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New plants can produce light in the dark – 18th December, 2017

Level 0

Scientists in the USA have made plants that light up. They hope their plant lights could replace electric lights and street lights. The team hopes the plant lights will help the environment. It said: "The vision is to make a plant that will [work] as a desk lamp...that you don't have to plug in....powered by the energy...of the plant."

The idea for the plant lights came from fireflies. They put the thing in fireflies that makes them glow into spinach and watercress leaves. The plants glowed for nearly four hours. Scientists said they want to treat a young plant one time and have it light up for its lifetime. He said plant lights will be a part of our life.

Level 1

Scientists have made plants that light up. They will soon light up our lives. The scientists work in the USA. They hope their plant lights could replace electric lights and even street lights. Professor Michael Strano said his team hopes the plant lights will help the environment. He said: "The vision is to make a plant that will function as a desk lamp - a lamp that you don't have to plug in. The light is...powered by the energy...of the plant."

The idea for the plant lights came from fireflies. They took the thing in fireflies that makes them glow. They put this thing into spinach and watercress leaves to make them glow. The plants glowed for nearly four hours. Professor Strano said he wanted to treat a young plant just one time and have it light up, "for the lifetime of the plant". He said plant lights will be a part of our life. He said: "We think this is an idea whose time has come."

Level 2

Scientists have made plants that glow in the dark. They want to make plants that can light up our lives. The scientists are from a university in the USA. They hope their plant lights could replace electric lights. Trees could produce light that could replace street lights. Lead author professor Michael Strano explained that his team wants to make light sources and help the environment. He said: "The vision is to make a plant that will function as a desk lamp - a lamp that you don't have to plug in. The light is...powered by the energy...of the plant itself."

The idea for the lighting plants came from fireflies. The researchers used the substance in fireflies that makes them glow. They put the substance into plant leaves to make them glow. The scientists made plants that glowed for nearly four hours. The research team tested the substance on spinach and watercress leaves. Professor Strano said: "Our target is to perform one treatment, when the plant is a seedling or a mature plant, and have it last for the lifetime of the plant." He said plant lights will be a part of our life. He said: "We think this is an idea whose time has come."

Level 3

Scientists have created plants that glow in the dark. They are hoping to produce plants that can light up our lives. The scientists are from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the USA. They hope their discovery could lead to plant lights replacing electric lights. One day, even light that trees produce could replace street lights. Professor Michael Strano, lead author of the research, explained that his team wants to create sustainable light sources and help the environment. He said: "The vision is to make a plant that will function as a desk lamp - a lamp that you don't have to plug in. The light is ultimately powered by the energy metabolism of the plant itself."

The researchers got the idea for their lighting plants from fireflies. They looked at the substance in fireflies that makes them glow. They created nanoparticles that contain the substance. They then put the nanoparticles into plant leaves to make them glow. The scientists were able to make plants that glowed for nearly four hours. The research team has tested the substance on salad leaves, including spinach and watercress. Professor Strano said: "Our target is to perform one treatment, when the plant is a seedling or a mature plant, and have it last for the lifetime of the plant." He thinks plant lights will be a part of our life in the future. He said: "We think this is an idea whose time has come."