

Text S1

Supplementary Tables Legends

Table S1: The top 50 annotating articles.

N: article rank; **Proteins:** number of proteins annotated in this article; **Annotations:** number of annotating GO terms; **Species:** annotated species; **ref.** annotating article; **MFO/BPO/CCO:** number of proteins annotated in the Molecular Function, Biological Process and Cellular Component ontologies, respectively.

Table S2: The Top-50 studies and the ECO terms we have assigned to them.

PMID: Articles' PubMed ID; **ECO terms/ECO ID's:** terms and ID's we assigned to the articles.

Table S3: ECO terms were assigned by us to the top-50 annotating papers.

The table entries are ranked by the frequency of the assignments, i.e. 27 papers are assigned with term ECO:0000160, 21 were assigned ECO:0000004, etc. Entries in **boldface** are for computational methods, which were used in many papers in combination with experimental methods to assign function. Table S2 lists the ECO terms.

Supplementary Tables

Table S1. Top 50 Annotating Articles

| N | Proteins | Annotations | Species | ref. | MFO | BPO | CCO |
|----|----------|-------------|------------------------|------|-----|------|-------|
| 1 | 4937 | 11050 | <i>H. sapiens</i> | [1] | 0 | 0 | 11050 |
| 2 | 4247 | 7046 | <i>S. pombe</i> | [2] | 0 | 0 | 7046 |
| 3 | 2412 | 2412 | <i>H. sapiens</i> | [3] | 0 | 0 | 2412 |
| 4 | 1791 | 5918 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [4] | 0 | 5918 | 0 |
| 5 | 1406 | 1863 | <i>S. cerevisiae</i> | [5] | 0 | 0 | 1863 |
| 6 | 1251 | 1251 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [6] | 0 | 0 | 1251 |
| 7 | 1205 | 1476 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [7] | 0 | 1476 | 0 |
| 8 | 1186 | 1213 | <i>M. musculus</i> | [8] | 0 | 0 | 1213 |
| 9 | 1136 | 1136 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [9] | 0 | 0 | 1136 |
| 10 | 1101 | 2269 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [10] | 0 | 2269 | 0 |
| 11 | 1043 | 1365 | <i>M. tuberculosis</i> | [11] | 0 | 0 | 1365 |
| 12 | 1041 | 1041 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [12] | 0 | 0 | 1041 |
| 13 | 865 | 1533 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [13] | 0 | 1533 | 0 |
| 14 | 845 | 845 | <i>S. cerevisiae</i> | [14] | 0 | 0 | 845 |
| 15 | 784 | 784 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [15] | 0 | 0 | 784 |
| 16 | 735 | 735 | <i>M. tuberculosis</i> | [16] | 0 | 0 | 735 |
| 17 | 724 | 882 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [17] | 0 | 0 | 882 |
| 18 | 634 | 634 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [18] | 0 | 0 | 634 |
| 19 | 613 | 613 | Mycobacter sp. | [19] | 0 | 613 | 0 |
| 20 | 607 | 661 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [20] | 0 | 659 | 2 |

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| N | Proteins | Annotations | Species | ref. | MFO | BPO | CCO |
|----------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 21 | 577 | 577 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [21] | 0 | 0 | 577 |
| 22 | 553 | 884 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [22] | 0 | 884 | 0 |
| 23 | 516 | 5972 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [23] | 0 | 5972 | 0 |
| 24 | 503 | 503 | <i>S. cerevisiae</i> | [24] | 0 | 0 | 503 |
| 25 | 498 | 638 | <i>S. cerevisiae</i> | [25] | 638 | 0 | 0 |
| 26 | 479 | 848 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [26] | 0 | 848 | 0 |
| 27 | 465 | 468 | <i>H. sapiens</i> | [27] | 0 | 0 | 468 |
| 28 | 436 | 436 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [28] | 0 | 0 | 436 |
| 29 | 430 | 513 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [29] | 0 | 0 | 513 |
| 30 | 413 | 456 | <i>D. melanogaster</i> | [30] | 0 | 39 | 417 |
| 31 | 401 | 401 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [31] | 0 | 0 | 401 |
| 32 | 392 | 392 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [32] | 0 | 0 | 392 |
| 33 | 392 | 639 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [33] | 0 | 639 | 0 |
| 34 | 383 | 917 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [34] | 0 | 917 | 0 |
| 35 | 380 | 380 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [35] | 0 | 0 | 380 |
| 36 | 375 | 375 | <i>M. musculus</i> | [36] | 0 | 0 | 375 |
| 37 | 343 | 509 | <i>H. sapiens</i> | [37] | 509 | 0 | 0 |
| 38 | 338 | 338 | Ddiscoideum | [38] | 0 | 0 | 338 |
| 39 | 328 | 328 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [39] | 0 | 0 | 328 |
| 40 | 319 | 329 | <i>C. albicans</i> | [40] | 1 | 328 | 0 |
| 41 | 305 | 312 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [41] | 0 | 0 | 312 |
| 42 | 290 | 331 | <i>S. cerevisiae</i> | [42] | 0 | 0 | 331 |

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| N | Proteins | Annotations | Species | ref. | MFO | BPO | CCO |
|----------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 43 | 285 | 761 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [43] | 0 | 761 | 0 |
| 44 | 283 | 499 | <i>C. elegans</i> | [44] | 0 | 499 | 0 |
| 45 | 266 | 433 | <i>M. musculus</i> | [45] | 433 | 0 | 0 |
| 46 | 260 | 260 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [46] | 0 | 260 | 0 |
| 47 | 258 | 259 | <i>S. pombe</i> | [47] | 0 | 259 | 0 |
| 48 | 244 | 397 | <i>D. melanogaster</i> | [48] | 0 | 367 | 30 |
| 49 | 242 | 397 | <i>D. melanogaster</i> | [49] | 0 | 0 | 397 |
| 50 | 241 | 263 | <i>A. thaliana</i> | [50] | 0 | 0 | 263 |

Table S2. ECO Terms Assigned to Top-50 Papers

| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|-------------|------------|---|
| 18029348 | [1] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 immunofluorescence evidence/ECO:0000007 immunolocalization evidence/ECO:0000087 |
| 16823372 | [2] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 yellow fluorescent protein fusion protein localization evidence/ECO:0000128 enzyme inhibition experiment evidence/ECO:0000184 |
| 18614015 | [3] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 GFP fusion protein localization evidence/ECO:0000126 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 |
| 14551910 | [4] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 nucleotide BLAST evidence/ECO:0000207 sequence alignment evidence/ECO:0000200 |
| 14562095 | [5] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 GFP fusion protein localization evidence/ECO:0000126 fusion protein localization evidence/ECO:0000124 affinity chromatography evidence/ECO:0000079 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|----------|-----|--|
| 18431481 | [6] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 imported information/ECO:0000311 |
| 15791247 | [7] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 |
| 14651853 | [8] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 nucleotide BLAST evidence/ECO:0000207 Affymetrix array experiment evidence/ECO:0000101 imported information/ECO:0000311 |
| 17317660 | [9] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|----------|------|---|
| 12529635 | [10] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 nucleotide BLAST evidence/ECO:0000207 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 |
| 15525680 | [11] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 biological system reconstruction/ECO:0000088 imported information/ECO:0000311 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 |
| 21166475 | [12] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 imported information/ECO:0000311 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 sequence alignment evidence/ECO:0000200 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 |
| 15489339 | [13] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 nucleotide BLAST evidence/ECO:0000207 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|----------|------|--|
| 16823961 | [14] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 imported information/ECO:0000311 |
| 21533090 | [15] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 imported information/ECO:0000311 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 sequence alignment evidence/ECO:0000200 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 |
| 14532352 | [16] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 |
| 20061580 | [17] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 imported information/ECO:0000311 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 protein expression level evidence/ECO:0000046 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|----------|------|---|
| 15028209 | [18] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 Affymetrix array experiment evidence/ECO:0000101 protein expression level evidence/ECO:0000046 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 |
| 12657046 | [19] | mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000015 nucleic acid hybridization evidence/ECO:0000026 imported information/ECO:0000311 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000212 |
| 17704769 | [20] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 |
| 17432890 | [21] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 imported information/ECO:0000311 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|----------|------|--|
| 11231151 | [22] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 |
| 17417969 | [23] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 |
| 14576278 | [24] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 |
| 16429126 | [25] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 affinity chromatography evidence/ECO:0000079 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 imported information/ECO:0000311 |
| 21529718 | [26] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 |
| 11256614 | [27] | GFP fusion protein localization evidence/ECO:0000126 yellow fluorescent protein fusion protein localization evidence/ECO:0000128 imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 nucleotide BLAST evidence/ECO:0000207 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|-------------|------------|--|
| 17644812 | [28] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 |
| 16618929 | [29] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 |
| 18433294 | [30] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 immunofluorescence evidence/ECO:0000007 |
| 17151019 | [31] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 imported information/ECO:0000311 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|----------|------|--|
| 14671022 | [32] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 |
| 12529643 | [33] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 |
| 12445391 | [34] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 BLAST evidence/ECO:0000206 |
| 15539469 | [35] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 |
| 12865426 | [36] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|----------|------|--|
| 16189514 | [37] | yeast 2-hybrid evidence/ECO:0000068 imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 co-purification evidence/ECO:0000022 combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000212 |
| 20422638 | [38] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000212 |
| 12938931 | [39] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 nucleotide BLAST evidence/ECO:0000207 imported information/ECO:0000311 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 |
| 16336044 | [40] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 |
| 18633119 | [41] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 cell fractionation evidence/ECO:0000004 Western blot evidence/ECO:0000112 |
| 11914276 | [42] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 immunofluorescence evidence/ECO:0000007 epitope-tagged protein immunolocalization evidence/ECO:0000092 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 imported information/ECO:0000311 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|----------|------|--|
| 11099033 | [43] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 |
| 11099034 | [44] | imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 nucleotide BLAST evidence/ECO:0000207 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 |
| 11591653 | [45] | hybrid interaction evidence/ECO:0000025 imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 |
| 16502469 | [46] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 Northern assay evidence/ECO:0000106 reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction transcription evidence/ECO:0000108 |
| 12529438 | [47] | microarray RNA expression level evidence/ECO:0000104 sequence orthology evidence used in manual assertion/ECO:0000266 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 |
| 17412918 | [48] | RNAi evidence/ECO:0000019 loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000016 imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 |

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| PMID | Ref | ECO terms/ECO ID's |
|-----------|------|---|
| 18981222 | [49] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 protein BLAST evidence/ECO:0000208 in vitro assay evidence/ECO:0000181 affinity chromatography evidence/ECO:0000079 imaging assay evidence/ECO:0000324 mutant phenotype evidence/ECO:0000015 |
| 1p6287169 | [50] | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence/ECO:0000160 sequence similarity evidence/ECO:0000044 transmembrane domain prediction evidence/ECO:0000083 sequence alignment evidence/ECO:0000200 computational combinatorial evidence/ECO:0000053 motif similarity evidence/ECO:0000028 targeting sequence prediction evidence/ECO:0000081 |

Table S3. Count of ECO terms in top-50 papers

| N | ECO term | ECO ID | Articles |
|----|---|-------------|----------|
| 1 | protein separation followed by fragment identification evidence | ECO:0000160 | 27 |
| 2 | sequence similarity evidence | ECO:0000044 | 27 |
| 3 | imaging assay evidence | ECO:0000324 | 24 |
| 4 | cell fractionation evidence | ECO:0000004 | 23 |
| 5 | transmembrane domain prediction evidence | ECO:0000083 | 17 |
| 6 | loss-of-function mutant phenotype evidence | ECO:0000016 | 15 |
| 7 | protein BLAST evidence | ECO:0000208 | 15 |
| 8 | RNAi evidence | ECO:0000019 | 15 |
| 9 | imported information | ECO:0000311 | 13 |
| 10 | computational combinatorial evidence | ECO:0000053 | 11 |
| 11 | targeting sequence prediction evidence | ECO:0000081 | 11 |
| 12 | motif similarity evidence | ECO:0000028 | 10 |
| 13 | nucleotide BLAST evidence | ECO:0000207 | 7 |
| 14 | sequence alignment evidence | ECO:0000200 | 4 |
| 15 | GFP fusion protein localization evidence | ECO:0000126 | 3 |
| 16 | immunofluorescence evidence | ECO:0000007 | 3 |
| 17 | affinity chromatography evidence | ECO:0000079 | 3 |
| 18 | computational combinatorial evidence | ECO:0000053 | 2 |
| 19 | Affymetrix array experiment evidence | ECO:0000101 | 2 |

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| N | ECO term | ECO ID | Articles |
|----------|--|---------------|-----------------|
| 20 | protein expression level evidence | ECO:0000046 | 2 |
| 21 | mutant phenotype evidence | ECO:0000015 | 2 |
| 22 | combinatorial evidence | ECO:0000212 | 2 |
| 23 | co-purification evidence | ECO:0000022 | 1 |
| 24 | epitope-tagged protein immunolocalization evidence | ECO:0000092 | 1 |
| 25 | sequence orthology evidence used in manual assertion | ECO:0000266 | 1 |
| 26 | YFP fusion protein localization evidence | ECO:0000128 | 2 |
| 27 | in vitro assay evidence | ECO:0000181 | 1 |
| 28 | biological system reconstruction | ECO:0000088 | 1 |
| 29 | reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction transcription evidence | ECO:0000108 | 1 |
| 30 | Northern assay evidence | ECO:0000106 | 1 |
| 31 | Western blot evidence | ECO:0000112 | 1 |
| 32 | microarray RNA expression level evidence | ECO:0000104 | 1 |
| 33 | fusion protein localization evidence | ECO:0000124 | 1 |
| 34 | BLAST evidence | ECO:0000206 | 1 |
| 35 | nucleic acid hybridization evidence | ECO:0000026 | 1 |
| 36 | enzyme inhibition experiment evidence | ECO:0000184 | 1 |
| 37 | immunolocalization evidence | ECO:0000087 | 1 |
| 38 | hybrid interaction evidence | ECO:0000025 | 1 |
| 39 | yeast 2-hybrid evidence | ECO:0000068 | 1 |

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