TOMATO PLANT CHEMICALS CAUSE CATERPILLAR CANNIBALISM

By exposing tomato plants to methyl jasmonate, a compound they release as a response to danger from pests, the plants were triggered to produce toxins. These in turn caused caterpillars feeding on the plant to turn on and eat dead caterpillar larvae sooner than usual.

MINIMUM ATMOSPHERIC LEAD LEVELS WERE DURING BLACK DEATH

Data from an ice core shows that minimum atmospheric lead levels have only occurred once in the past 2000 years – during the Black Death pandemic in the 1300s. It’s thought that this is due to lead mining virtually stopping during the period of the plague.

BIG BANG THEORY INSPIRES BaZnGa COMPOUND

Scientists inspired by a catchphrase from the Big Bang Theory, “Bazinga”, realised there was no known compound containing barium, zinc, and gallium. Consequently they decided to make it – though they found that the material had no remarkable properties.

ACHILLES’ HEEL OF TREATMENT RESISTANT CANCERS FOUND

Cancer can become resistant to treatments such as chemotherapy. New research shows that cancers which gain this resistance through changes in gene expression can be killed by targeting an enzyme which prevents iron-induced cell death (ferroptosis).

ANOTHER METHOD TO HELP SPOT COUNTERFEIT WHISKY

Weeks after the publication of a method which used the fluorescence of solutions to detect counterfeit whisky, a different method using total reflection X-ray fluorescence (TRXF) has been published. It uses a handheld device and only needs microlitres of solution for a test.

Links to articles & studies for the featured stories are provided at: https://goo.gl/6P79wz