

8, 9 & 11 for PC010 and 2, 5, 8, 9 & 12 for PC027. The percentage of surviving larvae was calculated relative to day 0 (start of assay).

[0030] FIG. 3-PC: Effects of *E. coli* strain AB309-105 expressing dsRNA target PC010 on survival of larvae of the mustard leaf beetle, *P. cochleariae*, over time. Data points for each treatment represent average mortality values from 3 different replicates. Error bars represent standard deviations. Target 10: SEQ ID NO: 488

[0031] FIG. 1-EV: Survival of *E. varivestis* larvae on bean leaf discs treated with dsRNA. Neonate larvae were fed bean leaf discs treated with 25 μ l of topically-applied solution of 1 μ g/ μ l dsRNA (targets or gfp control). After 2 days, the insects were transferred onto fresh dsRNA-treated leaf discs. At day 4, larvae from one treatment were collected and placed in a plastic box containing fresh untreated bean foliage. The insects were assessed for mortality at days 2, 4, 6, 8 & 10. The percentage of surviving larvae was calculated relative to day 0 (start of assay). Target 5: SEQ ID NO: 576; target 10: SEQ ID NO: 586; target 15: SEQ ID NO: 591; target 16: SEQ ID NO: 596; gfp dsRNA: SEQ ID NO: 235.

[0032] FIG. 2-EV: Effects of ingested target dsRNAs on survival of *E. varivestis* adults and resistance to snap bean foliar insect damage. (a) Survival of *E. varivestis* adults on bean leaf treated with dsRNA. Adults were fed bean leaf discs treated with 75 μ l of topically-applied solution of 0.1 μ g/ μ l dsRNA (targets or gfp control). After 24 hours, the insects were transferred onto fresh dsRNA-treated leaf discs. After a further 24 hours, adults from one treatment were collected and placed in a plastic box containing potted fresh untreated whole bean plants. The insects were assessed for mortality at days 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, & 11. The percentage of surviving adults was calculated relative to day 0 (start of assay). Target 10: SEQ ID NO: 586; target 15: SEQ ID NO: 591; target 16: SEQ ID NO: 596; gfp dsRNA: SEQ ID NO: 235. (b) Resistance to bean foliar damage caused by adults of the *E. varivestis* by dsRNA. Whole plants containing insects from one treatment (see (a)) were checked visually for foliar damage on day 9. (i) target 10; (ii) target 15; (iii) target 16; (iv) gfp dsRNA; (v) untreated.

[0033] FIG. 1-TC: Survival of *T. castaneum* larvae on artificial diet treated with dsRNA of target 14. Neonate larvae were fed diet based on a flour/milk mix with 1 mg dsRNA target 14. Control was water (without dsRNA) in diet. Four replicates of 10 first instar larvae per replicate were performed for each treatment. The insects were assessed for survival as average percentage means at days 6, 17, 31, 45 and 60. The percentage of surviving larvae was calculated relative to day 0 (start of assay). Error bars represent standard deviations. Target TC014: SEQ ID NO: 878.

[0034] FIG. 1-MP: Effect of ingested target 27 dsRNA on the survival of *Myzus persicae* nymphs. First instars were placed in feeding chambers containing 50 μ l of liquid diet with 2 μ g/ μ l dsRNA (target 27 or gfp dsRNA control). Per treatment, 5 feeding chambers were set up with 10 instars in each feeding chamber. Number of survivors were assessed at 8 days post start of bioassay. Error bars represent standard deviations. Target MP027: SEQ ID NO: 1061; gfp dsRNA: SEQ ID NO: 235.

[0035] FIG. 1-NL: Survival of *Nilaparvata lugens* on liquid artificial diet treated with dsRNA. Nymphs of the first to second larval stage were fed diet supplemented with 2 mg/ml solution of dsRNA targets in separate bioassays: (a) NL002, NL003, NL005, NL010; (b) NL009, NL016; (c) NL014, NL018; (d) NL013, NL015, NL021. Insect survival on targets

were compared to diet only and diet with gfp dsRNA control at same concentration. Diet was replaced with fresh diet containing dsRNA every two days. The number of surviving insects were assessed every day

[0036] FIG. 2-NL: Survival of *Nilaparvata lugens* on liquid artificial diet treated with different concentrations of target dsRNA NL002. Nymphs of the first to second larval stage were fed diet supplemented with 1, 0.2, 0.08, and 0.04 mg/ml (final concentration) of NL002. Diet was replaced with fresh diet containing dsRNA every two days. The numbers of surviving insects were assessed every day.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0037] The present invention provides a means for controlling pest infestations by exposing a pest to a target coding sequence that post-transcriptionally represses or inhibits a requisite biological function in the pest. Following exposure to a target sequence, the target forms a the dsRNA corresponding to part or whole of an essential pest gene and causes down regulation of the pest target via RNA interference (RNAi). As a result of the down regulation of mRNA, the dsRNA prevents expression of the target pest protein and hence causes death, growth arrest, or sterility of the pest.

[0038] The present invention finds application in any area where it is desirable to inhibit viability, growth, development or reproduction of a pest, or to decrease pathogenicity or infectivity of a pest. Practical applications include, but are not limited to, (1) protecting plants against pest infestation; (2) pharmaceutical or veterinary use in humans and animals (for example to control, treat, or prevent insect infections in humans and animals); (3) protecting materials against damage caused by pests; and (4) protecting perishable materials (such as foodstuffs, seed, etc.) against damage caused by pests.

[0039] Administering or exposing a double stranded ribonucleic acid molecule to a pest results in one or more of the following attributes: reduction in feeding by the pest, reduction in viability of the pest, death of the pest, inhibition of differentiation and development of the pest, absence of or reduced capacity for sexual reproduction by the pest, muscle formation, juvenile hormone formation, juvenile hormone regulation, ion regulation and transport, maintenance of cell membrane potential, amino acid biosynthesis, amino acid degradation, sperm formation, pheromone synthesis, pheromone sensing, antennae formation, wing formation, leg formation, development and differentiation, egg formation, larval maturation, digestive enzyme formation, haemolymph synthesis, haemolymph maintenance, neurotransmission, cell division, energy metabolism, respiration, apoptosis, and any component of a eukaryotic cells' cytoskeletal structure, such as, for example, actins and tubulins. Any one or any combination of these attributes can result in an effective inhibition of pest infestation.

[0040] All technical terms employed in this specification are commonly used in biochemistry, molecular biology and agriculture; hence, they are understood by those skilled in the field to which this invention belongs. Those technical terms can be found, for example in: MOLECULAR CLONING: A LABORATORY MANUAL, 3rd ed., vol. 1-3, ed. Sambrook and Russel, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press, Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y., 2001; CURRENT PROTOCOLS IN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY, ed. Ausubel et al., Greene Publishing Associates and Wiley-Interscience, New York, 1988 (with periodic updates); SHORT PROTOCOLS IN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY: A COMPENDIUM OF METHODS