14.1: Why Use Nomenclature?

Word and practical problems in biology can get confusing in a hurry, particularly if you’re distracted by something like exam stress! When you are manipulating several ideas, it is good practice to be thoughtful and follow rules that keep you consistent in your interpretation. As an instructor, I have seen work in which the student clearly got flustered and forgot that the mutation he or she was working on was dominant. This often leads to an answer that is inconsistent with the data.

There are a few simple rules we can use for nomenclature. This first appendix uses a simplified system to communicate allele characteristics. The next appendix will show a more complicated system that carries even more information in the gene symbols.