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The big-tomato gene

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Quantitative trait loci (QTLs) are genes whose variation controls continuous characteristics such as height and weight. Multiple QTLs for a single trait have made for complicated genetics and slow progress in moving from correlation to work with single genes. But in the July 7 *Science* Frary *et al.* isolate *fw2.2*, a gene whose small-fruit version can reduce the size of tomato fruit by 30% (*Science* 2000, **289**:85-88). The gene is expressed at higher levels in the carpels (which ultimately develop into fruit) of small-fruited plants. These carpels have fewer cells, and the predicted structural similarity of the products of *fw2.2* and the Ras oncogene suggest that *fw2.2* may play a role in cell cycle control.

References

1. Science magazine, [<http://www.sciencemag.org/>]