

Original Research Article

Marker Based Screening of F1 (Rosalie x Fuji) Mapping Population for Major Scab Resistance Gene Rvi6 in Apple (*Malus × Domestica*)

Abstract

The most significant and lucrative crop farmed in temperate areas is the apple (*Malus domestica* Borkh.), which is extremely susceptible to the apple scab disease. The most significant and lucrative crop farmed in temperate countries, the apple (*Malus domestica* Borkh.), is extremely susceptible to the apple scab disease. It becomes problematic when pathogens develop resistance and farmers spend a lot of money on fungicides. These widespread worries justifiably call for a different disease resistance management strategy in order to use fungicides less frequently. As a result, the current study focused on scab resistance gene introgression in cultivar Fuji Azitec using phenotypic and marker-assisted screening in hybrids created from crossings between Fuji Azitec with various resistant parents. There was a 1:1 Mendelian segregation ratio between susceptible and resistant hybrids. Thus from our the resistant hybrids obtained have the potential for being utilized as commercial varieties after evaluation for important pomological traits and also resistant gene source in downstream breeding programmes.

Keywords: Apple, Scab, Resistance, Introgression, Screening, Marker.

1. Introduction

According to FAO STAT (2012), the apple (*Malus x domestica* Borkh.) is the second most widely grown fruit crop in the world,

behind bananas. It is also one of the most recognisable and common fruit crops in temperate climates. According to reports, apples are home to over 70 infectious diseases, the majority of which are brought on by pathogenic fungi, then bacteria, viruses, mycoplasmas, and nematodes. Famous illnesses like root rot, leaf spot, leaf blight, scab, blossom blight, fruit decay, fruit spot, canker, and post-harvest decay are caused by the class Fungi. Apple scab, which is brought on by a fungus, is the disease that causes the most yield loss. *Inaequalis Venturia* (Cke.) Wint (anamorph *Spilocaea pomi* Fr.). Due to considerable financial losses of up to 70% in apple production, this disease has a significant negative economic impact on apple output and quality. MacHardy (1996). Throughout the growing season, numerous fungicide applications (10–15) are necessary to control the scab disease, which can be damaging to humans due to residues in food, the environment, and the economy of farmers (Muneer et al 2017). The general public is very interested in reducing fungicide use and supporting an alternative disease resistance management strategy as a result of these public concerns. Numerous scab-resistant cultivars have been made available; the majority of these are descended from *Malus floribunda*, the wild crab apple (Bus et al 2009). For more than 40 years, apple breeding programmes have used the Vf

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(Rvi6) resistance gene extensively, and it has been introduced into a significant number of apple varieties. The gene has been remarkably resilient in apple orchards, conferring resistance to five of the seven known races of *V. inaequalis* (Crossby et al 1992). Resistance breeding programmes should prioritise efforts to create cultivars that are long-lastingly scab resistant and marketable. Apple genotypes must be tested for scab resistance with fungal races found in a certain region in order to successfully design such programmes (Didelot et al 2007; Van et al 2011). Based on this background information and keeping in view the importance of management of scab disease using resistant cultivars in India, the study was devised to introgress Vf (Rvi6) scab resistant gene from scab resistant cultivar 'Rosalie' in the F1 hybrids derived from the cross between 'Rosalie' and commercial cultivar 'Fuji'

Material and Methods

30 F1 individuals produced from Rosalie and Fuji apple cultivars were employed in the current experiment for phenotypic and molecular screening. Rosalie, a commercial apple cultivar that is widely produced, is predicted to have the Vf (Rvi6) gene from the wild species *M. floribunda*, whereas Fuji is scab-prone.

Screening for resistance to scab

The individuals in F1 mapping population were inoculated with four races [(0), (1), (2) and (1, 2)] of *Venturia inaequalis*. The fungal culture preparation was carried out following the method of Barbara et al., (2008). The suspension was adjusted to 5×10^5 conidia per milliliter and the spore suspension was applied till runoff with a manual atomizer. Disease scoring on plants was performed after 14 days after inoculation and was classified on 0-4 scale as given by Chevalier et al., (1991). Plants with score of 0, 1, 2, 3a or 3b were graded as resistant and plants recorded at a score of 4 were categorized as susceptible.

DNA isolation and PCR amplification

Genomic DNA was isolated from fresh and young leaves of F1 progenies and parents using a CTAB (cetyl trimethylammonium bromide) method as elaborated by Doyle and Doyle (1990). The DNA was then purified by RNase A treatment using standard methods (Sambrook et al., 1989). DNA was quantified on 0.8% agarose gel stained with ethidium bromide and the quality of the DNA was verified spectrophotometrically on NanoDrop. The F1s were tested for presence of Rvi6 gene using the linked SCAR marker AL-07 (F: 5'-TGGAAGAGAGATCCAGAAAAGTG-3'; R: 5'-CATCCCTCCACAAATGCC-3'). PCR assay was performed in a reaction volume of 20 µL containing 25-50 ng genomic DNA, 1x PCR buffer (20 mM Tris-Cl pH 8.4, 50 mM KCl), 1.5 mM MgCl₂, 0.2 mM dNTPs and 1.0 unit of Taq DNA polymerase. PCR amplifications were performed in a gradient thermal cycler (Make TAKARA, Japan) with the following thermal regimes: Initial denaturation at 94 °C for 5 min was followed by 35 cycles at 94 °C for 1 min, 58-60 °C for 1 min and 72 °C for 2 min. The final extension was carried out at 72 °C for 7 min. Amplified fragments were resolved in 3 % agarose gel in a 1X TAE buffer. The gels were stained with ethidium bromide (0.5 µg/ml) and visualized under UV light and documented in gel documentation system (Bio Rad, U.S.A)

Statistical analysis

Segregation pattern of the F1 population was judged through chi-square analysis. T-test with unequal variance was performed to detect an association between marker and trait. Both the statistical tests were performed following the method of Gomez and Gomez (1976).

Results and Discussion

Phenotype screening

The "Rosalie x Fuji" F1 population was tested against four monoconidial strains of *V. inaequalis*. Different phenotypes were seen, including immunological response in individual F1 plants, chlorotic signs in some plants, and obvious sporulation on leaves in others. The minor genes or modifiers of the Vf gene itself may be responsible for this significant heterogeneity in symptom expression (Gessler, 1989). The illness score divided the progenies into 9 vulnerable and 8 resistant groups. Marker evaluation 17 F1 individuals and their two parents were subjected to a Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) assay utilising the SCAR marker AL-07 connected to the Rvi6 gene, which confers resistance to the apple scab disease. The codominant marker AL07 has been located by Tartarini et al., 2000, 0.9 cM distant from the Rvi6 (VF) gene. The marker AL07 amplified two alleles, 820 bp and 570 bp, corresponding to susceptibility and resistance, respectively, from the resistant parent, Rosalie, and a single 820 bp allele from a susceptible parent, Fuji (Fig. 1). The allelic distribution pattern and the phenotypic response to diagnostic races correlated in a way that was consistent with research conducted by Suat et al (2013). It was particularly helpful to distinguish between progenies who were homozygous and heterozygous for the Rvi6 (Vf) gene thanks to the co-dominant character of marker AL07. The offspring would be anticipated to segregate given that one of the parents employed in this investigation appeared to be heterozygous. It would be expected that the progeny will segregate as 1/2 (VFvf): 1/2 (vfvf) for resistance and susceptibility, respectively, as one of the parents employed in this investigation appeared to be heterozygous Fig 2. A single dominant gene ratio was validated by the Chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 0.58$), which also provided evidence for Rosalie's Rvi6 (Vf) resistance. MacHardy used apple segregation ratio to look into the existence of a significant gene resistance (1996). Using genetic markers closely linked to the Rvi6 resistance gene, the conventional selection procedures for apple scab resistance can be improved. A great tool for locating resistance genes and creating resistant cultivars is the use of marker-assisted selection.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, managing apple scab disease necessitates 10- 15 fungicidal sprays annually, which presents a number of ecological issues, consumer health concerns, and financial costs. The use of pesticide-resistant cultivars could lower costs for growers, improve the environment, and lessen fungicide residues on apples for consumers. These cultivars can be cultivated with significantly less pesticide application. Breeding for scab resistance has increased recently all over the world. An essential factor in apple breeding is to find cultivars resistant to apple scab because the climatic conditions in temperate areas of India, like Kashmir, are very suitable for the disease's development and spread. From our study the resistant hybrids obtained can be further evaluated for other pomologically important traits like color, size, TSS etc. and have the potential for being utilized as commercial varieties. In addition these hybrids lines can be further used in future resistance breeding programmes.

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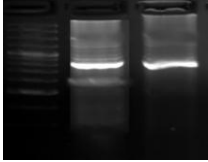


Fig 1 Molecular marker AL07 for scab resistance gene, R=Rosalie (Scab resistant); F=Fuji (Scab susceptible) Ladder: 100bp, Trait: Scab resistance, 570bp (R) and 820 bp (S)

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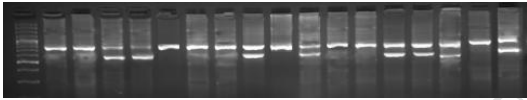


Fig 2. Molecular marker AL07 for scab resistance gene, R=Rosalie (Scab resistant); F=Fuji (Scab susceptible); 1-17 = F1 resulting from "Fuji x Rosalie" Ladder: 100bp, Trait: Scab resistance, 570bp (R) and 820 bp (S)

