KOPPERT
BIOLOGICAL SYSTEMS

Dr. John H. Werren
Department of Biology
University of Rochester
Rochester, N.Y. 14627 USA.

Dear Dr. Werren,

With this letter we like to give strong support for the proposed Genome Sequencing Project of the parasitoid *Nasonia vitripennis*.
We are the leading company worldwide for the production of biocontrol agents. Around 70% of the greenhouse tomato growers in the Netherlands, UK, Canada and USA are using our products for pollination (bumblebees) and biological control of pests. Also in sweet pepper and ornamental crops we have a strong position.
Parasitoid wasps belong to the most succesfull biocontrol agents. E.g. *Encarsia formosa* and *Eretmocerus* spp are used against whiteflies, *Diglyphus isea* against leafminers and *Aphidius spp.* against aphids.
We have a continued interest in improving rearing methods economically, as well as in increasing the efficiency of parasitoids in integrated pest management programs.
We believe that there is ample scope for further improvement of the use of parasitoid wasps in biocontrol. This requires more knowledge of basic biological aspects of parasitoids which can, for example, lead to better control of sex ratios and diapause induction, (genetic) manipulation of host searching and learning behaviour, as well as possible application of microbes to manipulate parasitoid reproduction. A full genome sequence of a parasitoid wasp will be very helpful for this goal and many commercial spin-offs are expected. Since *Nasonia* is the most investigated parasitoid genetically, this is the best choice for the first total genome sequencing of a parasitoid.

We strongly support this project and are much looking forward to its implications for the success of biocontrol efforts

Sincerely,

Dr. K. Bolckmans
Head Production and R&D
Koppert B.V.