

Fractional Modeling of Anomalous Diffusion in Plant Cells

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Abstract

Changes of turgor pressure in plant cells could produce leaf or branch movements as a consequence of ion diffusion. The phenomenon occurs when the solutes actively accumulated in cells are released to interstitial space. The lower pressure in the cells reduces the mechanical properties of intracellular walls and weakens tissues. In the inverse process, ions return to cells and the turgor pressure is maintained in plant structures. Moreover, the exchange of ions in the plant produces an electrical response that can be measured in the frequency domain by electrical impedance spectroscopy. The experiments show an anomalous diffusive relaxation phenomenon that requires a fractional analysis to determine the parameters of the equivalent electric circuit. The effects of memory on the response of the plant indicate a process dependent on previous excitable stimuli, which is explained by fractional differential equations. The proposed model was fitted to experimental data and explains elements related to the processes of semi-infinite diffusion. These elements correspond to several kinds of ions responsible for the propagation of the electrical impulse through the plant in transition between a capacitive and diffusive states.

References

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