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Change at the Helm of the Leibniz Institute of Plant Biochemistry

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Professor Steffen Abel will represent the Leibniz Institute of Plant Biochemistry as its new managing director.

On August 01, 2017, [Professor Steffen Abel](#) will take the leadership role at the Leibniz Institute of Plant Biochemistry in Halle (Germany). On a rotational basis, Professor Abel will take over as new managing director from Professor Ludger Wessjohann who held this position as chairman of the board of directors since 2010.

Steffen Abel studied and received his doctorate at the Martin Luther University in Halle-Wittenberg (Germany). After research fellowships in Hungary and after 18 years as scientist and teacher at the University of California (USA), the biochemist returned to Halle. In July of 2009, Steffen Abel established the Department of Molecular Signal Processing at the Leibniz Institute of Plant Biochemistry. This department fabulously integrated in the scientific concepts at the institute. The research topics in this department focus on the molecular signal pathways, which control the plant development from germination to ripening of the fruit while also adapting the plant physiology to the environmental conditions. In these complex growth processes, phytohormones such as auxin and jasmonate as well as subordinated chemical signals such as calcium ions play a central role. Elucidating the way plant hormones and other control substances exert their control in plants is the focus of research in Professor Steffen Abel's department. In other important projects in his department, scientists study the reactions of plants to nutrient deficiencies, metal toxicities and pathogens.

Professor Steffen Abel summarizes: "It was the right decision to return to Halle. The close collaboration between the Leibniz Institute of Plant Biochemistry and the Martin Luther University in the fields of biochemistry and the molecular plant sciences since Kurt Mothes established the institute has a long tradition and impressed me already in my student days. To me, it is an always present incentive as well as an obligation to bolster the international reputation of the Leibniz Institute of Plant Biochemistry with its four science departments and independent young scientist groups and to deepen the collaboration with the Martin Luther University and in



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Stiftung des öffentlichen Rechts

particular with members of the institutes on the Weinberg Campus.“

Contact:

[Prof. Dr. Steffen Abel](#)

Phone.: +49 (345) 5582 1200

sabel@ipb-halle.de