## **Instant Sunscreen for Plants**

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Instant sunscreen for plants, reported in ScienceNOW, 21 January 2005. Plants absorb light to power the process of photosynthesis, but if there is too much light the plants can absorb more energy than they can use, and the excess energy causes the formation of highly reactive molecules that can damage the plant cells. Scientists at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and University of California, Berkeley have recorded chemical reactions in leaves as they absorb and use sunlight. They found excess light causes the formation of a molecule named zeaxanthin. This molecule combines with chlorophyll (the green pigment that absorbs light) in a reaction that disperses the excess energy as heat. This process is very sensitive to changing light conditions and turns itself off when clouds pass overhead. Robert Blankensop, a biochemist at Arizona State University commented that this study could be helpful for developing artificial photosynthesis systems that harness solar energy more efficiently.

**Editorial Comment**: No-one doubts it will require intelligent creative scientists and engineers to make use of this discovery for making more efficient solar panels. Therefore, no-one should doubt that the plant system was designed by a smarter Creator. (Ref. design, engineering, plants)