Untreated control
Untreated control	56.9	0%
MIC-68390	58.4	2.6%
MIC-68178	59.7	4.9%
MIC-07010	58.9	3.5%
MIC-50414	57.5	1.1%

Example 6. Additional Methods of Mechanical and Manual Application, Artificial Inoculation and Disposition onto or into a Plant Element

Osmopriming and Hydropriming

[00370] A fungal or bacterial endophyte is inoculated onto seeds during the osmopriming (soaking in polyethylene glycol solution to create a range of osmotic potentials) and/or

hydropriming (soaking in de-chlorinated water) process. Osmoprimered seeds are soaked in a polyethylene glycol solution containing a bacterial and/or fungal endophyte for one to eight days and then air dried for one to two days. Hydroprimed seeds are soaked in water for one to eight days containing a bacterial and/or fungal endophyte and maintained under constant aeration to maintain a suitable dissolved oxygen content of the suspension until removal and air drying for one to two days. Talc and or flowability polymer are added during the drying process.

Foliar application

[00371] A fungal or bacterial endophyte is inoculated onto aboveground plant tissue (leaves and stems) as a liquid suspension in dechlorinated water containing adjuvants, sticker-spreaders and UV protectants. The suspension is sprayed onto crops with a boom or other appropriate sprayer.

Soil inoculation

[00372] A fungal or bacterial endophyte is inoculated onto soils in the form of a liquid suspension either; pre-planting as a soil drench, during planting as an in furrow application, or during crop growth as a side-dress. A fungal or bacterial endophyte is mixed directly into a fertigation system via drip tape, center pivot or other appropriate irrigation system.

Hydroponic and Aeroponic inoculation

[00373] A fungal or bacterial endophyte is inoculated into a hydroponic or aeroponic system either as a powder or liquid suspension applied directly to the rockwool substrate, or applied to the circulating or sprayed nutrient solution.

Vector-mediated inoculation

[00374] A fungal or bacterial endophyte is introduced in powder form in a mixture containing talc or other bulking agent to the entrance of a beehive (in the case of bee-mediation) or near the nest of another pollinator (in the case of other insects or birds.). The pollinators pick up the powder when exiting the hive and deposit the inoculum directly to the crop's flowers during the pollination process.

Root Wash

[00375] The method includes contacting the exterior surface of a plant's roots with a liquid inoculant formulation containing a purified bacterial population, a purified fungal population, or a mixture of purified bacteria and fungi. The plant's roots are briefly passed through standing liquid microbial formulation or liquid formulation is liberally sprayed over the roots, resulting in both physical removal of soil and microbial debris from the plant roots, as well as inoculation with microbes in the formulation.

Seedling Soak

[00376] The method includes contacting the exterior surfaces of a seedling with a liquid inoculant formulation containing a purified bacterial population, a purified fungal population, or a mixture of purified bacteria and fungi. The entire seedling is immersed in standing liquid microbial formulation for at least 30 seconds, resulting in both physical removal of soil and microbial debris from the plant roots, as well as inoculation of all plant surfaces with microbes in the formulation. Alternatively, the seedling can be germinated from seed in or transplanted into media soaked with the microbe(s) of interest and then allowed to grow in the media, resulting in soaking of the plantlet in microbial formulation for much greater time totaling as much as days or weeks. Endophytic microbes likely need time to colonize and enter the plant, as they explore the plant surface for cracks or wounds to enter, so the longer the soak, the more likely the microbes will successfully be installed in the plant.

Wound Inoculation

[00377] The method includes contacting the wounded surface of a plant with a liquid or solid inoculant formulation containing a purified bacterial population, a purified fungal population, or a mixture of purified bacteria and fungi. Plant surfaces are designed to block entry of microbes into the endosphere, since pathogens attempting to infect plants in this way. In order to introduce beneficial endophytic microbes to plant endospheres, access to the interior of the plant is opened by wounding the plant. This wound can take a number of forms, including pruned roots, pruned branches, puncture wounds in the stem breaching the bark and cortex, puncture wounds in the tap root, puncture wounds in leaves, and puncture wounds seed allowing entry past the seed coat. Wounds can be made using needles, hammer and nails, knives, drills, etc. The wound can then be contacted the microbial inoculant as liquid, as powder, inside gelatin capsules, in a pressurized capsule injection system, in a pressurized reservoir and tubing injection system, allowing entry and colonization by microbes into the endosphere. Alternatively, the entire wounded plant can be soaked or washed in the microbial inoculant for at least 30 seconds, giving more microbes a chance to enter the wound, as well as inoculating other plant surfaces with microbes in the formulation – for example pruning seedling roots and soaking them in inoculant before transplanting is a very effective way to introduce endophytes into the plant.

Injection

[00378] The method includes injecting microbes into a plant in order to successfully install them in the endosphere. Plant surfaces are designed to block entry of microbes into the endosphere, since pathogens attempting to infect plants in this way. In order to introduce

beneficial endophytic microbes to endospheres, access to the interior of the plant is opened by puncturing the plant surface with a needle and injecting microbes into the inside of the plant. Different parts of the plant can be inoculated this way including the main stem or trunk, branches, tap roots, seminal roots, buttress roots, and even leaves. The injection can be made with a hypodermic needle, a drilled hole injector, or a specialized injection system, and through the puncture wound can then be contacted the microbial inoculant as liquid, as powder, inside gelatin capsules, in a pressurized capsule injection system, in a pressurized reservoir and tubing injection system, allowing entry and colonization by microbes into the endosphere.

Example 7: Method of Determining Seed Nutritional Quality Trait Component

Preparation of endophytes

[00379] The following methods were used to produce endophytes for field trial seed treatments.

[00380] The thawed contents of a cryo-vial containing the isolated endophyte was added to 100 mL of growth media in a 250 mL Erlenmeyer flask with a vented cap. For fungal endophytes, the flask was incubated at 24 C for 3 days on a shaker set at approximately 130 revolutions per minute (RPM). For bacterial endophytes, the flask was incubated at 24 C for 2 days on a shaker set at approximately 130 revolutions per minute (RPM). An aliquot of the culture was collected and the purity of the culture assayed by DNA sequencing and taxonomic identification, for example, as described in Examples 1, 2 and 3.

[00381] For bacterial endophytes, a 1% inoculum was prepared from the endophyte culture and 1 L of sterile media in a Fernbach Flask. For fungal endophytes, a 3% inoculum was prepared from the endophyte culture and 1 L of sterile media in a Fernbach Flask. An Airtop Seal was on top of the Fernbach Flask. The Fernbach Flask is then incubated at 24 C on a shaker set at 130 RPM for 5-7 days (fungal endophytes) or 1-5 days (bacterial endophytes).

Heterologous disposition of endophytes on wheat seeds

[00382] Endophyte treatments were heterologously disposed to wheat seeds according to the following seed treatment protocol.

[00383] Liquid culture as prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 8.3 (fungal endophytes) or 8.4 (bacterial endophytes) ml per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of sterile broth. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds. For fungal endophytes, 12.5 g of talc powder per kg of seed was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. Then 17 ml (fungal endophytes) or 2 ml (bacterial endophytes) per kg of seed of Flo-Rite® 1706

(BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

Heterologous disposition of endophytes on soy seeds

[00384] Endophyte treatments were heterologously disposed soy seeds according to the following seed treatment protocol.

[00385] Liquid culture as prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 8.3 (fungal endophytes) or 8.4 (bacterial endophytes) ml per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of sterile broth. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds. Then 13.3 (fungal endophytes) or 2.7 (bacterial endophytes) ml per kg of seed of Flo-Rite[®] 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

Heterologous disposition of endophytes on corn seeds

[00386] Endophyte treatments were heterologously disposed to corn seeds according to the following seed treatment protocol.

[00387] Liquid culture as prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 23 (for fungal endophyte treatments) or 8.4 (for bacterial endophyte treatments) ml per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of sterile broth. The seeds were then agitated to disperse the solution evenly on the seeds. For fungal endophytes, 15 g per kg of seed of the talc powder prepared in sterile was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. Then 16.6 ml (for fungal endophyte treatments) or 2.4 ml (for bacterial endophyte treatments) per kg of seed of Flo-Rite[®] 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

Heterologous disposition of endophytes on cotton seeds

[00388] Endophyte treatments were heterologously disposed to cotton seeds according to the following seed treatment protocol.

[00389] Liquid culture as prepared above was added to the seeds at a rate of 8.3 (fungal endophytes) or 8.4 (bacterial endophytes) ml per kg of seeds. Control treatments were prepared using equivalent volumes of sterile broth. The seeds were then agitated to disperse

the solution evenly on the seeds. For fungal endophytes, 15 g per kg of seed of the talc powder prepared in sterile was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. Then 13.3 ml (fungal endophytes) or 2.7 ml (bacterial endophytes) per kg of seed of Flo-Rite® 1706 (BASF, Ludwigshafen, Germany) was added and the seeds were agitated to disperse the powder evenly on the seeds. The final concentration of endophyte was targeted to be at least 10^4 CFU. Treated seeds were allowed to dry overnight in a well-ventilated space before planting.

Wheat trial design

[00390] Field trials were conducted under non-irrigated (dryland) conditions at multiple locations, preferably in diverse geographic regions. Wheat seeds were treated with commercial fungicidal and insecticidal treatment. Seeds were heterologously disposed with the endophyte formulations described above and untreated seeds (lacking formulation and endophyte) were also planted. Seeds were sown in regularly spaced rows in soil at 1.2 million seeds/acre seeding density. At each location, at least 3 replicate plots were planted for each endophyte or control treatment in a randomized complete block design. Each plot consisted of seven, 15.24 m (40 ft.) rows.

[00391] At the end of the field trial employing endophyte treatment and control treatment plants, plots were machine harvested with a 5-ft research combine and yield calculated by the on-board computer.

Soy trial design

[00392] Field trials were conducted under non-irrigated (dryland) conditions at multiple locations, preferably in diverse geographic regions. Seeds were prepared with the endophyte formulations as described above and untreated seeds (lacking formulation and endophyte) were also planted.

[00393] Seeds were sown in regularly spaced rows in soil at 40,000 seeds/acre seeding density. At each location, at least 3 replicate plots were planted per endophyte or control treatment in a randomized complete block design. Each plot consisted of four 15.24 m (40 ft.) rows, each separated by 76.2 cm (30 in).

[00394] At the end of the field trial employing endophyte treatment and control treatment plants, plots were machine harvested with a 5-ft research combine and yield calculated by the on-board computer. Only the middle two rows of the 4 row plots were harvested to prevent border effects.

Corn trial design

[00395] Field trials were conducted at multiple locations, preferably in diverse geographic regions. Plots were non-irrigated (dryland) or maintained with suboptimal irrigation at a rate to target approximately 25% reduction in yield. Seeds were prepared with the endophyte formulations and formulation control as described above, untreated seeds (lacking formulation and endophyte) were also planted. Seeds were sown in regularly spaced rows in soil at planting densities typical for each region. At each location 3 replicate plots were planted per endophyte or control treatment in a randomized complete block design. Each plot consisted of four 15.24 m (40 ft.) rows, each separated by 76.2 cm (30 in).

[00396] At the end of the field trial employing endophyte treatment and control treatment plants, plots were machine harvested with a 5-ft research combine and yield calculated by the on-board computer. Only the middle two rows of the 4 row plots were harvested to prevent border effects.

Cotton trial design

[00397] Field trials were conducted under non-irrigated (dryland) conditions at multiple locations, preferably in diverse geographic regions. Seeds were prepared with the endophyte formulations as described above and untreated seeds (lacking formulation and endophyte) were also planted.

[00398] Seeds were sown in regularly spaced rows in soil at 40,000 seeds/acre seeding density. At each location, at least 3 replicate plots were planted per endophyte or control treatment in a randomized complete block design. Each plot consisted of four 15.24 m (40 ft.) rows.

[00399] At the end of the field trial employing endophyte treatment and control treatment plants, plots were machine harvested and the seed de-linted.

Seed Nutritional Analysis

[00400] Fat: Seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described above in this Example and also as from plants grown as described in Example 5. Analysis of fat was conducted on replicate samples according to the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists Reference Method AOAC 920.39, of the Official Methods Of Analysis of AOAC International, 20th Edition (2016). Samples were weighed onto filter paper, dried, and extracted in hot hexane for 4 hrs using a Soxhlet system. Oil was recovered in pre-weighed glassware, and % fat was measured gravimetrically. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and untreated control (seed treated not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of this Example. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and

formulation control (seeds treated with a formulation not comprising an endophyte) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of Example 5. The percent crude fat composition of endophyte treated soy seeds and untreated controls are shown in Figure 4 and Table 12. The percent crude fat composition of endophyte treated wheat seeds and untreated controls are shown in Figure 7 and Table 13.

Table 12: Average crude fat content as % of soy seed composition for seeds produced by endophyte treated and untreated control plants.

Treatment	Mean	Std Dev	Std Error	% over NT
Untreated control (NT)	20.11	5.74	1.73	0.00
MIC-84414	22.12	1.53	0.44	9.98
MIC-38013	22.63	1.68	0.49	12.55

Table 13: Average crude fat content as % of wheat seed composition for seeds produced by endophyte treated and untreated control plants.

Treatment	mean	Std Dev	Std Error	% over NT
Untreated control (NT)	2.00	0.33	0.10	0.00
MIC-84414	2.16	0.62	0.18	8.12
MIC-82330	2.36	0.43	0.12	17.82
MIC-70076	2.14	0.42	0.12	6.91
MIC-99849	2.28	0.47	0.14	14.03

[00401] Ash: Replicate seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described above in this Example and also as from plants grown as described in Example 5. Analysis of ash was conducted on replicate samples according to the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists Reference Method AOAC 942.05, of the Official Methods Of Analysis of AOAC International, 20th Edition (2016). Samples were weighed into pre-weighed crucibles, and ashed in a furnace at 600°C for 3 hrs. Weight loss on ashing was calculated as % ash. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and untreated control (seed treated not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of this Example. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and formulation control (seeds treated with a formulation not comprising an endophyte) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of Example 5. The percent ash composition of endophyte treated cotton seeds and untreated controls are shown in Figure 8 and Table 14.

Table 14: Average ash content as % of cotton seed composition for seeds produced by endophyte treated and untreated control plants.

Treatment	mean	Std Dev	Std Error	% over NT
Untreated control (NT)	4.46	1.38	0.62	0.00
MIC-68178	5.40	1.11	0.45	21.08
MIC-96038	4.43	1.63	0.67	-0.60
MIC-50414	5.42	2.91	1.19	21.45

[00402] Fiber: Replicate seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described above in this Example and also as from plants grown as described in Example 5. Analysis of fiber was conducted on replicate samples according to the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists Reference Method AOAC 978.10, of the Official Methods Of Analysis of AOAC International, 20th Edition (2016). Samples were weighed into filter paper, defatted and dried, and hydrolyzed first in acid, then in alkali solution. The recovered portion was dried, weighed, ashed at 600°, and weighed again. The loss on ashing was calculated as % Fiber. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and untreated control (seed treated not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of this Example. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and formulation control (seeds treated with a formulation not comprising an endophyte) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of Example 5. The percent ADF composition of endophyte treated corn seeds and untreated controls are shown in Figure 6 and Table 15.

Table 15: Average ADF content as % of corn seed composition for seeds produced by endophyte treated and untreated control plants.

Treatment	mean	Std Dev	Std Error	% over NT
Untreated control (NT)	3.23	1.52	0.38	0.00
MIC-38013	3.83	1.44	0.36	18.60
MIC-93265	2.36	1.05	0.26	-26.94
MIC-54707	2.90	1.73	0.43	-10.08

[00403] Moisture: Replicate seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described above in this Example and also as from plants grown as described in Example 5. Analysis of moisture was conducted on replicate samples according to the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists Reference Method AOAC 930.15, of the Official Methods Of Analysis of AOAC International, 20th Edition (2016). Samples were weighed into pre-weighed aluminum dishes, and dried at 135°C for 2 hrs. Weight loss on drying was calculated as % Moisture. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated

seed) and untreated control (seed treated not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of this Example. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and formulation control (seeds treated with a formulation not comprising an endophyte) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of Example 5.

[00404] Protein: Replicate seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described in above in this Example and also as from plants grown as described in Example 5. Analysis of protein was conducted on replicate samples according to the Association of Official Agricultural Chemists Reference Method AOAC 990.03, of the Official Methods Of Analysis of AOAC International, 20th Edition (2016). Samples were combusted and nitrogen gas is measured using a combustion nitrogen analyzer (Dumas). Nitrogen was multiplied by 6.25 to calculate % protein. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and untreated control (seed treated not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of this Example. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and formulation control (seeds treated with a formulation not comprising an endophyte) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of Example 5.

[00405] Total Carbohydrate: Replicate seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described in Example 5. Analysis of carbohydrate was determined for replicate samples as a calculation according to the following formula:

$$\text{Total Carbohydrate} = 100\% - \% (\text{Protein} + \text{Ash} + \text{Fat} + \text{Moisture} + \text{Fiber})$$

The % Protein, % Ash, % Fat, % Moisture, % Fiber was determined according to the methods described in this Example. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and formulation control (seeds treated with a formulation not comprising an endophyte) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of Example 5. The percent carbohydrate composition of endophyte treated soy seeds and formulation controls are shown in Figure 10 and Table 16.

Table 16: Average total carbohydrates as % of soybean seed composition for seeds produced by endophyte treated and formulation control plants.

Treatment	mean	Std Dev	Std Error	% over Formulation
Formulation	29.75	1.11	0.20	0.00
MIC-14715	30.90	0.78	0.25	3.87
MIC-78123	31.37	0.50	0.16	5.44
MIC-19621	31.64	0.84	0.26	6.34
MIC-89612	29.13	1.16	0.21	-2.08

MIC-33228	29.16	1.07	0.24	-1.99
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[00406] Total Calories: Replicate seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described in Example 5. Analysis of Calories was determined for replicate samples as a calculation according to the following formula:

$$\text{Total Calories} = (\text{Calories from protein}) + (\text{Calories from carbohydrate}) + (\text{Calories from fat})$$

Where Calories from protein are calculated as 4 Calories per gram of protein, Calories from carbohydrate are calculated as 4 Calories per gram of carbohydrate, and Calories from fat are calculated as 9 Calories per gram of fat. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and untreated control (seed treated not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of this Example. Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and formulation control (seeds treated with a formulation not comprising an endophyte) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of Example 5.

[00407] Total digestible nutrients: Replicate seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described above in this Example. Total digestible nutrients (TDN) was determined for replicate samples as a calculation according to the following formula:

$$\text{TDN} = 81.41 - (0.48 * \text{ADF})$$

Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and untreated control (seed treated not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation) were calculated for seeds produced by the methods of this Example. The percent total digestible nutrient composition of endophyte treated corn seeds and untreated controls are shown in Figure 5 and Table 17.

Table 17: Average total digestible nutrients content as % of corn seed composition for seeds produced by endophyte treated and untreated control plants.

Treatment	mean	Std Dev	Std Error	% over NT
Untreated control (NT)	79.78	0.74	0.18	0.00
MIC-38013	79.51	0.69	0.17	-0.34
MIC-93265	80.21	0.51	0.13	0.54
MIC-54707	79.95	0.83	0.21	0.21

[00408] Net energy: Replicate seed samples from harvested plants were obtained as described above in this Example. Net energy was determined for replicate samples as a calculation according to the following formula:

$$\text{Net energy (Mcal/lb)} = (\text{TDN \%} \times 0.01114) - 0.054$$

Mean percent changes between the treatment (endophyte-treated seed) and untreated control (seed treated not heterologously disposed with a treatment formulation) were calculated. The net energy composition of endophyte treated corn seeds and untreated controls are shown in Figure 9 and Table 18.

Table 18: Average net energy content (Mcal/lb) of corn seed produced by endophyte treated and untreated control plants.

Treatment	mean	Std Dev	Std Error	% over NT
Untreated control (NT)	0.87	0.01	0.00	0.00
MIC-38013	0.87	0.01	0.00	-0.64
MIC-93265	0.88	0.01	0.00	0.93
MIC-54707	0.88	0.01	0.00	0.43

[00409] Having illustrated and described the principles of the present invention, it should be apparent to persons skilled in the art that the invention can be modified in arrangement and detail without departing from such principles. It is to be understood that while the invention has been described in conjunction with the detailed description thereof, the foregoing description is intended to illustrate and not limit the scope of the invention, which is defined by the scope of the appended claims. Other embodiments, advantages, and modifications are within the scope of the following claims.

WE CLAIM:

1. A method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a soybean plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a soybean plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the soybean plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
3. The method of Claim 2, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.
4. The method of Claim 2, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.
5. The method of Claim 1, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
6. The method of Claim 5, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25.
7. An animal feed derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of any of Claims 1-6.
8. A soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of any of Claims 1-4.
9. A human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of any of Claims 1-6.
10. An industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the method of any of Claims 1-6.
11. A method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a corn plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a corn plant element in an amount effective to

- alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
12. The method of Claim 11, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
 13. The method of Claim 12, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.
 14. The method of Claim 11, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
 15. The method of Claim 14, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.
 16. The method of Claim 11, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
 17. The method of Claim 16, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 and 19.
 18. An animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of any of Claims 11-17.
 19. A human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of any of Claims 11-17.
 20. An industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the method of any of Claims 11-17.
 21. The industrial product of Claim 20, wherein the product is ethanol.
 22. A method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a wheat plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a wheat plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

23. The method of Claim 22, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
24. The method of Claim 23, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 and 23.
25. The method of Claim 23, wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.
26. An animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of any of Claims 22-25.
27. A human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of any of Claims 22-25.
28. An industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the method of any of Claims 22-25.
29. A method of modulating the composition of a seed produced by a cotton plant, comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to a cotton plant element in an amount effective to alter the composition of the seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
30. The method of Claim 29, wherein the seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
31. The method of Claim 30, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, and 37.
32. An animal feed derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of any of Claims 29-31.
33. A human food product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of any of Claims 29-31.
34. An industrial product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the method of any of Claims 29-31.

35. The method of any of Claims 1, 11, 22 or 29, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
36. The method of any of Claims 1, 11, 22 or 29, wherein the plant element is modified.
37. A synthetic composition, comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
38. The synthetic composition of Claim 37, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
39. The synthetic composition of Claim 38, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 16, 17, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33.
40. The synthetic composition of Claim 38, wherein the endophyte is a *Curvularia spicifera* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. NRRL-67467, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase fat composition of a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.
41. The synthetic composition of Claim 37, wherein the seed exhibits an increase in carbohydrate composition as compared to a reference soybean plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
42. The synthetic composition of Claim 41, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 20, 21, 24, and 25. .
43. An animal feed derived from the soybean seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 37-42.
44. A soybean for oil extraction comprising the modulated soybean seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 37-42.
45. A human food product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 37-42.
46. An industrial product derived from the modulated soybean seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 37-42.

47. A synthetic composition, comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference corn plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
48. The synthetic composition of Claim 47, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
49. The synthetic composition of Claim 48, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.
50. The synthetic composition of Claim 47, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
51. The synthetic composition of Claim 50, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.
52. The synthetic composition of Claim 47, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in total digestible nutrients and a decrease in acid detergent fiber as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
53. The synthetic composition of Claim 52, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 18 or 19.
54. An animal feed derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 47-53.
55. A human food product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 47-53.
56. An industrial product derived from the modulated corn seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 47-53.
57. The industrial product of Claim 56, wherein the product is ethanol.
58. A synthetic composition, comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering

the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference wheat plant element not further comprising the endophyte.

59. The synthetic composition of Claim 58, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in fat composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
60. The synthetic composition of Claim 59, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 22 or 23.
61. The synthetic composition of Claim 59, wherein the endophyte is an *Enterobacter cowanii* as deposited under NRRL Culture Deposit No. as NRRL-B67465, or a modified endophyte derived from the deposit that retains the ability to increase in fat composition in a seed produced by a plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte.
62. An animal feed derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 58-61.
63. A human food product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 58-61.
64. An industrial product derived from the modulated wheat seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 58-61.
65. A synthetic composition, comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte heterologously disposed to the plant element, wherein the endophyte is capable of altering the composition of seed produced by the plant element relative to seed produced by a reference cotton plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
66. The synthetic composition of Claim 65, wherein the seed produced from the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte exhibits an increase in ash composition as compared to a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
67. The method of Claim 66, wherein the endophyte comprises a polynucleotide sequence that is at least 97% identical to a polynucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs. 34, 35, 36, or 37.
68. An animal feed derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 65-67.
69. A human food product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 65-67.

70. An industrial product derived from the modulated cotton seed produced by the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte of any of Claims 65-67.
71. The synthetic composition of any of Claims 37, 47, 58 or 65, wherein the plant element heterologously disposed with the endophyte is capable of producing an average seed yield at least 97% of the average seed yield of a reference plant element not further comprising the endophyte.
72. The synthetic composition of any of Claims 37, 47, 58 or 65, wherein the plant element is modified.

FIGURE 1A

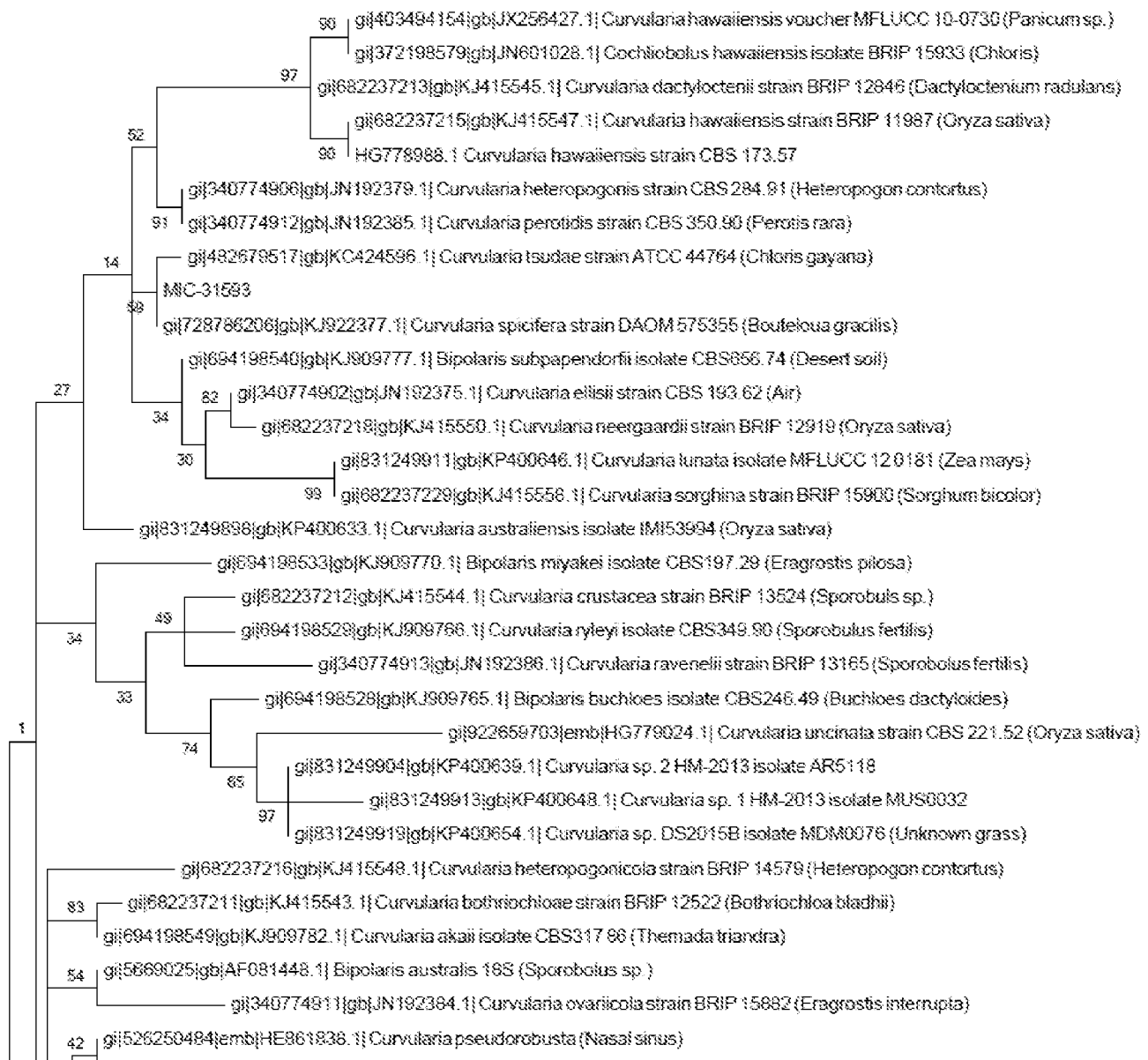


FIGURE 1B

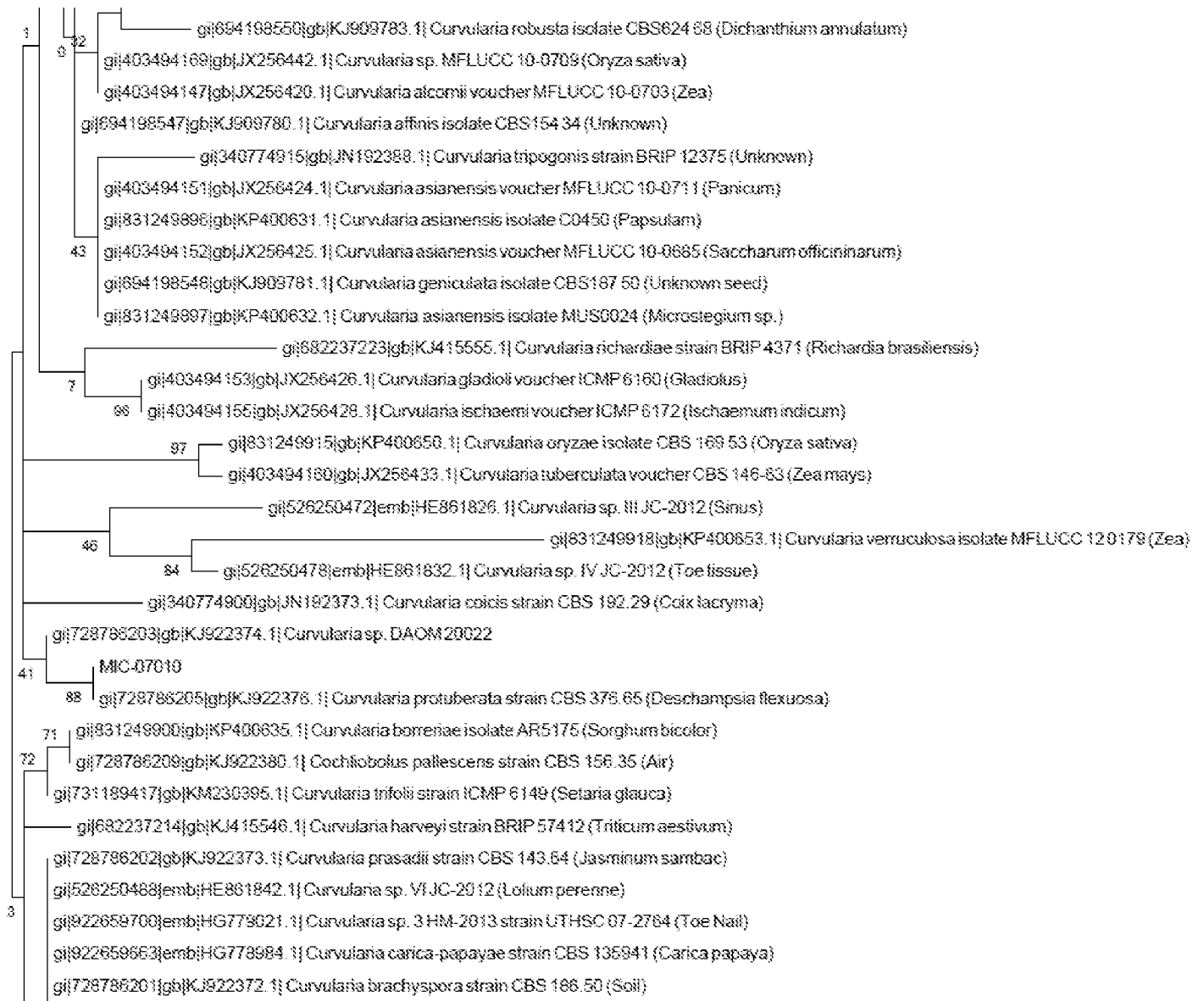


FIGURE 2

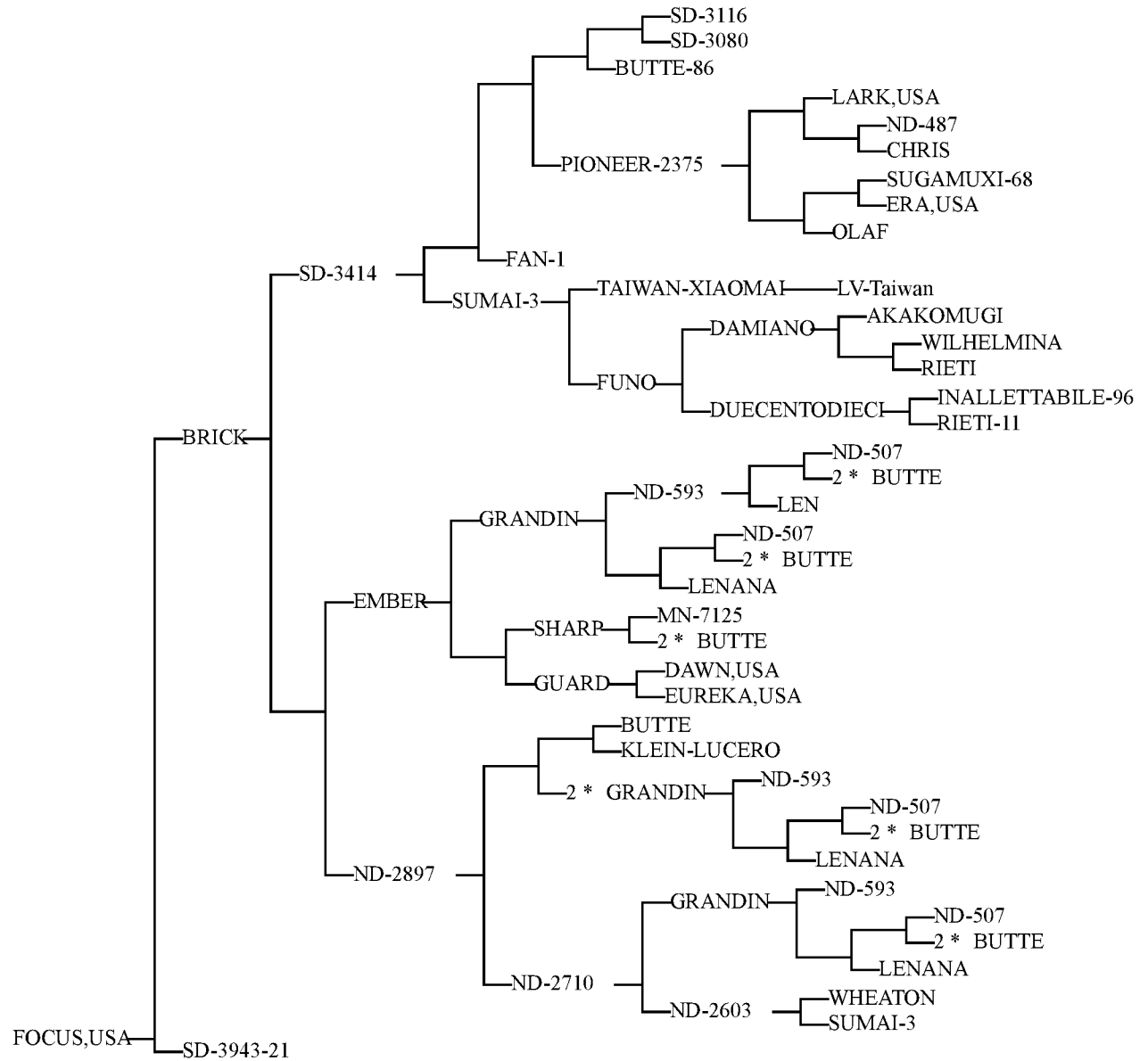


FIGURE 3

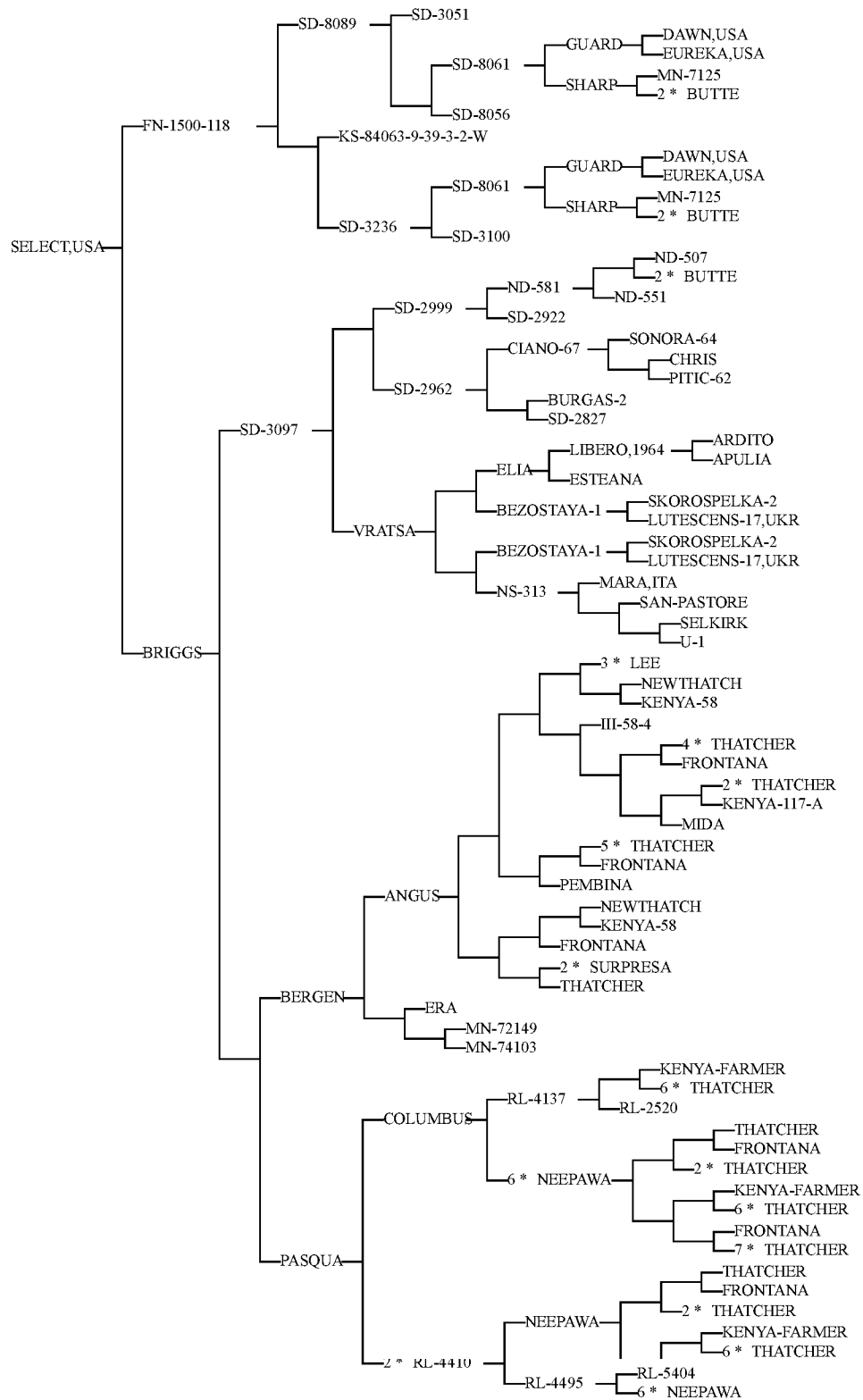


FIGURE 4

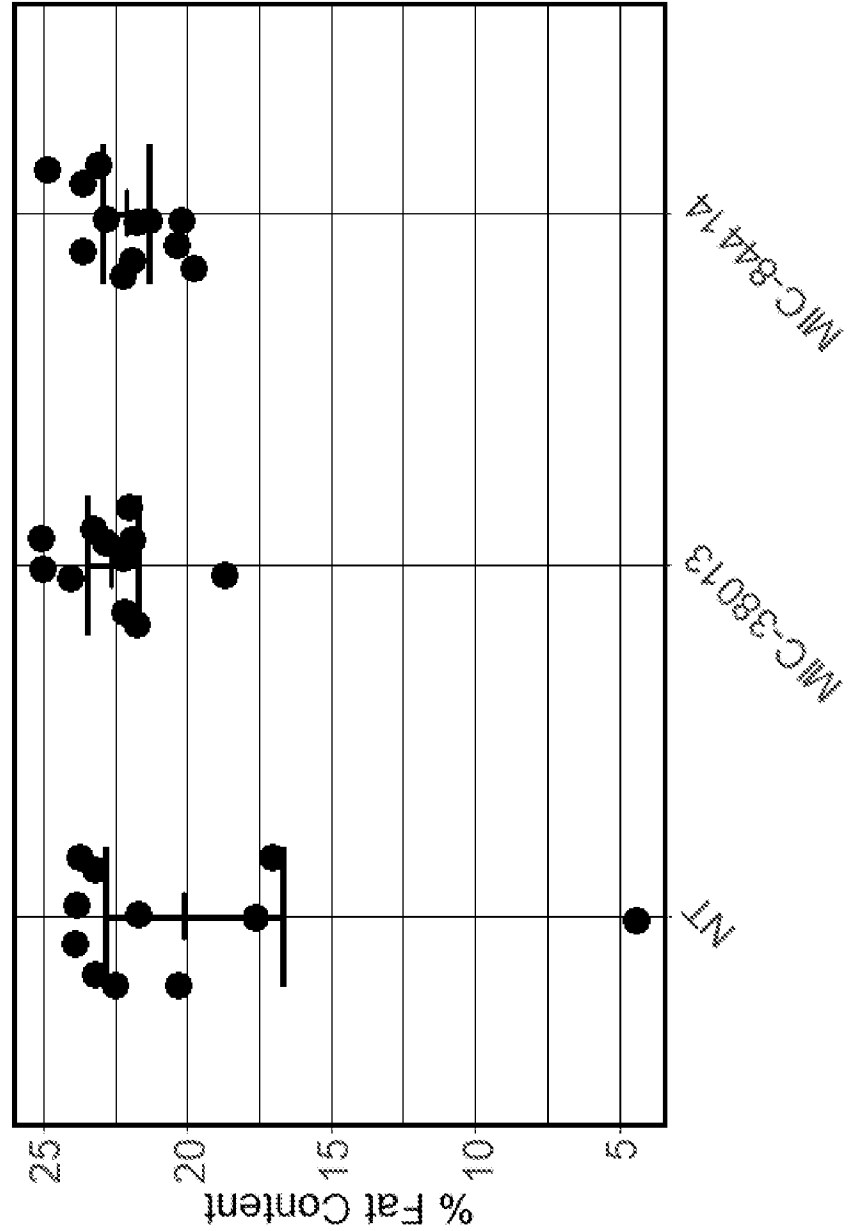


FIGURE 5

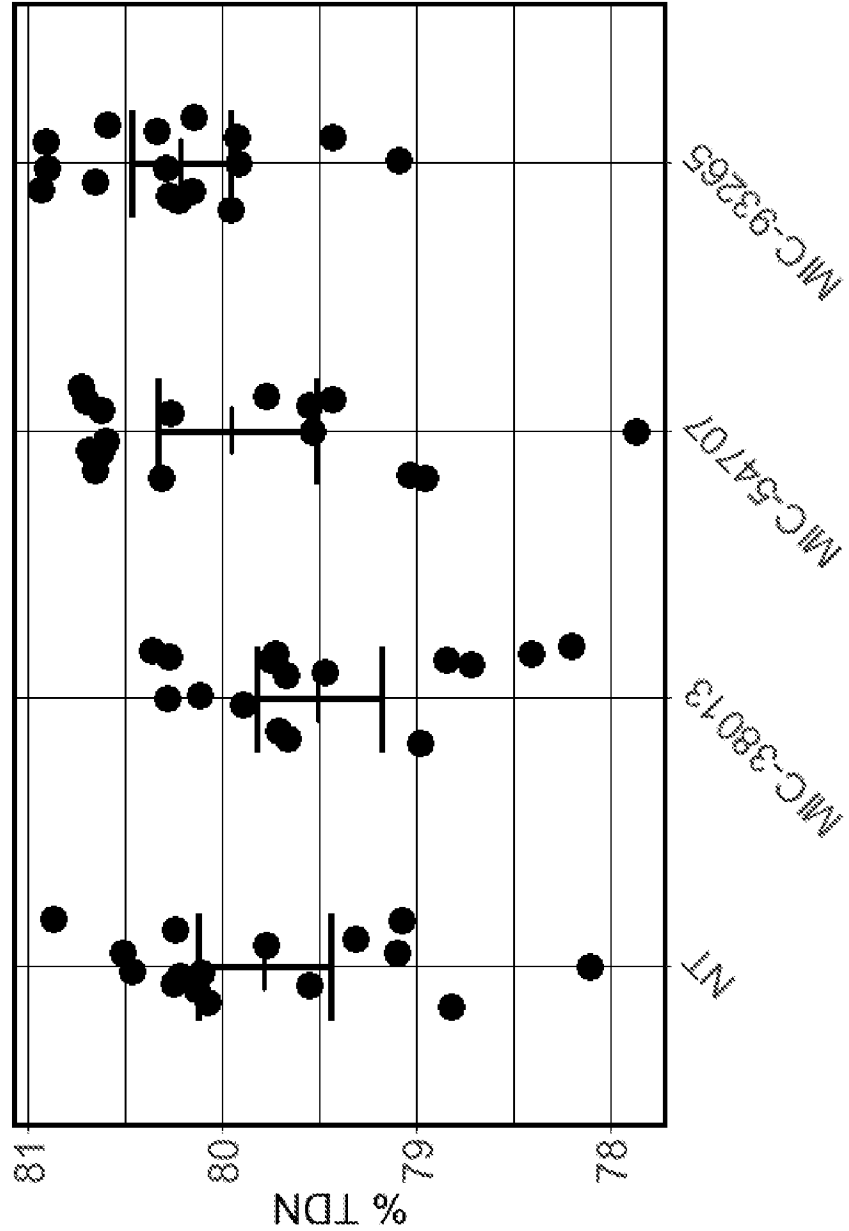


FIGURE 6

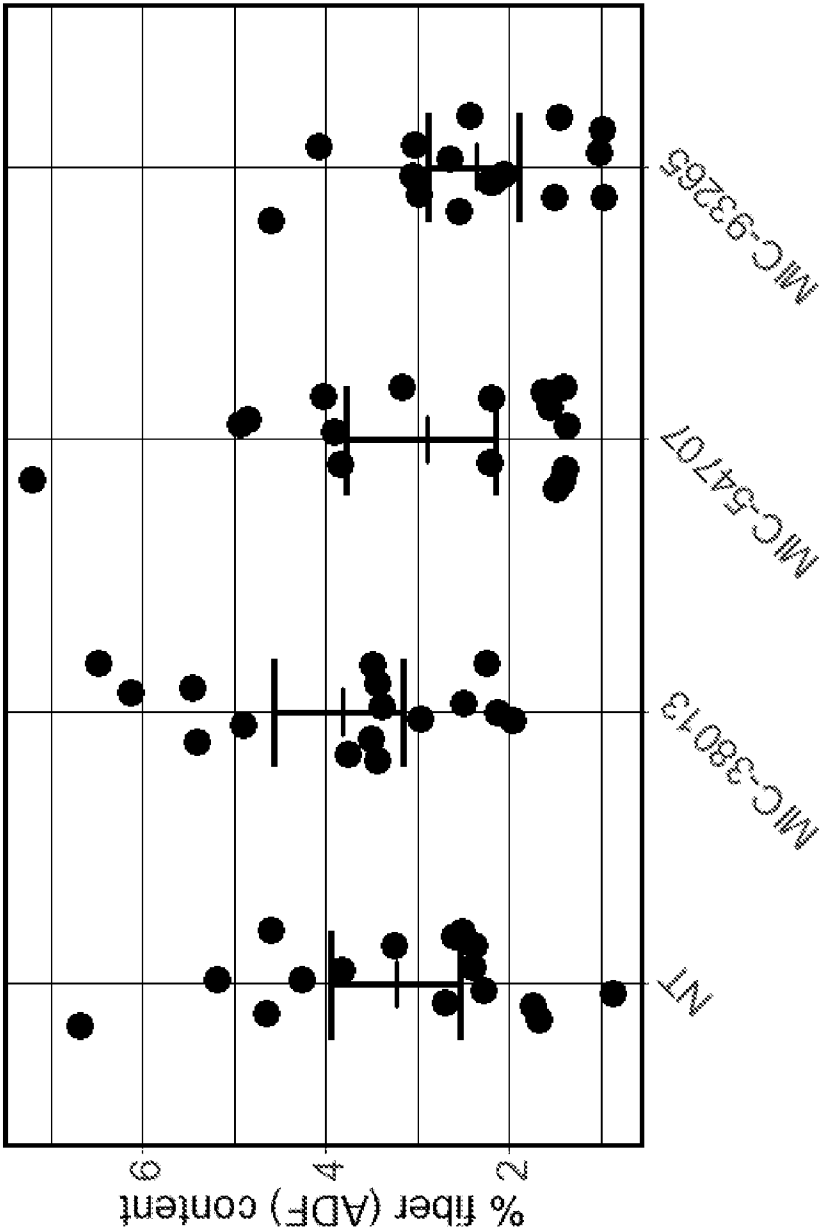


FIGURE 7

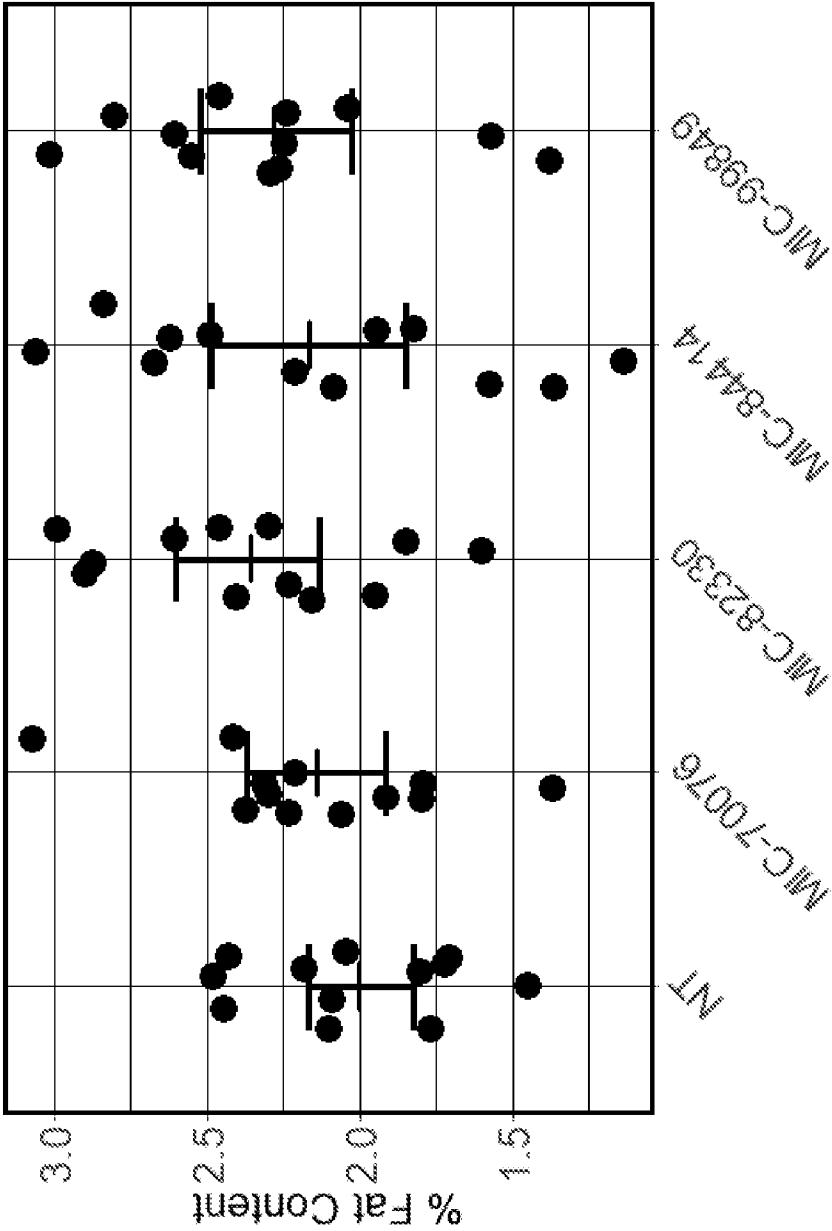


FIGURE 8

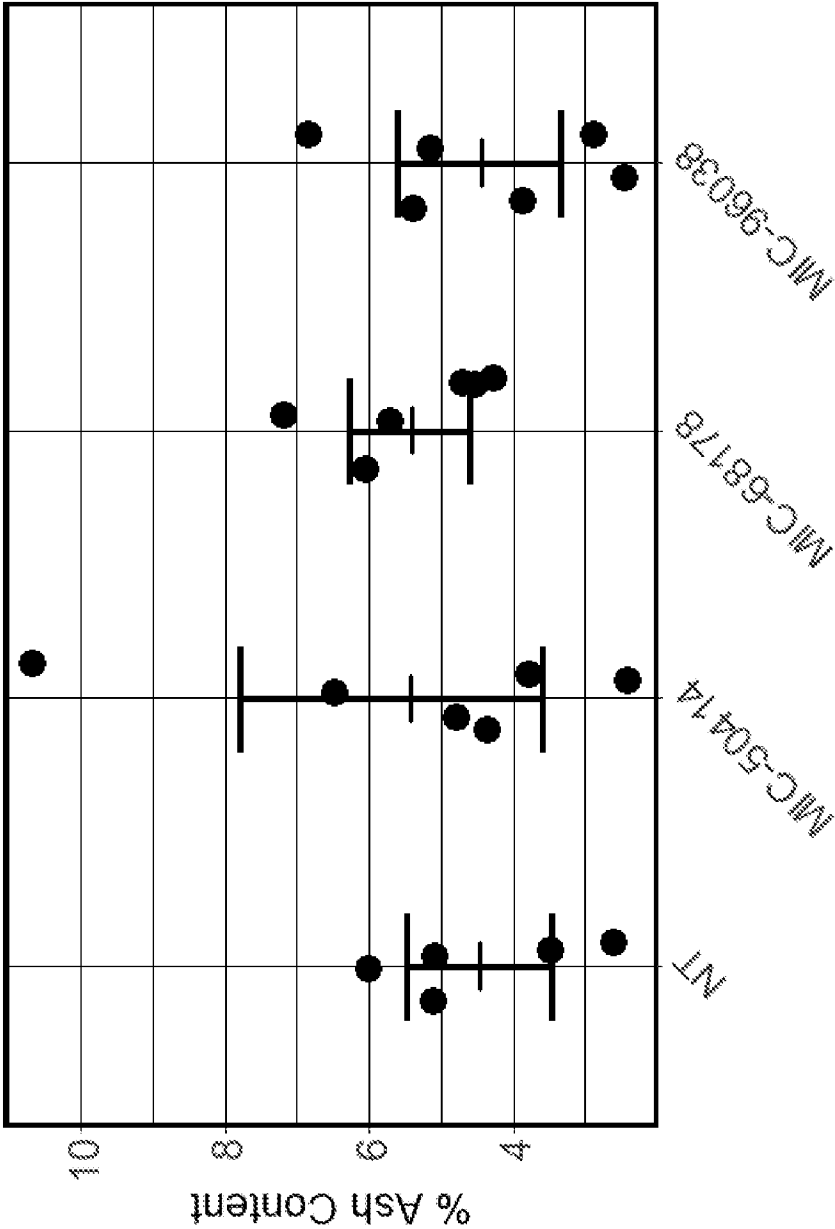


FIGURE 9

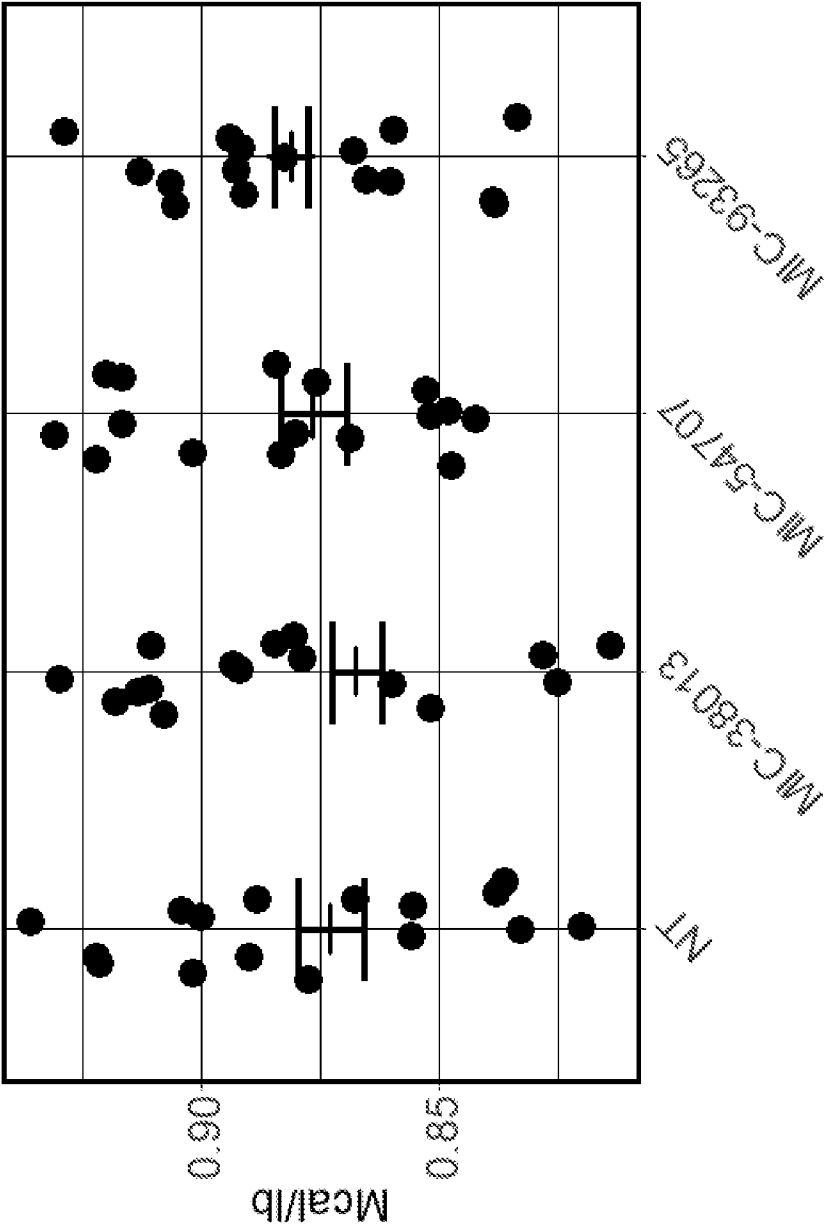
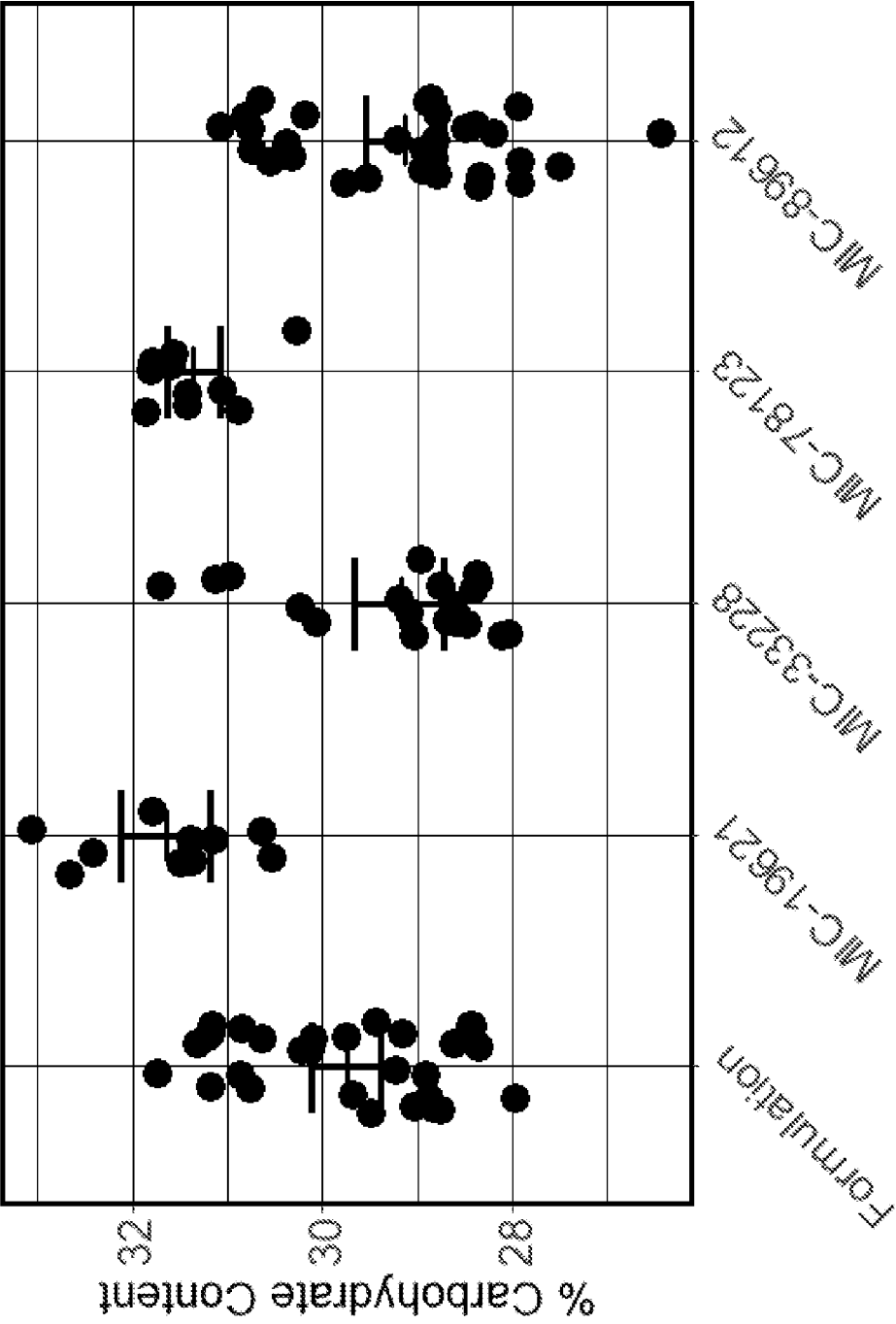


FIGURE 10



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/US2017/064292

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
INV. A01H17/00 A01H3/00
ADD.

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
A01H

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, BIOSIS, Sequence Search

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 2015/200902 A2 (SYMBIOTA LLC [US]) 30 December 2015 (2015-12-30) page 4, lines 6-8 page 6, lines 12-14 page 8, line 1 page 48, lines 5-7	1
X	----- WO 2016/179047 A1 (INDIGO AGRICULTURE INC [US]) 10 November 2016 (2016-11-10) page 46, paragraph 0077 page 58, paragraph 00123 claims 10-14, 30, 47; sequence 560 -/--	1-3, 37-39



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

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"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

12 February 2018

Date of mailing of the international search report

11/05/2018

Name and mailing address of the ISA/

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Bilang, Jürg

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/US2017/064292

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
	-& DATABASE Geneseq [Online] 29 December 2016 (2016-12-29), "Streptomyces sp. derived 16S ribosomal RNA (16S rRNA), SEQ ID 560.", XP002778058, retrieved from EBI accession no. GSN:BDI40423 Database accession no. BDI40423 sequence -----	
X	US 2016/174570 A1 (VUJANOVIC VLADIMIR [CA] ET AL) 23 June 2016 (2016-06-23) paragraphs [0008], [0012], [0019], [0023], [0239]; sequence 6 -----	36-39, 43-46
A	GABOR J. BETHLENFALVAY ET AL: "Mycorrhizal fungi effects on nutrient composition and yield of soybean seeds", JOURNAL OF PLANT NUTRITION, vol. 20, no. 4-5, 1 April 1997 (1997-04-01), pages 581-591, XP055449128, US ISSN: 0190-4167, DOI: 10.1080/01904169709365276 the whole document -----	1-4,7-10
X,P	WO 2016/200987 A1 (INDIGO AGRICULTURE INC [US]) 15 December 2016 (2016-12-15) paragraphs [0018], [0020], [0193]; sequence 12 & DATABASE Geneseq [Online] 9 February 2017 (2017-02-09), "Streptomyces neyagawaensis 16S ribosomal RNA (16S rRNA), SEQ ID 12.", retrieved from EBI accession no. GSN:BDK88530 Database accession no. BDK88530 sequence -----	1-3, 7-10, 37-39, 43-46

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/US2017/064292

Box No. II Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This international search report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to parts of the international application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful international search can be carried out, specifically:
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box No. III Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 3 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fees, this Authority did not invite payment of additional fees.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this international search report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. ☒ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this international search report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

2-4, 38-40(completely); 1, 7-10, 35-37, 43-46, 71, 72(partially)

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest and, where applicable, the payment of a protest fee.
- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest but the applicable protest fee was not paid within the time limit specified in the invitation.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. claims: 2-4, 38-40(completely); 1, 7-10, 35-37, 43-46, 71, 72(partially)

Method of modulating seed composition of soybean comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to the soybean plant; products derived from the seed; compositions comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte; wherein the endophyte has a polynucleotide which is at least 97% identical to a sequence selected from SEQ ID NO: 16, 17, 26-33, and where the seed has an increased fat composition

2. claims: 5, 6, 41, 42(completely); 1, 7-10, 35-37, 43-46, 71, 72(partially)

Method of modulating seed composition of soybean comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to the soybean plant; products derived from the seed; compositions comprising a soybean plant element and an endophyte; wherein the endophyte has a polynucleotide which is at least 97% identical to a sequence selected from SEQ ID NO: 20, 21, 24, 25, and where the seed has an increase in carbohydrate composition

3. claims: 11-21, 47-57(completely); 35, 36, 71, 72(partially)

Method of modulating seed composition of corn comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to the corn plant; products derived from the seed; compositions comprising a corn plant element and an endophyte

4. claims: 22-28, 58-64(completely); 35, 36, 71, 72(partially)

Method of modulating seed composition of wheat comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to the wheat plant; products derived from the seed; compositions comprising a wheat plant element and an endophyte

5. claims: 29-34, 65-70(completely); 35, 36, 71, 72(partially)

Method of modulating seed composition of cotton comprising heterologously disposing an endophyte to the cotton plant; products derived from the seed; compositions comprising a cotton plant element and an endophyte

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/US2017/064292

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