

基于纳米颗粒递送的dsRNA在农林植物病虫害防治中的应用

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摘要

随着全球森林和农作物病虫害问题的日益严重, 传统化学农药防治方法因其环境污染和生物抗性問題而受到公众的质疑。近年来, 越来越多的研究者将目光转向RNA干扰(RNAi)技术, 利用RNAi的特性控制农林植物病虫害, 并减少对环境的负面影响。本综述聚焦于RNAi技术的原理、外源性dsRNA的应用, 并分析目前面临的机遇和挑战。同时探讨纳米颗粒在dsRNA递送应用方面的研究进展, 如壳聚糖纳米颗粒(CNPs)、层状氢氧化物(LDH)和星形阳离子聚合物(SPC)等, 这些纳米颗粒可以有效保护dsRNA并提高其传递效率。这些研究为农林业可持续发展提供了新的解决方案, 有助于保护森林植被和提高农作物的产量与质量。

关键词

农林植物病虫害防治, RNA干扰, dsRNA, 纳米颗粒

The Application of Nanoparticle-Delivered dsRNA in Agricultural and Forestry Plant Pests and Diseases Control

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Abstract

With the increasing problems of pest and disease of global forests and crops, traditional chemical pesticide control methods are being questioned due to environmental pollution and biological resistance issues. However, recently, more researchers have turned to RNA interference (RNAi) technology, using the properties of RNAi to control plant pests and diseases, reducing the negative impact on the environments. This review focuses on the principles of RNAi technology, the applications of exogenous double-stranded RNA (dsRNA), while analyzing the associated opportunities and challenges. Additionally, we explored the research progress in nanoparticle delivery systems for dsRNA, such as chitosan nanoparticles (CNPs), layered double hydroxide (LDH), and star polycation (SPC), which effectively protect dsRNA and enhance its delivery efficiency. These studies provide innovative solutions for sustainable agricultural and forestry development, contributing to the preservation of forest and the improvement of crop yields and quality.

Keywords

Prevention and Control of Agricultural and Forestry Plant Diseases and Pests, RNA Interference, dsRNA, Nanoparticles

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1. 引言

森林覆盖了全球 31% 的陆地面积并储存着约 2960 亿吨的碳, 森林不仅是多数生物的栖息地, 还为人类社会提供着一系列的生态效益产品[1]。但由于气候变化及人类活动等因素的影响, 森林植被遭受到的病虫害胁迫比以前更为严重。另一方面, 病虫害也是一直制约着农作物健康生长和产量的最大因素之一。根据联合国粮食及农业组织(FAO)的估计, 害虫和病原体感染导致的作物产量损失约占世界每年潜在作物总产量的 20%~40% [2] [3]。然而目前防治植物病虫害最主要的方法是喷施化学药剂, 这种做法不仅容易对环境造成严重污染, 而且会导致生物多样性逐步丧失, 长时间喷施单一的化学药剂甚至会提高真菌和害虫等的农药抗性[4] [5]。此外, 长期接触化学农药的人容易罹患癌症、心脏病、呼吸系统和神经系统疾病等慢性疾病[6]。

近年来, 研究者们开始寻求一些绿色的植物病虫害防控措施, 如转基因植物[7]、生防菌剂[4] [8]和作物轮作[9]等。虽然这些方法在一定程度上可以减少化学农药的使用, 但是均存在着一定的局限性[10]-[12]。在此背景下, RNA 干扰(RNA interference, RNAi)技术, 如喷施诱导基因沉默(Spray-induced gene silencing, SIGS)技术, 因其环境友好性、高特异性、快速响应能力等特性, 成为一种极具潜力的植物保护措施。RNAi 技术通过向生物体直接施加靶向特定病原菌和昆虫的双链 RNA (double-stranded RNA, dsRNA), 触发目标生物体的 RNAi 机制, 抑制靶标病虫害的目标基因表达, 从而实现对靶标病虫害的特异性控制。与传统农药相比, RNAi 技术既能精准作用于目标生物, 减少对非目标生物的影响, 又可以有效避免因长期使用化学农药导致病虫害抗性增强的问题。RNAi 技术不仅在植物病虫害防治领域展现了广阔的应用前景[4] [8], 而且为实现农林业的可持续发展提供了新的解决方案。

2. RNAi 技术的原理及应用

RNAi 技术作为一种高效的基因沉默策略, 已成为农作物及林木抵御各种生物胁迫的重要手段之一[5]

[10][13]。它在促进植物生长发育以及增强植物对病毒、真菌、线虫和害虫等病原体的防御能力方面均扮演着至关重要的角色[7] [14]。RNAi 是细胞内基因的表达水平在 dsRNA 或小干扰 RNA (small interfering RNA, siRNA) 的作用下发生沉默下调的一种现象[15]。它通过特定的 dsRNA 激活, 实现对目的基因表达的精确调控[16]。首先, dsRNA 被核糖核酸酶 Dicer, 如 RNase-III 家族的酶, 切割成长度为 18~30 个核苷酸长度的小 RNA (sRNA), 其中包括 siRNA 和微 RNA (microRNA, miRNA) 等[15] [17]。这些 siRNA/miRNA 随后在细胞质内与 AGO 蛋白(Argonaute proteins)等因子结合, 形成 RNA 诱导的沉默复合体(RNA-induced silencing complex, RISC); RISC-siRNA 复合物/RISC-miRNA 复合物通过识别并切割与 guide 链(siRNA/miRNA 中的一条链)互补的靶标 mRNA, 或通过抑制蛋白质的合成来触发沉默反应[15] [18] [19]。在某些真核生物中, 这一沉默反应可以通过 RNA 依赖的 RNA 聚合酶(RNA-dependent RNA polymerase, RdRP)进一步放大, 将被切割的 mRNA 转化为次级 dsRNA, 从而增强并延续 RNAi 的效应。

目前, RNAi 除用作基因功能分析的研究工具和医疗干预手段外, 还被广泛用作植物病虫害管理的策略之一[5] [6] [9] [20], 主要针对真菌、病毒、节肢动物和线虫等。例如, 利用宿主诱导基因沉默技术(Host-induced gene silencing, HIGS)靶向南方根结线虫(*Meloidogyne incognita*) *rpn7* 基因, 可以影响其繁殖和传染性[21]。外源性 dsRNA/siRNA 还可以通过喷施、注射和喂食等方法进入生物体内, 触发生物体内的 RNAi 机制, 特异性地降低或沉默关键基因的表达, 达到控制病虫害的目的[4] [22]-[25]。这些方法利用了真菌、线虫和昆虫等生物能够从环境中吸收 dsRNA 等的特性, 以及 dsRNA 等可以在真菌和宿主植物之间进行跨界传播的能力, 从而利用 RNAi 机制进行互相影响[26] [27]。Wang 等人在番茄(*Solanum lycopersicum* L.)、葡萄(*Vitis vinifera* L.)等水果和蔬菜表面喷施靶向灰霉菌(*Botrytis cinerea*) *DCL1* 和 *DCL2* 基因的 dsRNA, 可以显著抑制 *B. cinerea* 的生长[28] [29]。Sun 等人向森林害虫舞毒蛾(*Lymantria dispar*)幼虫注射靶向 *OAI* (*OCULAR ALBINISM TYPE 1*)基因的 dsRNA 后, 发现幼虫死亡率比对照组高出 4.80 倍[30]。这些结果表明, 外源 dsRNA 的应用可以为病虫害的防治提供一种有效的策略。

3. 外源 dsRNA 在农林病虫害防治中的应用

在植物上的外源性 dsRNA 通过摄食等途径进入害虫肠道后, 能够引发 RNAi 机制, 沉默靶标基因, 提高害虫死亡率, 从而起到防治虫害、保护植物的作用[31]。在温室条件下, Majumdar 等人向马铃薯(*Solanum tuberosum* L.)施用靶向 *L. decemlineata* 肌动蛋白的 dsRNA, 增强了 *S. tuberosum* 对该虫的抗性[32]。同样, Wang 等人向 *S. lycopersicum* 叶片施用外源性 dsRNA 后, 发现 dsRNA 对防治番茄潜叶蛾(*Tuta absoluta*)也显示出一定的效果[33]。Hunter 等人发现亚洲柑橘木虱(*Diaphorina citri*)、马铃薯木虱(*Bactericera cockerelli*)和葡萄果蝇(*Homalodisca vitripennis*)在取食经过 dsRNA 处理的植物后大量死亡, 表明 dsRNA 处理能够有效诱导这些害虫的 RNAi 反应, 从而导致其死亡, 并有效地抑制虫害[34]。

外源施用的 dsRNA 或 sRNAs 可以直接被真菌细胞吸收, 或通过植物细胞转运到真菌细胞中, 以沉默相关基因来抑制感染[13] [35]-[37]。例如, 靶向 *F. graminearum* 细胞色素 P450 或麦角甾醇生物合成基因的 dsRNA 抑制了其在大麦(*Hordeum vulgare* L.)叶上的生长[38]。靶向 *B. cinerea* 或亚洲镰孢菌(*Fusarium asiaticum* L.) β_2 微管蛋白的 dsRNA 抑制了孢子萌发和菌丝生长, 保护了黄瓜(*Cucumis sativus* L.)、黄豆(*Glycine max*)等的生长发育[39]。研究表明, McLoughlin 等人通过在拟南芥(*Arabidopsis thaliana*)和油菜(*Brassica napus* L.)叶面施用 dsRNA, 减轻了 *B. cinerea* 和核盘菌(*Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*)的症状[36], 这表明 dsRNA 能够有效地诱导植物和真菌的 RNAi 机制, 从而增强植物对病原真菌的防御能力。

然而, 裸露的 dsRNA 在环境中的不稳定性限制了其应用。在土壤环境中, dsRNA 可能在 48 小时内完全降解, 而在植物叶片上的半衰期通常不超过 7 天[8] [40]; 害虫肠道环境也可能影响 RNAi 效率[41] [42]。且 dsRNA 的摄取效率因真菌种类和细胞类型而异, *B. cinerea*、*S. sclerotiorum*、立枯丝核菌(*Rhizoctonia*

solani)、黑曲霉(*Aspergillus niger*)和大丽轮枝菌(*Verticillium dahliae*)等可以高效地吸收 dsRNA, 而炭疽病菌(*Colletotrichum gloeosporioides*)的 dsRNA 吸收效率较低[43]。有些真菌(例如 *F. asiaticum*)自身无法维持 siRNA 机制的扩增, 需要持续向它们供应 dsRNA 来维持基因沉默的效果[37]。因此, 提高 dsRNA 的稳定性, 如通过纳米颗粒递送 RNA 或进行 RNA 修饰等, 以延长 RNAi 效应时间, 是当前研究的热点之一。

4. 纳米载体介导的 dsRNA 递送

递送外源性 dsRNA 技术凭借着绿色和高效的特点已经广泛应用于多种植物病虫害的治理研究中[4]。然而它在实际应用中面临的一个主要挑战是裸露的 dsRNA 在自然环境中并不稳定, 且对植物的保护时间较短[8]。为了使 RNAi 效应更为持久, 必须确保 dsRNA 在生物体内外的完整性和持久性, 同时确保 dsRNA 能够顺利进入生物体细胞, 从而引发 RNAi 机制, 抑制病虫害的发生, 保护植物健康生长。纳米颗粒的引入, 为 dsRNA 的保护和递送提供了一种创新解决方案, 利用纳米颗粒递送 dsRNA 有助于增强 RNAi 技术的实用性, 实现更持久的植物保护效果。纳米颗粒具有尺寸小、比表面积大、表面能高和表面原子所占比例大等特点[44], 它们能够有效结合 dsRNA 或 sRNAs, 形成的纳米-小 RNA 复合物能够通过内吞作用进入生物体细胞。进入细胞后的复合物需要从内质网逃逸, 以避免被溶酶体降解。最后, dsRNA 或 siRNA 需从纳米颗粒上解离, 以在 RNAi 过程中发挥作用, 这可以通过响应细胞内刺激或其他途径来实现[13][24]。此外, 纳米颗粒的种类繁多且易于合成, 可以根据不同的生物分子和应用需求定制纳米载体。使用纳米颗粒递送 dsRNA, 不仅能够抑制 dsRNA 的降解, 还能有效地将 dsRNA 递送至生物体细胞, 实现精准的基因沉默。

4.1. 壳聚糖纳米颗粒

壳聚糖(Chitosan, CNP)是一种天然多糖, 具有良好的生物相容性和生物可降解性。它可以通过化学改性使自身的机械、化学和生物性能得到显著提升, 适用于多种应用场景[45]。壳聚糖是一种理想的 dsRNA、siRNA 等分子的递送载体, 它分子中带正电的氨基与 RNA 链中带负电的磷酸基团相互作用, 能够形成稳定的复合物。这种 CNP/dsRNA 复合物还能与内吞作用途径的核心成分 CHC (Clathrin heavy chain)蛋白结合, 从而显著提高 RNAi 的效率[13][24][33][46]。

在虫害防治的研究领域, 壳聚糖的应用已经取得了显著的进展。Zhang 等人的实验表明, 以 CNP/AgCHS1-dsRNA 复合物为食的甘比亚按蚊(*Anopheles gambiae*)幼虫的 AgCHS1 转录水平和甲壳素含量分别降低了 62.8%和 33.8%, 这表明壳聚糖可以作为 dsRNA 的载体用于害虫防治[47]。而使用 CNP 递送靶向 *A. gambiae* 几丁质合酶 2 (*chitin synthase2*)基因的 dsRNA, 基因沉默率可达 40%~60%, 显著提高了 *A. gambiae* 的死亡率[48]。此外, Kolge 等人的研究表明, CNP 可以递送靶向棉铃虫(*Helicoverpa armigera*)幼年激素甲基转移酶(JHAMT)和乙酰胆碱酯酶(ACHE)基因的特异性 dsRNA, 触发 RNAi 机制, 诱导 *H. armigera* 死亡[49]。壳聚糖还可以与星形阳离子聚合物(SPC)形成 CSC 复合物, 与特异性 dsRNA 结合后, 可以减少水稻(*Oryza sativa* L.)上 *R. solani* 的侵染, 并将 dsRNA 的保护时间延长至 20 天[50][51]。Dhandapani 等人通过将 CNP 与三聚磷酸钠交联制备的纳米级高分子电解质复合物, 结合特异性 dsRNA 后, 可以使埃及伊蚊(*Aedes aegypti*)的死亡率提高至 60%以上[52]。同时, 有研究表明 CNP 对植物和人类细胞无毒, 这为壳聚糖在病虫害防治中的安全应用提供了坚实的科学基础。这些研究成果不仅展示了壳聚糖作为 dsRNA 载体在害虫防治中的有效性, 也表明了其在植物保护中的潜力, 为实现更环保、更安全的病虫害管理提供了新的思路[49]。

4.2. 层状氢氧化物

层状氢氧化物(Layered double hydroxide, LDH)是一类具有良好生物相容性和生物可降解性的无机层

状材料[53] [54]。LDH 纳米颗粒由混合的二价/三价金属氢氧化物层组成, 这些层与阴离子及水分子键合在一起, 形成了独特的层状结构。LDH 的层状结构和带正电荷的氢氧化物层的特性, 使其成为携带负电荷的生物分子(如 DNA、RNA 和蛋白质等)的理想载体[55]。利用 LDH 制备的生物农药纳米颗粒能够为植物保护提供一种绿色、高效且安全的解决方案。

LDH 纳米片与 dsRNA 结合形成的 dsRNA-LDH 复合物(BioClay) [54] [56]喷洒到植物上后, 会在低 pH 条件、CO₂ 和水分的作用下缓慢降解, 逐步释放 dsRNA 至叶面, 从而增强 dsRNA 的稳定性并延长作物的保护周期[8] [56] [57]。Mitter 等人的研究表明, 使用 LDH 纳米颗粒装载特异性 dsRNA 后, 喷施于豇豆(*Vigna unguiculata*)和 *N. tabacum* 叶片后, 可以提供至少 20 天的抗病毒保护[56]。另一方面, Duanis-Assaf 等人使用 BioClay 喷施 *V. vinifera*、*S. lycopersicum*、鹰嘴豆(*Cicer arietinum* L.)等果实, 发现可以显著抑制 *B. cinerea* 的生长, 延缓真菌在果实中的定殖和果实的腐烂, 这或许可以替代杀菌剂为收获后的果实提供更安全的保护[57] [58]。此外, LDH 装载靶向暹罗刺盘孢菌(*Colletotrichum siamense*) CsSCS7 的 dsRNA, 可以显著增强对该菌的控制效果, 减少橡胶树叶片的病变面积[59]。Tang 等人通过用脂肪酸修饰 LDH, 使其由亲水性转变为两亲性, 通过直接喷洒增强褐飞虱(*Nilaparvata lugens*)对 dsRNA 的摄取, 同时促进 BioClay 从 *O. sativa* 叶片到维管束的易位, 然后以摄食的方式进入 *N. lugens* 体内, 提高 *N. lugens* 的死亡率[60]。

4.3. 星形阳离子聚合物

星形阳离子聚合物(Star polycation, SPc)以其成本低廉和结构简单而著称, 它由疏水核心和带正电荷的外臂构成, 能够与带负电荷的核酸形成稳定的复合物[61], 还能通过氢键、范德华力和静电吸附等分子间作用力来装载药物分子[62] [63]。基于 SPc 的纳米递送系统, 在提升 dsRNA 的稳定性和有效性、以及开发 RNAi 农药等方面展现出巨大的潜力。

SPc 与 dsRNA/siRNA 分子结合时, 能够显著延缓它们的降解, 并促进这些分子跨细胞膜易位, 实现有效的基因沉默[24] [64]。SPc/dsRNA 复合物能够降低木瓜小地老虎(*Agrotis ypsilon*)和大豆蚜虫(*Aphis glycines*)中目的基因的表达, 并有效抑制害虫的生长[61] [65]。Zhao 等人基于 SPc 的递送系统, 开发了一种新型自组装的靶向 *npfr* 和 *ampk* 基因的 RNAi 纳米农药, 该农药在抑制亚洲玉米螟(*Ostrinia furnacalis*)幼虫的摄食和生长发育方面显示出卓越的防治效果[63]。Wang 等人使用 SPc 同时装载 dsRNA 和纤维二糖, 组成一种纳米级多元生物制剂, 将这种制剂喷施在 *S. tuberosum* 叶片上后, 显著抑制了致病疫霉菌(*Phytophthora infestans*)的侵染, 对 *S. tuberosum* 的保护效果高达 68%, 并延长了 RNAi 的效应时长[66]。Yin 等人利用 SPc 制备水杨酸纳米诱抗剂, 有效控制了由 *V. dahliae* 引起的棉花黄萎病[67]。Li 等人则使用 SPc 装载 *hem-dsRNA* 及植物农药苦参碱, 形成的多组分纳米农药对桃蚜(*Myzus persicae*)展现出高效的基因沉默和显著的死亡率[62]。综上所述, SPc 作为一种多功能的纳米递送载体, 在提高 RNAi 效率、开发新型 RNAi 农药以及增强作物保护等方面具有广泛的应用前景, 为绿色和可持续农林业提供了新的可能性。

4.4. 其他纳米颗粒

除了上述纳米颗粒外, 还有多种纳米颗粒能够装载 dsRNA/siRNA 等分子, 并将其递送至植物、真菌或害虫等, 有效控制植物病虫害。例如, Qiao 等人使用阳离子脂质合成的人工纳米囊泡(Artificial nanovesicles, AVs)包裹靶向 *B. cinerea* VDS 基因的 dsRNA, 然后将其施用于 *S. lycopersicum* 果实、*V. vinifera* 叶与果实上, 可以显著减少病斑大小并延长对植物的保护时长[68]。Wang 等人使用功能化碳量子点(Functionalized carbon dots, CDs)作为 dsRNA 的载体, 将 dsRNA-CDs 复合物喷施于植物, 可以显著提升

对 *P. infestans*、大豆病疫菌(*Phytophthora sojae*)和辣椒疫霉(*Phytophthora capsici*)的防治效果[69]。阳离子脂质体也是一种有效的递送系统，Lin 等人将 dsRNA/siRNA 等与阳离子脂质体结合，形成脂质复合物，能够抑制 dsRNA 的降解并提高德国小蠊(*Blattella germanica*)的死亡率[70]。此外，微型细胞(Microcells) [71]、金纳米团簇(Gold nanoclusters, AuNCs) [72]和细胞穿透肽(Cell-penetrating peptides, CPP) [73]等纳米载体在病虫害控制领域同样展现出巨大的应用潜力，可以根据具体需求选择不同的纳米载体进行研究、应用与优化(见表 1)。

Table 1. Common nanoparticles and their key characteristics
表 1. 常见的纳米颗粒及其关键特征

纳米颗粒	细胞毒性	合成成本	颗粒大小	应用领域	参考文献
壳聚糖	低	低	100~200 nm	昆虫	[47]-[49]
层状氢氧化物	中低	低	20~80 nm	真菌、昆虫	[56]-[59]
星形阳离子聚合物	中低	低	100 nm	真菌、昆虫	[61]-[67]
人工纳米囊泡	低	低	200~400 nm	真菌	[68]
功能化碳量子点	未检测	低	2.7~3.9 nm	真菌	[13] [69]
阳离子脂质体	低	中	100~250 nm	昆虫	[24] [70]

5. 展望

RNAi 作为一种新兴的技术，虽然已经在实验室条件下证明有效，且正在逐步推广至田间实验[5] [49] [50] [66] [74]，但要实现其在农林业中的商业化和广泛应用，仍需克服一些关键挑战，并探索新的研究方向。

外源性 dsRNA 的稳定性是制约该技术应用的主要障碍之一[8]。复杂的土壤环境或害虫肠道环境处处制约着 RNAi 效率。未来研究的重点方向应该是利用纳米颗粒递送系统或化学修饰 dsRNA，同时优化 dsRNA 的递送效率，增强 dsRNA 的稳定性和传递效率，从而提高 RNAi 效率和病虫害抑制效果[8] [25]。

在土壤环境中，dsRNA 传递技术与根际微生物之间的互作，包括与菌根真菌的互作，是另一个值得探索的领域[75]。在林木根际施用的菌根真菌等根际微生物，可以与林木形成互惠互利的共生关系，而 dsRNA 的应用可以保护根际微生物或树木免受害虫和真菌病原体的侵害。如何利用这一互作机制来增强植物的自然防御能力，是一个充满前景的研究方向。

虽然 RNAi 技术拥有着广泛的应用前景，但世界各国对 dsRNA 产品的应用与管理仍处于起步阶段[6] [76]。在我国，目前还未有 dsRNA 农药相关登记管理规定，这需要相关管理部门定义明确的风险评估方案，全面评估施用外源性 dsRNA 所涉及的各个方面，如 dsRNA 合成技术、表观遗传修饰、dsRNA 在土壤和水体中的稳定性、生物累积潜力和生态毒性等，以确保该技术的可持续应用，满足生产与社会需求。

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