

BIOLOGICAL CONTROL AGENTS AGAINST SUNFLOWER PATHOGENS

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Outline

- 1** Current situation of the biological control of sunflower diseases.
- 2** Biological control by means of entomopathogenic fungi.
- 3** Biological control by means of soil inhabiting bacteria.
- 4** Conclusions.

1

Current situation of the biological control of sunflower diseases

Management of plant diseases

Agronomical, physical
and cultural methods



Chemical control



Genetic resistance



Biological control



Biological control

The use of living organisms to suppress the population density or impact of a specific pest organism, making it less abundant or less damaging than it would otherwise be.

Biological control is one of the control strategies used in **Integrated Pest Management** or IPM (Directive 2009/128/EC, art. 12).

Major **uses** of biological control agents:

- Biological control of **invertebrate pests** using predators, parasitoids and pathogens.
- Biological control of **weeds** using herbivores and pathogens.
- Biological control of **plant pathogens** using antagonistic micro-organisms and induced plant resistance.

Eilenberg et al. 2001. *BioControl* 46: 387–400.

Microorganisms from the sunflower rhizosphere (*Pseudomonas* spp., *Xanthomonas* spp., *Agrobacterium* spp., *Bacillus* spp., *Azospirillum* spp. among others) have deserved attention because of their putative antagonistic effect and for being, at the same time, good colonizers of plant roots.

Some ***Pseudomonas* and *Bacillus*** were efficient at controlling the sunflower pathogens *Macrophomina phaseolina* and *Sclerotium rolfsii*. *Pseudomonas putida* showed reduction of sunflower downy mildew incidence in the greenhouse but it was no further assayed.

Some **plant extracts** have shown an *in vitro* detrimental effect against some soil-borne fungi affecting sunflower. This is the case of *Lycium europaeum* extracts, having chlorogenic acid as a major compound. They inhibited the micelial growth of *V. dahliae* and *S. sclerotiorum* as well as conidia and sclerotia formation.

Tej et al. 2018. Eur. J. Plant Pathol. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10658-018-1469-9>

On dual culture, ***Trichoderma harzianum*** inhibited mycelial growth of the seed-borne pathogens of sunflower *Alternaria alternata*, *Bipolaris cynodontis*, *Fusarium culmorum* and *F. oxysporum*. Conidial germination of *F. culmorum* was also reduced.

Guclu and Ozer 2022. Lett. Appl. Bio. DOI: 10.1111/lam.13698

New approaches and options can still be explored

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- 1 Current situation of the biological control of sunflower diseases.
- 2 Biological control by means of entomopathogenic fungi.
- 3 Biological control by means of soil inhabiting bacteria.
- 4 Conclusions.

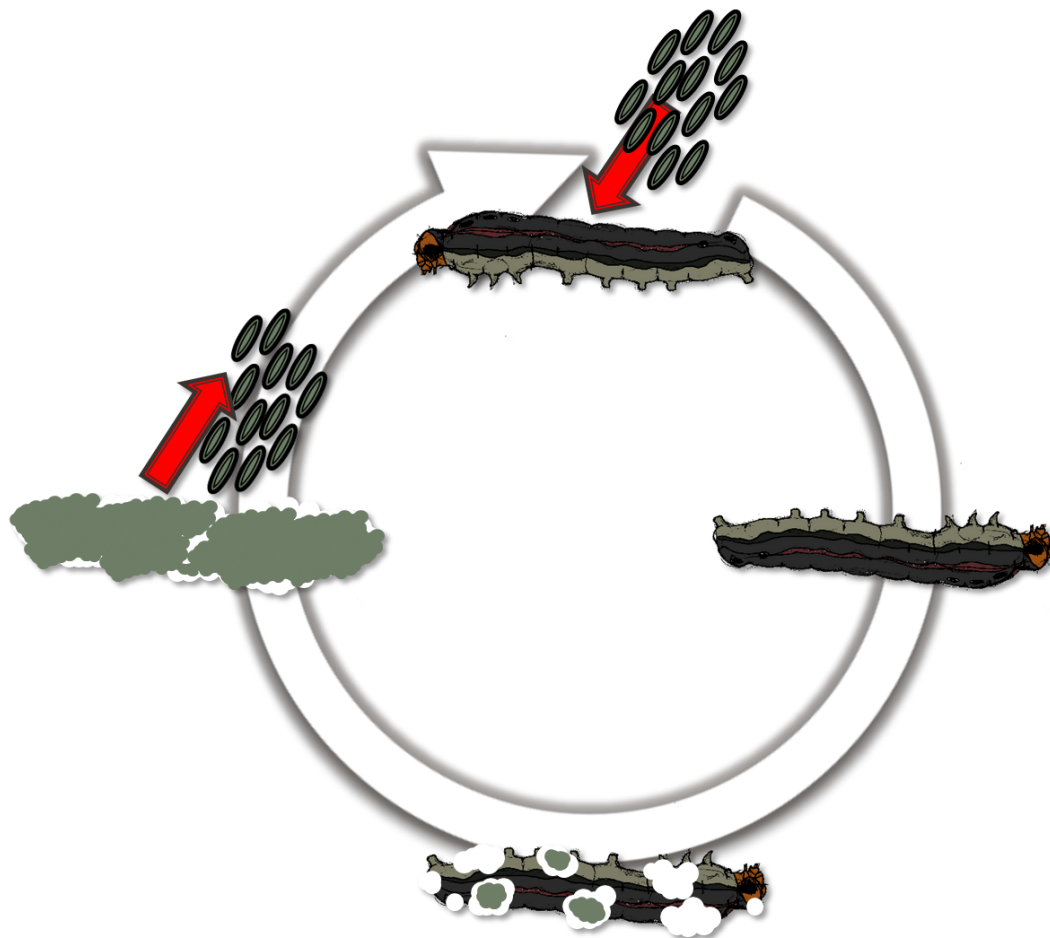
Fungal entomopathogens

- Natural enemies of phytophagous insects. High efficacy.
- They are present in numerous environments.
- Very active commercial development.

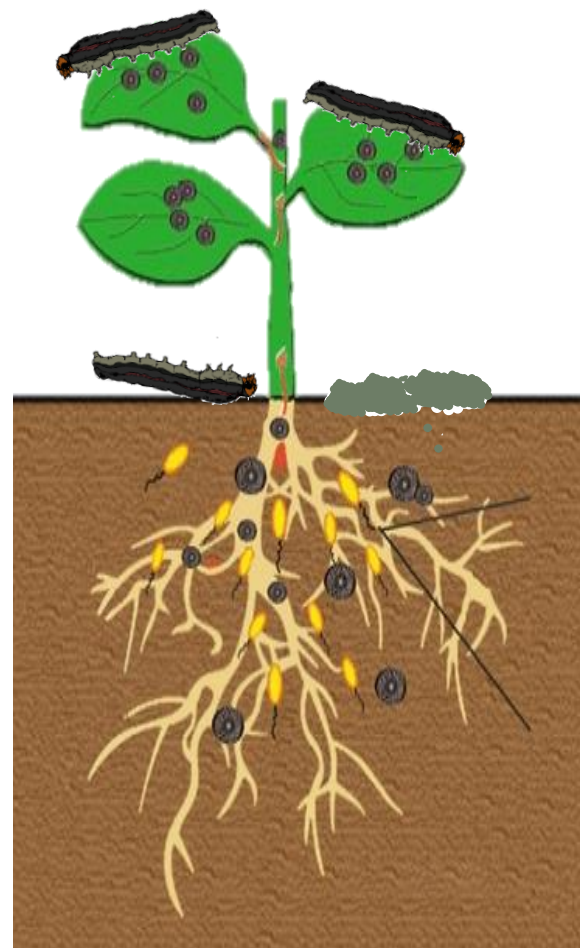


Mode of action of fungal entomopathogens

By contact

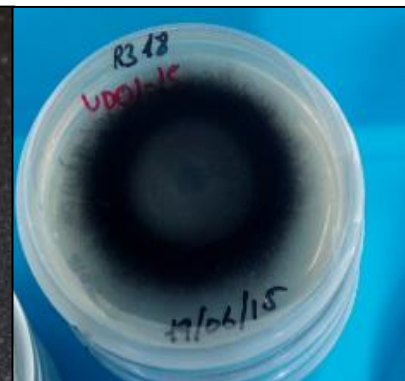
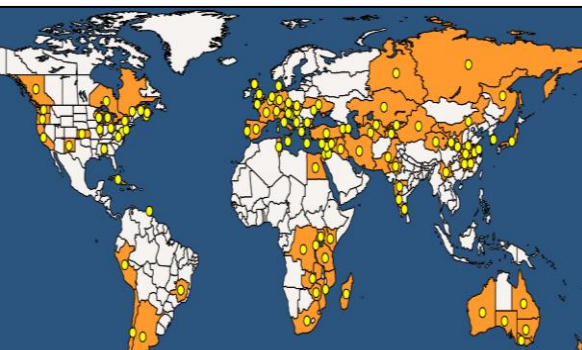


Endophytically



Verticillium wilt of sunflower (*Verticillium dahliae* Kleb.)

- Soil-borne fungus with more than 2000 host plant species.
- Microsclerotia (> 10 years).
- Interveinal chlorosis and yellowing of leaves, progressing upwards.
- Stem lesions.
- No active ingredients registered in the European Union.
- Control by means of genetic resistance.



Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2022

20th International Sunflower Conference, Novi Sad, Serbia, June 20 – 23, 2022

Sunflower downy mildew (*Plasmopara halstedii* Farl. Berl. and de Toni)

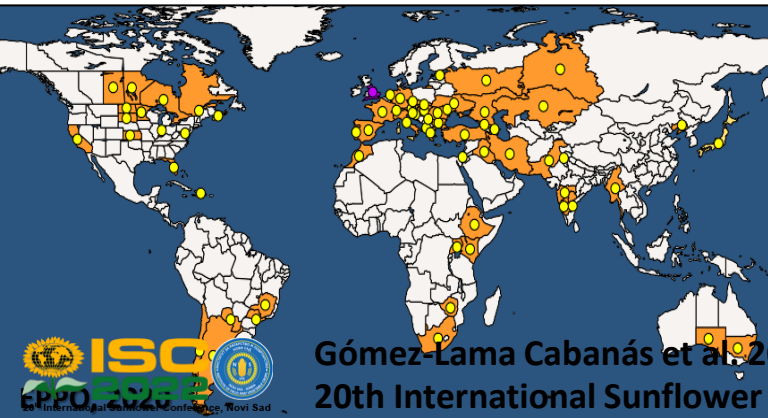
- One of the most widespread and important diseases worldwide.
- Obligate parasite with two types of infections:

Primary infections: resting oospores, affects seeds and seedlings (vertical transmission).



Secondary infections: zoospores infecting leaf tissues, low economic impact.

- Pre- and post-emergence damping-off, chlorosis bordering the main veins progressing downwards, stunting.
- Genetic resistance (more than 40 pathotypes) and chemical control (phenylamides, strobilurins, resistance-inducing chemicals, oxathiapiprolin).



Objectives

To determine whether strains of two different EF species (*Metarhizium brunneum* and *Beauveria bassiana*), could be suitable candidates as biological control agents against *V. dahliae*.

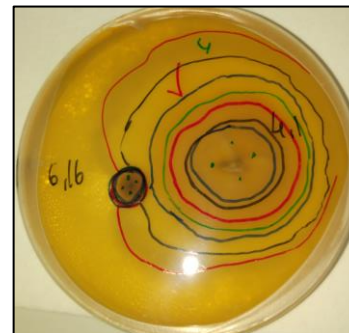
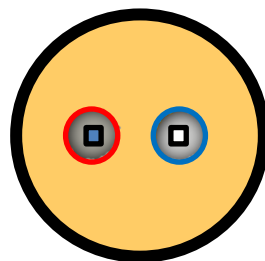
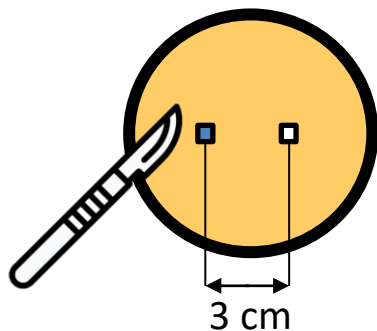
We carried out both *in vitro* experiments, in which the EF were dually plated against *V. dahliae*, and *in planta* experiments, in which we monitored the effect of the EF on the severity of Verticillium wilt symptoms in sunflowers in greenhouse. We also assessed the time lapse of EF in the substrate and performed a molecular detection of the fungi in the plants.

To determine the effectiveness of EF species (*Metarhizium brunneum* and *Beauveria bassiana*) as a method for the management of **sunflower downy mildew**.

We assessed the effect of EF on downy mildew as well as on the growth of sunflowers in axenic culture. We determined whether, or not, EF and *P. halstedii* simultaneously colonize inner tissues of sunflower.

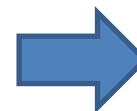
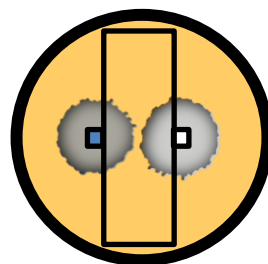
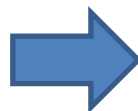
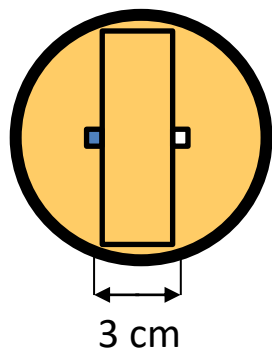
- Entomopathogenic fungi: three strains of *M. brunneum* and two strains of *B. bassiana*.
- Six isolates of *V. dahliae*.

Dual cultures



$$\text{Inhibition of Micelial Growth (\%)} = 100 \times \frac{\text{Diam. colony Control} - \text{Diam. colony Treatment}}{\text{Diam. colony Control}}$$

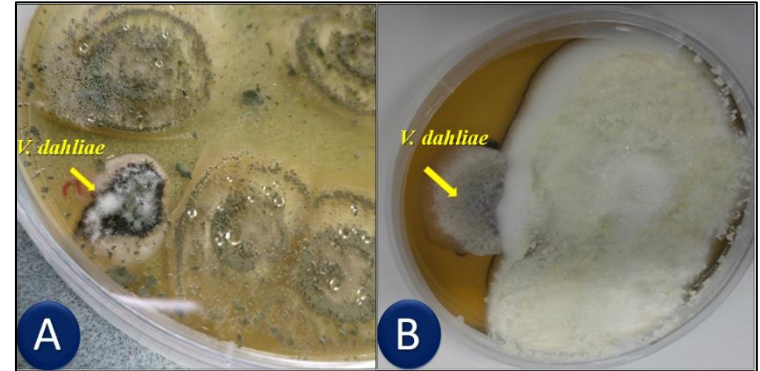
Slides under the microscope



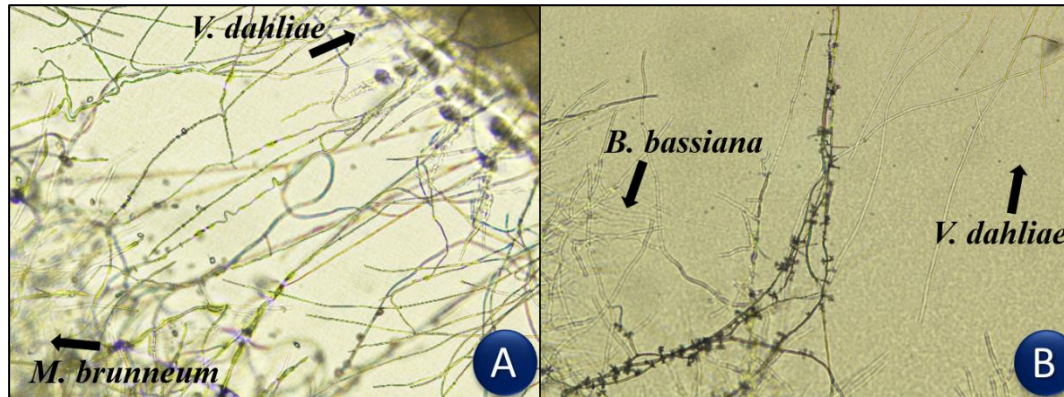
Results

IMG: 8.3 – 63.5% (EF and *V. dahliae* isolate)

Most efficient (EABb 01/33-Su) and less efficient (EAMb 01/158-Su)



Antagonism: **micelial overgrowth** and **antibiosis**.



Experiment under greenhouse conditions

- Entomopathogenic fungi: two strains of *M. brunneum* and two strains of *B. bassiana*.
- One isolate of *V. dahliae* (VdS0113) and one susceptible genotype (RHA821)

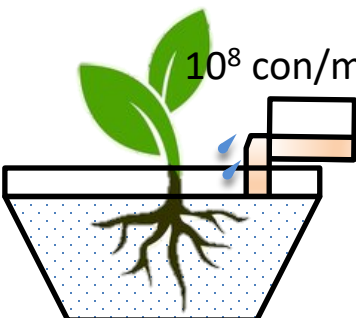


Greenhouse, 34 – 64 DAS

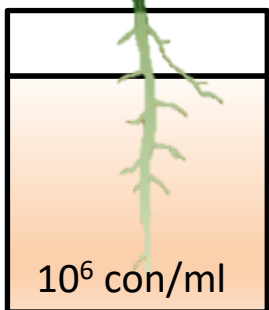
- Weekly disease severity and AUDPC.
- Weekly assessment of EF populations in the soil.



10^8 con/ml



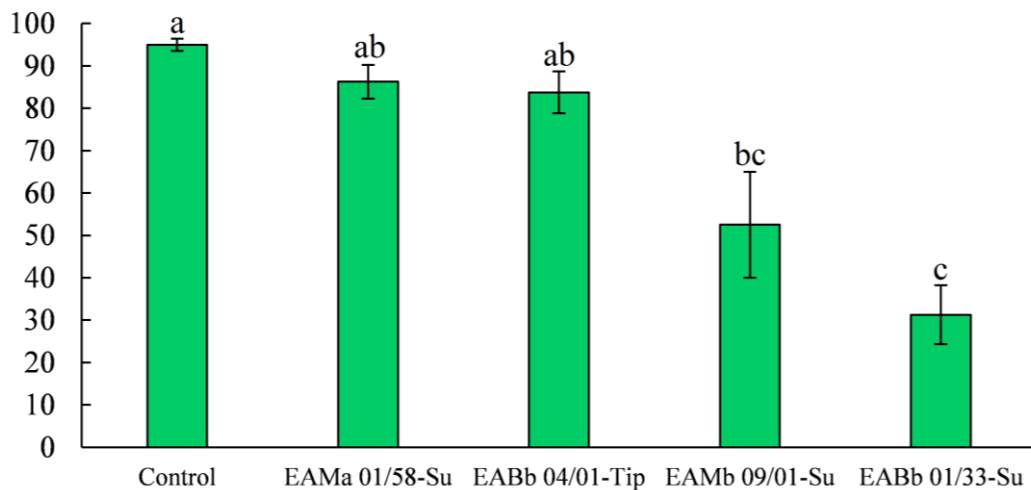
EF, 4 DAS



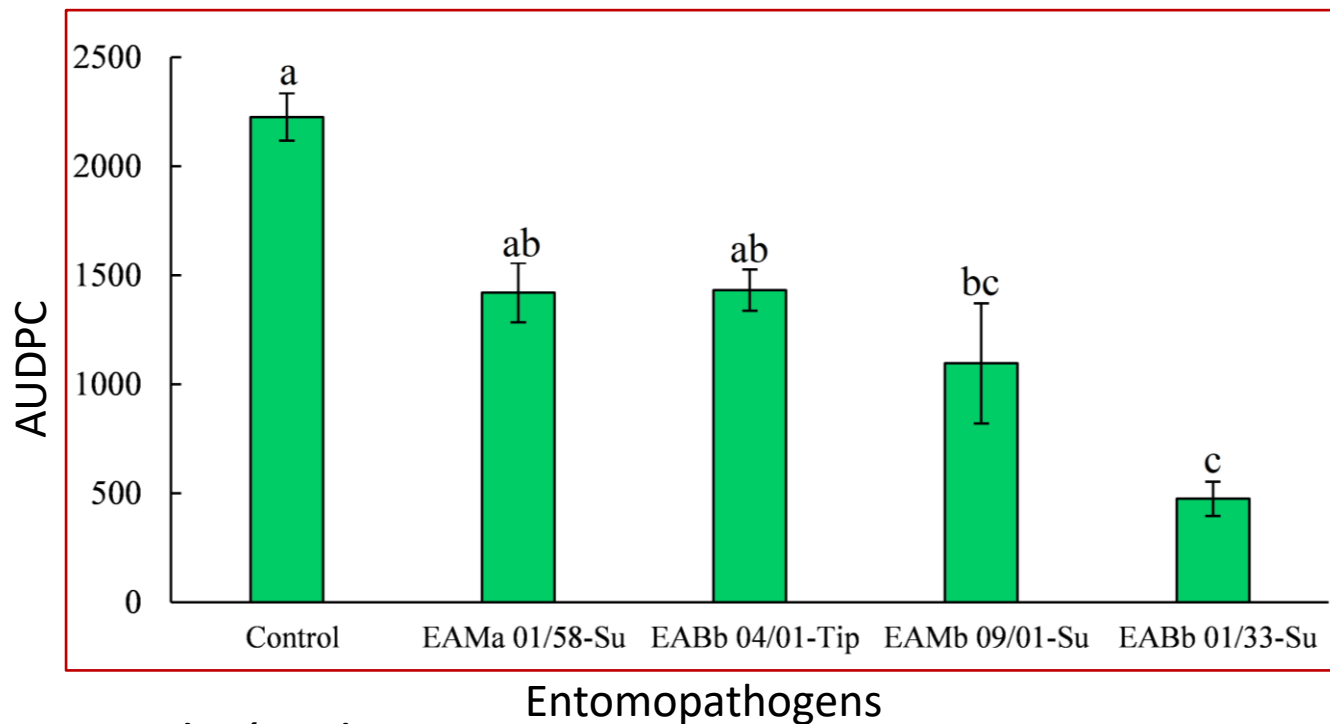
10^6 con/ml

Vd, 34 DAS

Symptoms at the end of the experiment

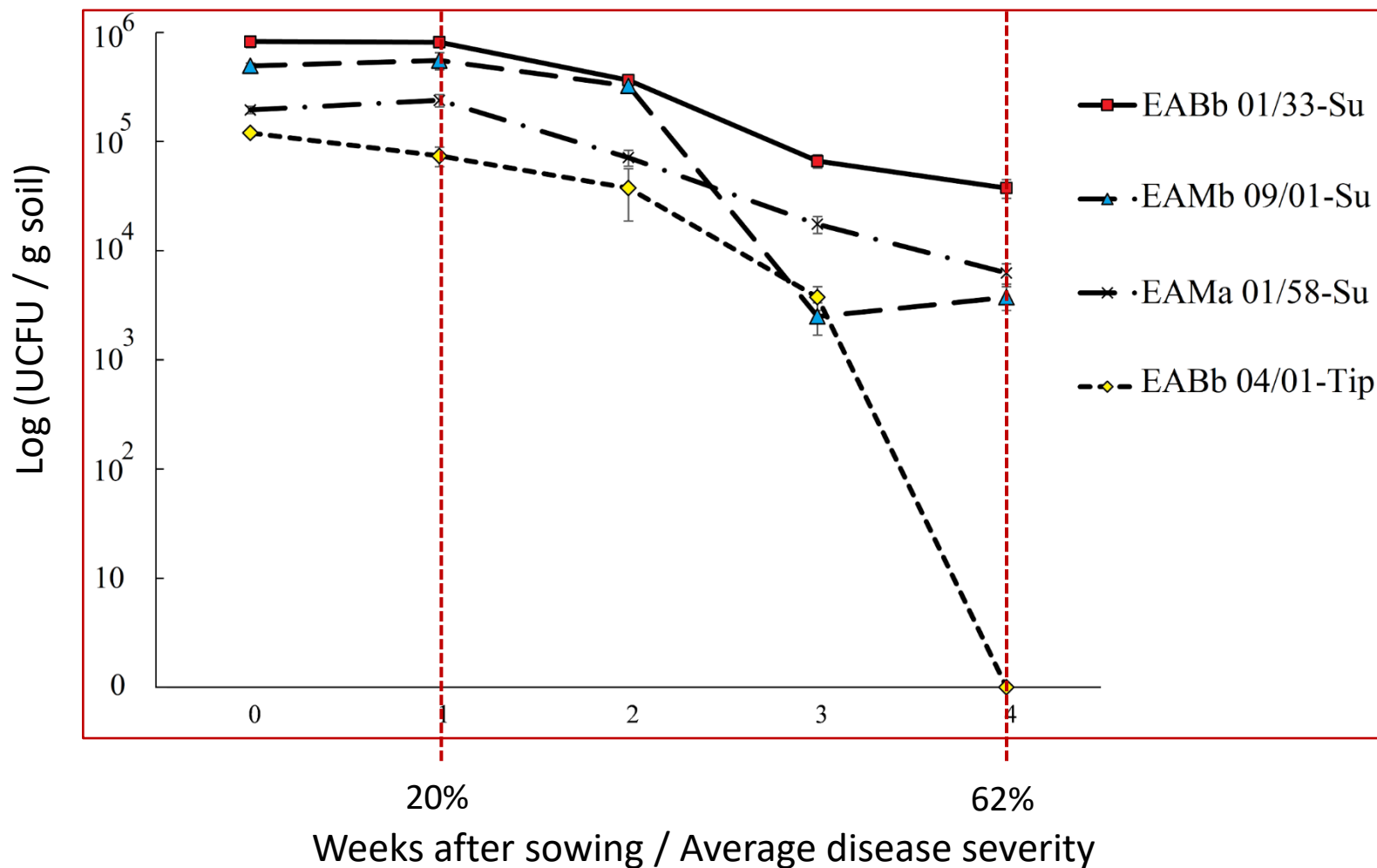


Two strains of EF significantly reduced symptoms of verticillium in sunflowers.



Entomopathogens

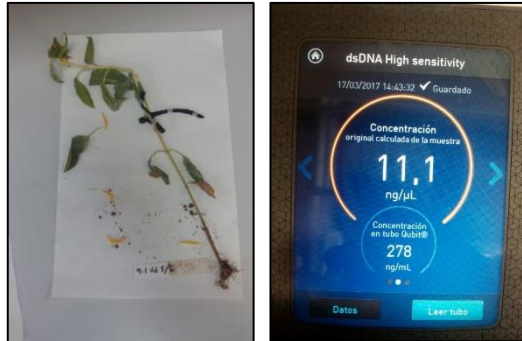
Populations of EF in the soil of sunflowers inoculated with *V. dahliae*



The EF were able to efficiently persist in the soil.

Molecular detection of EF and *V. dahliae* inside the plants

Amplification of the region consisting of the 5.8S ribosomal DNA and internal transcribed spacers 1 and 2 using the primer set ITS5/ITS4.



When the sunflowers were inoculated with *V. dahliae*, we detected the pathogen, but not the entomopathogen, by molecular methods.

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DOI: 10.1111/ppa.13230

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Plant Pathology

WILEY

Evidence of soil-located competition as the cause of the reduction of sunflower verticillium wilt by entomopathogenic fungi

Pedro Miranda-Fuentes^{1,2}  | Ana Belén García-Carneros¹ | Ana María Montilla-Carmona¹ | Leire Molinero-Ruiz¹ 

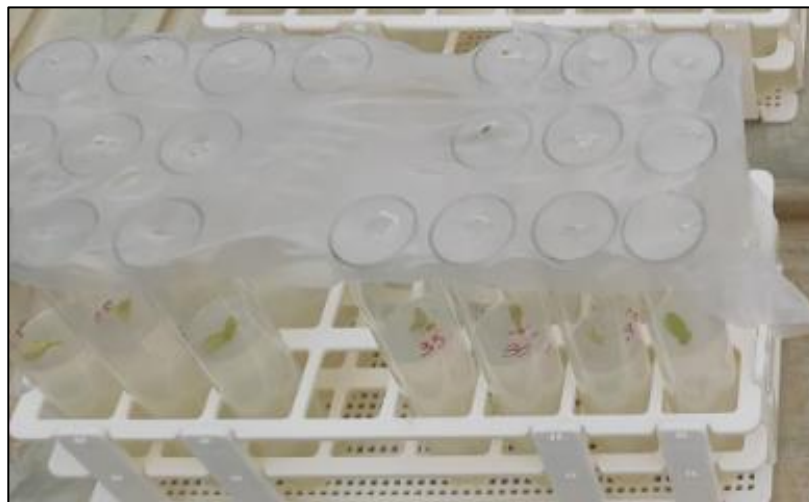
The protection that the EF *B. bassiana* and *M. brunneum* confer against verticillium wilt might not be plant-located, but is more likely to be the consequence of their competition with *V. dahliae* in the soil.

- Entomopathogenic fungi: three strains of *M. brunneum* and two strains of *B. bassiana*.
- One isolate of *P. halstedii* (1SM, race 304) and one susceptible genotype (HA304)

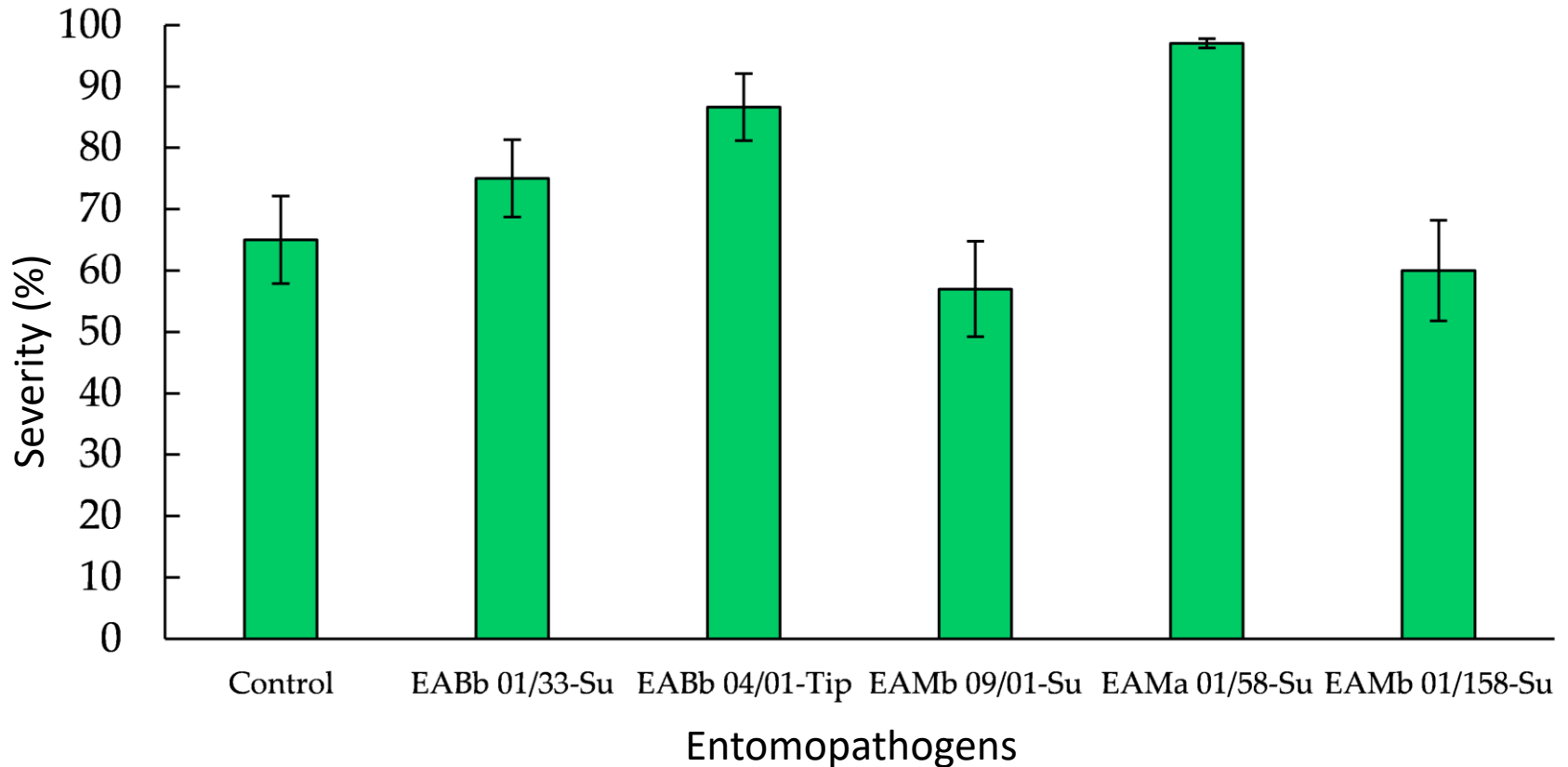
Germinated seeds individually sown in Hoagland and Knop's culture medium.

Treatment with EF (10^7 con./ml, $5\mu\text{l}$).

Inoculation with *P. halstedii* 24 h later (4×10^4 zoospores/ml, $5\mu\text{l}$).



Effect of EF on downy mildew



No significant differences found for:

- Downy mildew severity (0% no symptoms, to 100% cottony growth completely covering the cotyledons and first true pair of leaves and evident in the base of the stem).
- Shoot height and root length
- Dry weight of shoots and roots.

Effect of EF on the growth of sunflower

- Entomopathogenic fungi: three strains of *M. brunneum* and two strains of *B. bassiana*.

Germinated seeds individually sown in Hoagland and Knop's culture medium. Treatment with EF (10^7 con./ml, 5 μ l).

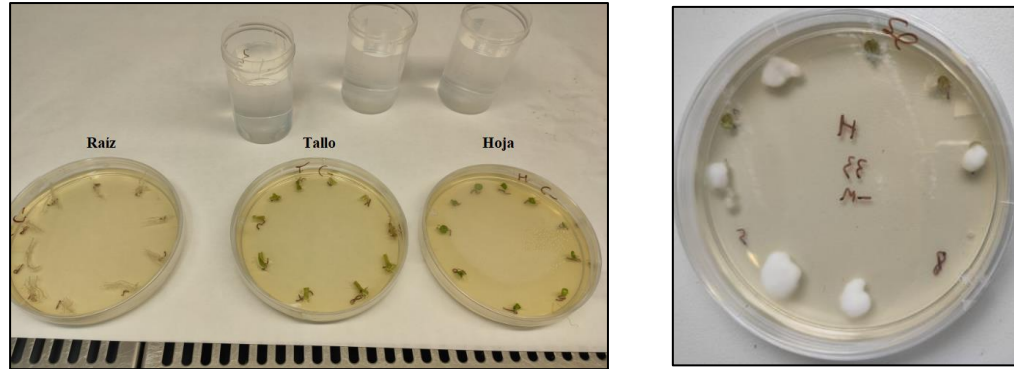


| EF | Shoot height (cm) | Root length (cm) | Dry weight of shoot (g) | Dry weight of roots (g) |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Control | 14.7 ± 0.8 a | 12.3 ± 0.9 a | 1.2 ± 0.1 a | 0.4 ± 0.0 a |
| EABb 01/33-Su | 9.8 ± 1.5 b | 9.2 ± 1.2 c | 0.7 ± 0.1 b | 0.2 ± 0.0 c |
| EABb 04/01-Tip | 13.0 ± 0.9 a | 11.1 ± 0.5 abc | 0.9 ± 0.1 a | 0.3 ± 0.0 bc |
| EABb 09/01-Su | 15.4 ± 0.7 a | 9.9 ± 0.6 bc | 1.2 ± 0.1 a | 0.3 ± 0.1 abc |
| EAMa 01/58-Su | 15.1 ± 0.7 a | 11.6 ± 0.3 ab | 1.1 ± 0.1 a | 0.3 ± 0.0 abc |
| EAMb 01/158-Su | 14.8 ± 0.7 a | 11.2 ± 0.5 abc | 1.1 ± 0.1 a | 0.3 ± 0.0 ab |

Some of the EF reduced some of the growth variables of sunflower.

Microbiological detection of EF inside the plant

Isolation of five EF on Sabouraud Dextrose Agar.
Root, shoot and leaf tissue.



| Entomopathogen | Root (%) | Shoot (%) | Leaf (%) |
|----------------|----------|-----------|----------|
| Control | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| EABb 01/33-Su | 87.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| EABb 04/01-Tip | 30.0 | 20.0 | 10.0 |
| EABb 09/01-Su | 20.0 | 22.2 | 0.0 |
| EAMa 01/58-Su | 20.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| EAMb 01/158-Su | 20.0 | 30.0 | 20.0 |

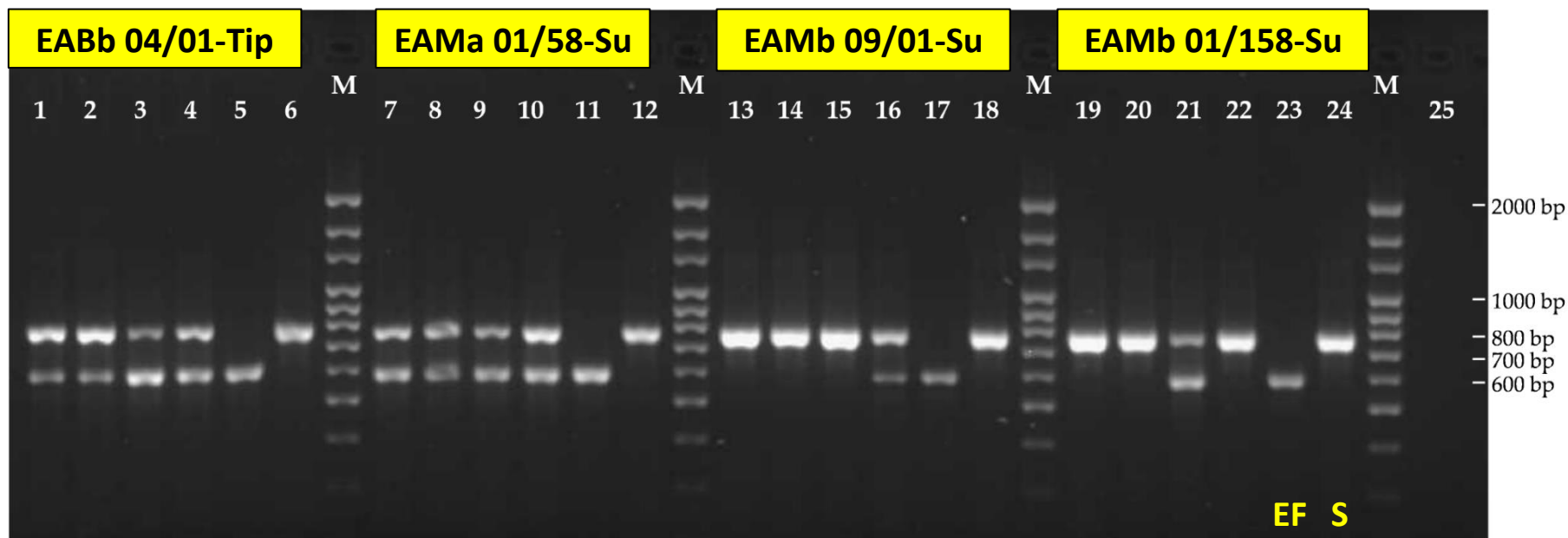
None of the EF strains was recovered from plants inoculated with *P. halstedii*.

The five EF strains were isolated from non-inoculated sunflowers, although with percentages of isolation that varied depending on plant part and EF strain.

Molecular detection of EF inside the plant

EF: amplification of the region consisting of the 5.8S ribosomal DNA and internal transcribed spacers 1 and 2 using the primer set ITS5/ITS4.

P. halstedii: amplification of the nuclear DNA coding for the large ribosomal unit (28S rDNA) using LR0R and LR6-O primers.



DNA from EF was only amplified in plant samples treated with EF but not inoculated with *P. halstedii*.

Article

Updated Characterization of Races of *Plasmopara halstedii* and Entomopathogenic Fungi as Endophytes of Sunflower Plants in Axenic Culture

Pedro Miranda-Fuentes ^{1,2,†} , Ana B. García-Carneros ^{1,†} and Leire Molinero-Ruiz ^{1,*} 

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† These authors contributed equally to this work.

The **obligate nature** of *P. halstedii* infections and the **strong dependence** of *Metarhizium* and *Beauveria* spp. **on soil ecology and characteristics**, seem to condition the bioactivity of EF against downy mildew. This is highly dependent on environmental conditions involving the experimental soil system.

Outline

- 1 Current situation of the biological control of sunflower diseases.
- 2 Biological control by means of entomopathogenic fungi.
- 3 Biological control by means of soil inhabiting bacteria.
- 4 Conclusions.

The biological control by **soil-inhabiting microbes** has proven to be a successful strategy **against soil-borne pathogens**. It has been widely implemented in the management of *Fusarium* and *Verticillium* diseases.

The most common microbial **genera** with effective biocontrol activity against this type of diseases are *Pseudomonas*, *Bacillus*, *Streptomyces*, *Trichoderma*, non-pathogenic *Fusarium oxysporum*, and some arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi.

Bubici et al. 2019. *Front. Microbiol.* 10:1290. doi: 10.3389/fmicb.2019.01290

Our group identified biocontrol agents against **Verticillium wilt of olive tree** and **Fusarium wilt of banana**. Most of these antagonists originated from the olive tree or the banana **rhizosphere soil or roots**, as native constituents of the root endophytome.

Köberl et al. 2017. *Sci. Rep.* 7:45318. doi: 10.1038/srep45318

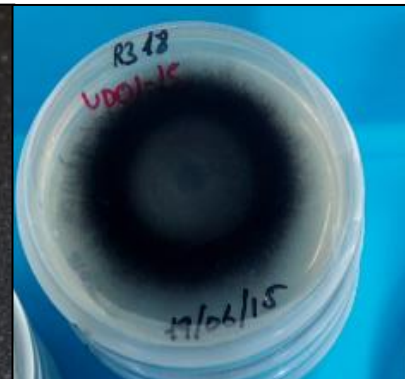
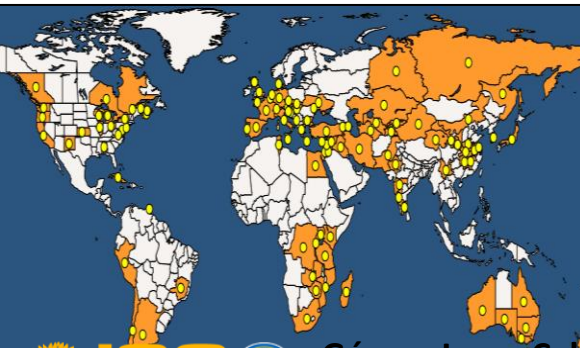
Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2018. *Front. Microbiol.* 9:277. doi: 10.3389/fmicb.2018.00277

Pseudomonas simiae PICF7, a highly versatile beneficial endophytic rhizobacteria isolated from olive roots, shows **biocontrol and plant-growth promoting abilities**. Moreover, it displays significant biocontrol of *Verticillium* wilt of olive and *Fusarium* wilt of banana.

Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2021. *J. Fungi* 7:194. doi: 10.3390/jof7030194

Verticillium wilt of sunflower (*Verticillium dahliae* Kleb.)

- Soil-borne fungus with more than 2000 host plant species.
- Microsclerotia (> 10 years).
- Interveinal chlorosis and yellowing of leaves, progressing upwards.
- Stem lesions.
- No active ingredients registered in the European Union.
- Control by means of genetic resistance.



Gómez-Lama Cabanas et al. 2022

20th International Sunflower Conference, Novi Sad, Serbia, June 20 – 23, 2022

Sunflower broomrape (*Orobanche cumana* Wallr.)

➤ Disease caused by a root holoparasitic plant that depends entirely on sunflower to complete its life cycle and reduces dramatically the crop yield.

➤ Initial development of symptoms around flowering of sunflower. Symptoms have a similar appearance to those of water stress.

➤ Sunflower broomrape is mainly controlled by means of genetic resistance. New races are identified.



EURASIA



Affected countries
 Affected areas

Objectives:

Evaluating the *in vitro* antagonism of a collection of soil inhabiting bacteria with good biocontrol effect on wilts of olive tree or banana, against *V. dahliae* from sunflower.

Evaluating, under greenhouse conditions, a collection of soil inhabiting bacteria, with known biocontrol effect of wilts of olive tree or banana on:

- The infection of sunflower by *O. cumana*.
- The growth of sunflower.

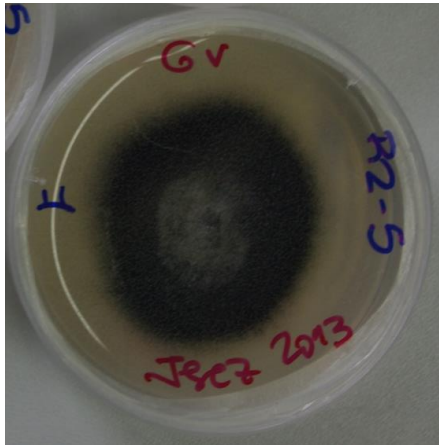
Regarding sunflower diseases, **preliminary results** suggested that bacterization of sunflower seeds with *Pseudomonas* spp. from olive roots can promote plant growth as well as result in significant reductions of the number of broomrape nodules.

Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2018. Abstracts of the International Symposium on Confection Sunflower Technology and Production, p.41. Wu Yuan County, Inner Mongolia (China), August 8-10, 2018.

Bacterial strains from plant rhizosphere used in this work

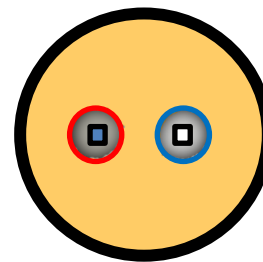
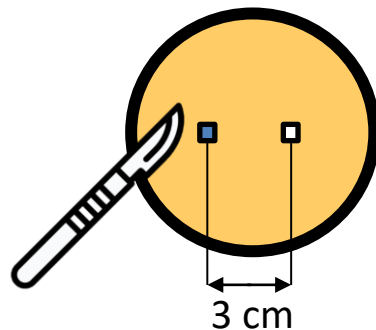
| Reference | Taxa | Host of isolation | Previous works | Experiment-pathogen |
|------------|---|-------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| IAS-B-364 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis</i> | Banana | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2021 | Plates-Vd |
| IAS-B-931 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis subsp. aurantiaca</i> | Banana | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2021 | Plates-Vd |
| IAS-B-944 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis subsp. aureofaciens</i> | Banana | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2021 | Plates-Vd, greenhouse-Oc |
| IAS-B-1013 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis</i> | Banana | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2021 | Plates-Vd |
| IAS-B-1054 | <i>Pseudomonas sp.</i> | Banana | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2021 | Plates-Vd, greenhouse-Oc |
| PIC25 | <i>Pseudomonas sp.</i> | Olive | Gómez-Lama et al. 2018a | Plates-Vd, greenhouse-Oc |
| PIC28 | <i>Bacillus spp.</i> | Olive | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2018b | Plates-Vd, greenhouse-Oc |
| PIC105 | <i>Pseudomonas indica</i> | Olive | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2018a | Plates-Vd, greenhouse-Oc |
| PIC141 | <i>Pseudomonas sp.</i> | Olive | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2018a | Greenhouse-Oc |
| PIC167 | <i>Paenibacillus terrae</i> | Olive | Gómez-Lama Cabanás et al. 2018b | Greenhouse-Oc |
| PICF4 | <i>Pseudomonas fluorescens</i> | Olive | Mercado-Blanco et al. 2004 | Greenhouse-Oc |
| PICF6 | <i>Pseudomonas sp.</i> | Olive | Mercado-Blanco et al. 2004 | Plates-Vd, greenhouse-Oc |
| PICF7 | <i>Pseudomonas simiae</i> | Olive | Mercado-Blanco et al. 2004 | Plates-Vd, greenhouse-Oc |

Dual cultures



| Reference | Year of collection | Geographical | Host | Previous works |
|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|---|
| | | location | | |
| Vd01-13 | 2013 | Cadiz (Andalusia, Spain) | Sunflower | Martin-Sanz et al. 2018. Front. Plant Sci. 9: 288 |
| Vd09-16 | 2016 | Kastamonu (Ahmetbey, Turkey) | Sunflower | Martin-Sanz et al. 2018. Front. Plant Sci. 9: 288 |

➤ Ten bacterial strains



Nutrient Agar (NA)
Potato Dextrose Agar (PDA)

$$\text{Inhibition of Micelial Growth (\%)} = 100 \times \frac{\text{Diam. colony Control} - \text{Diam. colony Treatment}}{\text{Diam. colony Control}}$$

Results

| Reference | Taxa | Inhibition of <i>Verticillium dahliae</i> | | | |
|------------|---|---|---------|----------|----------|
| | | (%) | | | |
| | | Vd01-13 | | Vd09-16 | |
| | | NA | PDA | NA | PDA |
| Control | | 0.00 A | 0.00 A | 0.00 A | 0.00 A |
| IAS-B-364 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis</i> | 83.55 E | 88.12 E | 87.82 G | 65.79 F |
| IAS-B-944 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis</i> | 83.75 E | 88.05 E | 78.91 F | 27.14 D |
| IAS-B-931 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis</i> <i>subsp. aurantiaca</i> | 84.25 E | 35.50 B | 79.97 F | 12.54 B |
| PIC28 | <i>Bacillus</i> sp. | 55.73 B | 33.15 B | 63.11 E | 20.82 CD |
| PICF6 | <i>Pseudomonas</i> sp. | 78.47 E | 40.33 C | 33.28 B | 17.07 BC |
| PICF7 | <i>Pseudomonas simiae</i> | 27.82 B | 88.68 E | 41.04 C | 23.84 CD |
| IAS-B-1054 | <i>Pseudomonas</i> sp. | 83.65 E | ----- | 87.91 G | ----- |
| IAS-B-1013 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis</i> | 83.15 E | ----- | 87.20 G | ----- |
| PIC25 | <i>Pseudomonas</i> sp. | 50.85 D | 53.80 D | 53.93 D | 22.46 CD |
| PIC105 | <i>Pseudomonas indica</i> | 40.48 C | 56.01 D | 58.96 DE | 42.45 E |

- Significant differences of inhibition between *V. dahliae* isolates: independent analyses.
- Five bacterial strains showed interesting results (inhibition >70%) against both isolates. Two additional strains inhibited the growth of one isolate.

3

Biological control by means of soil inhabiting bacteria: *O. cumana*

- Ten strains (*Bacillus*, *Paenibacillus*, *Pseudomonas*)
- One population of *O. cumana* and one susceptible genotype of sunflower (B117)
- Greenhouse ($\pm 25^{\circ}\text{C}$) for 5 weeks



Results

Control of broomrape

| Reference | Taxa | Height | N. nodules* | Weight | |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | | | | Root | Aboveground parts |
| Control (MgSO ₄) | | 16.79 A | 5.71 AB | 0.72 A | 3.44 ABCD |
| IAS-B-944 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis subp. aureofaciens</i> | 20.20 BC | 5.14 AB | 1.98 FGH | 3.75 ABC |
| PIC28 | <i>Bacillus</i> sp. | 17.89 BC | 8.00 A | 2.26 H | 4.05 A |
| PIC167 | <i>Paenibacillus terrae</i> | 17.76 AB | 6.00 AB | 1.40 BCD | 2.96 D |
| PICF4 | <i>Pseudomonas fluorescens</i> | 22.13 C | 1.29 C | 1.56 DEF | 3.51 ABCD |
| PICF6 | <i>Pseudomonas</i> sp. | 20.53 BC | 7.00 AB | 2.04 GH | 3.87 AB |
| PICF7 | <i>Pseudomonas simiae</i> | 19.49 ABC | 2.86 BC | 1.63 DEFG | 3.09 CD |
| IAS-B-1054 | <i>Pseudomonas</i> sp. | 19.00 AB | 2.86 BC | 1.28 BC | 3.24 BCD |
| PIC25 | <i>Pseudomonas</i> sp. | 17.86 AB | 3.14 BC | 1.56 DEF | 3.33 ABCD |
| PIC105 | <i>Pseudomonas indica</i> | 20.20 BC | 0.71 C | 1.32 BC | 2.88 D |
| PIC141 | <i>Pseudomonas</i> sp. | 16.79 A | 7.71 A | 1.76 EFG | 2.96 D |

- All the bacteria significantly increased the weight of roots. Some of them also caused less nodules.
- One *Bacillus* and four *Pseudomonas* were associated to taller plants.

Results

Growth promotion

| Reference | Taxa | Height | Weight | |
|------------------------------|---|---------|----------------|-------------------|
| | | | Root | Aboveground parts |
| Control (MgSO ₄) | | 20.36 A | 0.76 A | 3.27 |
| IAS-B-944 | <i>Pseudomonas chlororaphis subsp. aureofaciens</i> | 19.03 A | 1.45 BC | 2.93 |
| PIC28 | <i>Bacillus sp.</i> | 18.79 A | 1.76 C | 3.52 |
| PIC167 | <i>Paenibacillus terrae</i> | 18.57 A | 1.13 AB | 2.86 |
| PICF4 | <i>Pseudomonas fluorescens</i> | 20.43 A | 1.49 BC | 3.21 |
| PICF6 | <i>Pseudomonas sp.</i> | 21.74 A | 1.66 C | 3.64 |
| PICF7 | <i>Pseudomonas simiae</i> | 19.93 A | 1.74 C | 3.26 |
| IAS-B-1054 | <i>Pseudomonas sp.</i> | 20.00 A | 1.65 C | 2.99 |
| PIC25 | <i>Pseudomonas sp.</i> | 14.79 B | 1.51 BC | 2.99 |
| PIC105 | <i>Pseudomonas indica</i> | 20.00 A | 1.51 BC | 3.15 |
| PIC141 | <i>Pseudomonas sp.</i> | 20.29 A | 1.44 BC | 3.52 |

- All except one of the bacteria significantly increased the weight of roots. There were no statistical differences of weight of shoots and leaves of the plants.
- One *Pseudomonas* was associated to shorter plants.

2

The protection that *B. bassiana* and *M. brunneum* confer against verticillium wilt might not be plant-located, but is more likely to be the consequence of their competition with *V. dahliae* in the soil.

The inefficacy of entomopathogens against *P. halstedii* in our works might be related to environmental conditions of the experimental soil system. This is not unexpected, since *P. halstedii* is an obligate parasite that shelters into the plant and *Metarhizium* and *Beauveria* spp. are soil-dependent and affected by soil ecology and characteristics.

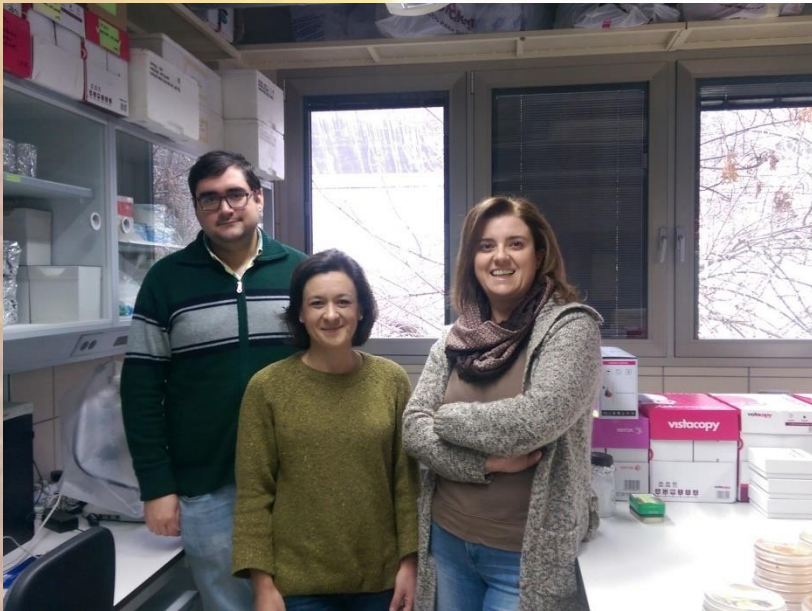
3

Although the inhibition of *V. dahliae* by soil-inhabiting bacteria depended on the fungal isolate, five strains showed promising results. Future research will address the study of their efficacy under greenhouse conditions.

The bacteria were associated to increases of root weight of sunflower irrespective of the presence of *O. cumana*. In inoculated plants, some of the tested strains were associated to low number of nodules.

Thank you for your attention!!

Lab. Diseases of Field Crops



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