

# Contents

<b>1 SUMMARY</b>	1
<b>ZUSAMMENFASSUNG</b>	2
<b>2 INTRODUCTION</b>	5
<b>2.1 Model Systems</b>	5
2.1.1 Overview	5
2.1.2 <i>C. elegans</i> is a powerful model for genetic analyses of development and diseases	5
<b>2.2 Genome</b>	5
<b>2.3 Life history</b>	6
<b>2.4 Dauer Diapause</b>	7
<b>2.5 The dauer pathways converge on the nuclear hormone receptor DAF- 12</b>	7
2.5.1 Molecular overview	7
2.5.2 Heterochronic pathways	8
2.5.3 Aging	9
<b>2.6 <i>daf-12</i> features</b>	11
2.6.1 Molecular features	11
2.6.2 Phenotypic complexity	11
2.6.3 Functional redundancy	11
<b>2.7 The Daf- genes and homologs regulate fundamental processes during the development</b>	12
2.7.1 Dauer signaling	12
2.7.2 Insulin/IGF Pathway	12
2.7.3 TGF- $\beta$ pathway	14
2.7.4 cGMP and serotonergic signaling pathways	16
<b>2.8 Nuclear hormone receptor complexes</b>	18
2.8.1 Nuclear hormone receptors	18
2.8.2 Nuclear receptor coactivators	20
2.8.3 Nuclear receptor corepressors	20
<b>2.9 Techniques</b>	21
2.9.1 Yeast-two hybrid System	21
2.9.2 RNA interference (RNAi)	21
<b>2.10 Thesis question</b>	22
<b>3 MATERIALS AND METHODS</b>	24
<b>3.1 <i>Escherichia coli</i> strains and culture media</b>	24
<b>3.2 Plasmids</b>	24
3.2.1 Plasmid constructions	24
<b>3.2.2 Plasmids isolated from cDNA librarys in yeast- two- hybrid screens</b>	26
<b>3.3 Primer</b>	27
<b>3.4 Yeast methods</b>	28
<b>3.5 Yeast- two hybrid screening</b>	29

<b>3.5 <i>C. elegans</i> cDNA libraries</b>	29
<b>3.7 Database analyses</b>	30
<b>3.8 <i>din-1</i> cDNA clones</b>	30
<b>3.9 Preparation of <i>C. elegans</i> mix-stage RNA</b>	31
<b>3.10 Full length <i>din-1</i> cDNA</b>	31
<b>3.11 Nematode culture</b>	32
<b>3.12 <i>C. elegans</i> strains</b>	32
<b>3.13 RNAi</b>	33
3.13.1 RNAi plates	33
3.13.2 RNAi feeding assays	33
<b>3.14 DIC-microscopy</b>	33
<b>3.15 EMS mutagenesis screens</b>	33
<b>3.16 Worm Mini-prep</b>	34
<b>3.17 Phenotypic analyses</b>	36
<b>3.18 Life span assays</b>	36
3.18.1 <i>din-1(dh118)</i>	36
3.18.2 <i>din-1(dh127); din-1RNAi</i>	37
<b>3.19 DIN-1::gfp construction</b>	37
3.19.1 Genomic <i>din-1::gfp</i>	37
3.19.2 <i>din-1</i> Promotor region::gfp	37
3.19.3 <i>din-1A</i> cDNA::gfp	38
<b>3.20 <i>din-1 D</i> genomic construct</b>	38
<b>4 RESULT</b>	39
<b>4.1 Yeast two- hybrid screens with DAF-12 bait plasmids</b>	39
<b>4.2 DIN-1, a putative DAF-12 cofactor</b>	46
4.2.1 <i>din-1</i> structure	46
4.2.2 <i>din-1</i> isoforms	47
4.2.3 DIN-1 homologs	50
4.2.4 DIN-1 functional domains	50
<b>4.3 DAF-12-DIN-1 interaction domain</b>	56
<b>4.4 <i>din-1</i> RNAi phenotypes</b>	57
<b>4.5 DIN-1 mutants</b>	62
4.5.1 Isolation of <i>din-1</i> alleles	62
4.5.2 <i>din-1</i> phenotypes	65
<b>4.6 Aging experiments with DIN-1</b>	68
<b>4.7 DIN-1 expression</b>	71
<b>5 DISCUSSION</b>	74
<b>5.1 DAF-12 interactors</b>	74
<b>5.2 DIN-1 and homologs</b>	74
<b>5.3 <i>din-1</i> physiological functions</b>	75
<b>5.4 Biochemical and physiological functions of DIN-1 homologs</b>	76
<b>5.5 Is DIN-1 a corepressor or coactivator?</b>	77
<b>5.6 <i>din-1</i> isoforms</b>	79
<b>5.7 <i>din-1</i> mutants</b>	80
<b>5.8 <i>din-1</i> expression pattern</b>	81
<b>5.9 Heterochronic phenotypes</b>	82
<b>5.10 <i>daf-12</i> phenotypic complexity</b>	83

<b>5.11 Dauer Model</b>	85
<b>5.12 Life span</b>	87
<b>5.13 SPEN proteins</b>	87
<b>5.14 Other putative DAF-12 cofactors</b>	88
<b>5.15 Future Prospects</b>	92
<b>6 REFERENCES</b>	93
<b>Acknowledgements / Danksagung</b>	109
<b>Curriculum Vitae</b>	110