23. The method of claim **21**, wherein the plant cell further comprises a polynucleotide sequence encoding a pesticidal agent selected from the group consisting of a patatin, a *Bacillus thuringiensis* insecticidal protein, a *Xenorhabdus* insecticidal protein, a *Photorhabdus* insecticidal protein, a *Bacillus* laterosporus insecticidal protein, and a *Bacillus sphaericus* insecticidal protein.

24. The method of claim **23** wherein said *Bacillus thuringiensis* insecticidal protein is selected from the group consisting of a Cry1, a Cry3, a TIC851, a CryET70, a Cry22, a TIC901, a TIC201, a TIC407, a TIC417, a binary insecticidal protein CryET33 and CryET34, a binary insecticidal protein CryET80 and CryET76, a binary insecticidal protein TIC100 and TIC101, a combination of the insecticidal proteins ET29 or ET37 with insecticidal proteins TIC810 or TIC812, and a binary insecticidal protein PS149B1.

25. The method of claim **21**, wherein the target sequence encodes a protein, the predicted function of which is selected from the group consisting of muscle formation, juvenile hormone formation, juvenile hormone regulation, ion regulation and transport, digestive enzyme synthesis, 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, and apoptosis.

26. The method of claim **21**, wherein said coleopteran pest is a *Diabrotica* spp. is selected from the group consisting of *Diabrotica virgifera, Diabrotica virgifera virgifera, Diabrotica virgifera zea, Diabrotica balteata, Diabrotica barberi, Diabrotica viridula, Diabrotica speciosa*, and *Diabrotica undecimpunctata.*

27. The method of claim **21**, wherein the polynucleotide functions upon ingestion by the pest to suppress a gene that performs a function essential for insect survival, said function being selected from the group consisting of feeding by the pest, pest cell apoptosis, cell differentiation and development, capacity or desire for sexual reproduction, muscle formation, muscle twitching, muscle contraction, 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, egg formation, larval maturation, digestive enzyme formation, haemolymph synthesis, haemolymph maintenance, neurotransmission, larval stage transition, pupation, emergence from pupation, cell division, energy metabolism, respiration, and formation of cytoskeletal structure.

28. A method for improving the yield of a crop produced from a crop plant subjected to insect pest infestation, said method comprising the steps of,

a) introducing a polynucleotide according to claim **1** into said crop plant,

b) cultivating the crop plant to allow the expression of said polynucleotide, wherein expression of the polynucleotide inhibits feeding by insects pests and loss of yield due to pest infestation.

29. The method of claim **28**, wherein expression of the polynucleotide produces an RNA molecule that suppresses at least a first target gene in an insect pest that has ingested a portion of said crop plant, wherein the target gene performs at least one essential function selected from the group consisting of feeding by the pest, viability of the pest, pest cell apoptosis, differentiation and development of the pest or any pest cell, sexual reproduction by the pest, muscle formation, muscle twitching, muscle contraction, juvenile hormone formation and/or reduction, 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, egg formation, larval maturation, digestive enzyme formation, haemolymph synthesis, haemolymph maintenance, neurotransmission, larval stage transition, pupation, emergence from pupation, cell division, energy metabolism, respiration, cytoskeletal structure synthesis and maintenance, nucleotide metabolism, nitrogen metabolism, water use, water retention, and sensory perception.

30. The method of claim **28**, wherein the insect pest is a corn rootworm pest selected from the group consisting of *Diabrotica undecimpunctata howardi* (Southern Corn Rootworm (SCR)), *Diabrotica virgifera virgifera* (Western Corn Rootworm (WCR)), *Diabrotica barberi* (Northern Corn Rootworm (NCR)), *Diabrotica virgifera zea* (Mexican Corn Rootworm (MCR)), *Diabrotica balteata* (Brazilian Corn Rootworm (BZR)), *Diabrotica viridula* (Brazilian Corn Rootworm (BZR)), and *Diabrotica speciosa* (Brazilian Corn Rootworm (BZR)).

31. A method for improving the drought tolerance of a crop produced from a crop plant subjected to insect pest infestation, said method comprising the steps of,

a) introducing a polynucleotide according to claim **1** into said crop plant,

b) cultivating the crop plant to allow the expression of said polynucleotide, wherein expression of the polynucleotide inhibits feeding by insects pests and loss of drought tolerance due to pest infestation.

32. A method of producing a commodity product comprising obtaining a plant according to claim **12** or a part thereof, and preparing a commodity product from the plant or part thereof.

33. A method of producing food or feed, comprising obtaining a plant according to claim **12** or a part thereof and preparing food or feed from said plant or part thereof.

34. The method of claim **33**, wherein the food or feed is defined as oil, meal, protein, starch, flour or silage.

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