Solar power from spinach

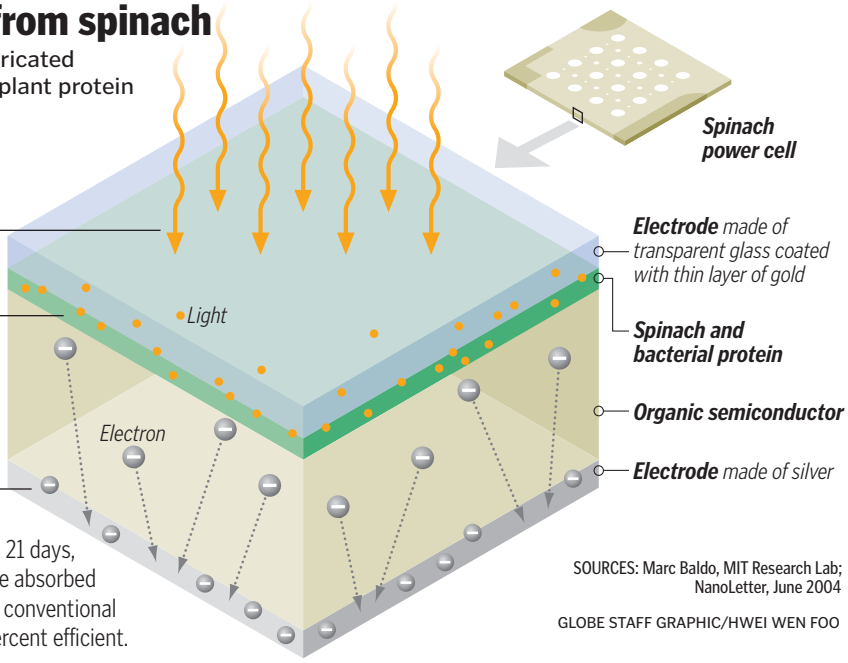
Researchers have fabricated a solar cell that uses plant protein to convert light into electrical energy.

1. Sunlight shines through glass.

2. Photosynthetic proteins absorb light.

3. Electrons pass into organic semiconductor and collect in the silver electrode and produce a current.

The prototype cells can generate current for up to 21 days, converting only 12% of the absorbed light into electricity. Most conventional solar cells are 20 to 30 percent efficient.



SOURCES: Marc Baldo, MIT Research Lab; NanoLetter, June 2004

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