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## Breach of rhizobial host specificity and colonization of V. radiata root nodules by rhizobacteria

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Legumes develop symbiotic relationship with rhizobia following complex exchange of signals. Regardless of high specificity of Symbiosis, isolation of *rhizobacteria* from surface sterilized root nodules has been reported. To explore how these *rhizobacteria* enter root hairs and colonize root nodules, we hypothesized that host specific *rhizobia* initiate the signaling process to form infection thread (IT), which is invaded by *rhizobacteria* to breach host specificity. To experimentally prove the hypothesis, fluorescently tagged predominant *rhizobacteria Pseudomonas fluorescens* and a facultative aerobe *Klebsiella pneumoniae* were coinoculated with native host nodulating rhizobia *Ensifer adhaerens to Vigna radiata* seedlings and root hair infection was monitored at 5 days post inoculation (DPI) using confocal microscope. and *K. pneumoniae* adhered to surface and base of root hairs and failed to enter root hairs independently but successfully colonized root hairs when coinoculated with *E. adhaerens*. Recovery and confirmation of inoculated tagged strains through confocal laser scanning microscopy and 16S rDNA sequencing validated nodule occupancy by test *rhizobacteria* at 50 DPI. This is the first study that addresses the fundamental question of how non-rhizobia invade root nodules. We also isolated eight non-rhizobia with predominance of gram positive *Paenibacillus* and *Bacillus* among other gram-negative species of *Klebsiella, Ensifer, Agrobacterium, Blastobacter, Dyadobacter and Chitinophaga* from field grown *V. radiata* root nodules.

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