

Supplementary Method 1 (Surface sterilization)

The cut branches (45-50 cm long and 0.2-0.5 cm diameter) were treated with one drop of dishwashing liquid and washed under running tap water for 5 min. To remove surface contamination and residual phenols, the stem segments were washed thoroughly under running tap water for about 2 h. The stem segments were cut into smaller pieces containing a node and a petiole and surface-sterilized for 6 min in a 20% commercial bleach solution (containing sodium hypochlorite with 5% active chlorine) and 30 seconds with 0.1% (w/v) mercuric chloride (HgCl_2) (Merck, Germany) followed by the treatment with 70% ethanol for 30 seconds. Finally, the stem segments were rinsed three times with sterilized distilled deionized water for 5 min.