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1001 Avenue of the Americas, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10018

a4bgu.org



Prof. Simon Barak is a member of the French Associates Institute for Agriculture and Biotechnology of Drylands at BGU's Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research.

Prof. Barak received his B.Sc. in Agricultural Science from the University of Nottingham, in the United Kingdom. He received his Ph.D. from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and did a post-doctorate at UCLA, studying the circadian clock of plants.

His research focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms of plant tolerance to harsh environmental stresses such as those found in the Negev including heat, drought, and high soil salinity. Prof. Barak's team has discovered two genes that, when disabled, lead to plants' tolerance to multiple stresses. An agreement between BGN Technologies, BGU's technology-transfer company, and Bayer Crop Science, will allow Prof. Barak's team to identify additional genes that have an effect on making plants more "stress-resistant".