Molecular Breeding for Improved Berry Quality in *Ribes, Rubus* and *Vaccinium*

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Fruit Breeding Group
Fruit Breeding at JHI

- Commercially-funded breeding programmes
  - Raspberry, blackberry
  - Blackcurrant
- New techniques for selecting the plants we need
  - Marker–assisted breeding strategies
  - Faster and more specific cultivar development
Breeding techniques

- Expensive to run breeding programmes:
  - Lengthy timescales
    - Some traits take a long time to screen for, others are impossible to screen on a high-throughput basis
  - Field/glasshouse costs
- Timescales need to be reduced and efficiency needs to be increased
  - Time to cv. currently 12-15 years
- Extensive phenotyping in field, glasshouse and CE rooms
- Establish link between genotype and phenotype
Molecular Breeding

- Faster identification of genetically superior individuals in breeding populations

- Can be utilised in situations where:
  - Assessment in field takes a long time
    - Pest resistance (some)
  - Assessment can only be done on mature plants over time
    - Fruit quality

- Basic research development costs relatively high, deployment costs low

- No environmental effects

- Must be associated with detailed phenotyping
Existing markers in *Rubus* and *Ribes*

- Markers linked to pest/disease resistances
  - *Phytophthora* root rot (raspberry)
  - *Cecidophyopsis* gall mite (blackcurrant)

- SSR marker (root rot)
- PCR-based marker (gall mite)

- Time saved compared to field infestation plots (ca. 4 years) for screening of new lines from breeding programme

- Markers now routinely deployed in JHI breeding programmes as a selection tool

Brennan et al., 2009. TAG **118**: 205-212
Graham et al., 2011. TAG **123**: 585-601
Blackcurrant Breeding Objectives

**Fruit quality**
- High Brix/acid ratio
- Low total acidity
- Anthocyanins
  - Delphinidins preferentially selected
- Vitamin C (AsA)
  - > 140 mg/100 ml
- Sensory traits
- Berry size
  - 1 g minimum
  - Fresh market – 2 g minimum

**Agronomic**
- Environmental resilience
  - Winter chill levels
    - < 2000 h/7.2°C
- Pest resistance for low-input growing
- Acceptable crop yield
  - > 6 t/ha
  - Juice yield also quantified
Trait associations – *Ribes* fruit quality I

- Measurements across reference 9328 mapping population (ca. 300 plants) for 4 years at JHI
- SNP-based linkage map developed using transcriptome-based 2GS 454 sequencing
- Individual traits placed on genetic linkage map
  - Fruit size
  - Anthocyanins
- Associated molecular markers identified for validation in other germplasm

Russell et al., BMC Plant Biology 2011, **11:147**
Blackcurrant berry weight

SCRI9328 LG1

Smaller effects on LG4 and LG5, but less consistent
Blackcurrant – Ascorbic acid

SCRI9328 LG1

SCRI9328 LG5
Blackcurrant total anthocyanins

Also major QTLs for citrate in this area. Also anthocyanin (pomace) in both years, and Brix

Anthocyanin_08

Anthocyanin_09
Trait associations – *Ribes* fruit quality II

- Use of gene expression data from ripening fruit linked to metabolomic analyses
  - Fruit quality analysed at various stages
  - Gene expression monitored across stages using Agilent microarrays
  - Key genes mapped, markers identified for the various quality and nutritional traits
  - Environmental influences on gene expression
Reduction of seedling numbers using marker-assisted breeding - *Ribes*

- Marker for berry size
  - Est. 2013

- Markers for anthocyanins, sugars, vitamin C
  - Est. 2015

- Marker for gall mite resistance
  - 2012

- Reduced seedling numbers – but increased relevance to industry needs

- Faster field selections and cv. releases
Raspberry quality traits

- Commercial traits assessed across seasons and environments:
  - Ripening
  - Cropping season
  - Colour
  - pH
  - Anthocyanins
  - Berry size
  - Sensory traits
  - Brix
  - Volatiles
  - Raspberry ketone
Experimental outline

- Glen Moy x Latham reference mapping population
- 3 seasons and 3 environments
- Assessments of trait of interest
- QTL mapping
- Candidate gene analysis
- Microarray to examine changes in gene expression during fruit development
Ripening

- QTLs for the ripening stages were identified across four chromosomes 2, 3, 5 and 6.
- Each of the groups had markers that had a significant effect at various ripening stages.
- The work identified genetic markers associated with early or late bud break and short or long ripening periods.
Anthocyanins in Raspberry

- Anthocyanins in mapping progeny and parents:
  - cyanidin-3-sophoroside (C3S)
  - cyanidin-3-glucoside (C3G)
  - cyanidin-3-glucosylrutinoside (C3GR)
  - cyanidin-3-rutinoside (C3R)
  - pelargonidin-3-sophoroside (P3S)
  - pelargonidin-3-glucoside (P3G)
  - pelargonidin-3-glucosylrutinoside (P3GR)
  - pelargonidin-3-rutinoside (P3R)

- Major QTL identified for all anthocyanins across seasons and sites

- Several transcription factors underlying QTL:
  - bHLH, FruitE4 encoding a basic leucine zipper (bZIP) transcription factor
  - Rub119 encoding a NAM (no apical meristem)-like transcription factor

- Markers linked to QTL under validation
QTL for anthocyanin production

Kassim et al., 2009
# Raspberry Volatiles Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Field 2006</th>
<th>Field 2007</th>
<th>Polytunnel 2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Progeny</td>
<td>Progeny</td>
<td>Progeny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volatile</td>
<td>Mean ± SEM</td>
<td>Min-Max</td>
<td>Mean ± SEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b-damascenone</td>
<td>72.29 ± 4.02</td>
<td>0 – 463.8</td>
<td>87.10 ± 6.82</td>
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<tr>
<td>b-ionone</td>
<td>13.65 ± 0.53</td>
<td>0.46 – 47.88</td>
<td>9.83 ± 0.44</td>
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<tr>
<td>a-ionone</td>
<td>7.31 ± 0.19</td>
<td>1.65 – 17.16</td>
<td>3.86 ± 0.14</td>
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<tr>
<td>a-ionol</td>
<td>2.24 ± 0.09</td>
<td>0.16 – 7.28</td>
<td>1.83 ± 0.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linalool</td>
<td>4.72 ± 0.32</td>
<td>0.67 – 22.26</td>
<td>2.90 ± 0.17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geraniol</td>
<td>2.64 ± 0.08</td>
<td>0.68 – 8.87</td>
<td>1.82 ± 0.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Z)-3-hexenol</td>
<td>22.35 ± 0.34</td>
<td>0.71 – 28.15</td>
<td>9.06 ± 0.29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acetic acid</td>
<td>1.39 ± 0.06</td>
<td>0.06 – 8.26</td>
<td>0.64 ± 0.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hexanoic acid</td>
<td>6.54 ± 0.35</td>
<td>0.89 – 41.68</td>
<td>7.97 ± 0.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acetoin</td>
<td>1.02 ± 0.05</td>
<td>0.09 – 4.74</td>
<td>1.03 ± 0.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benzyl alcohol</td>
<td>0.59 ± 0.03</td>
<td>0.15 – 2.18</td>
<td>1.07 ± 0.04</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Min-Max values indicate the range of variation for each sample.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gene/Protein Name</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRUITE8OMT</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERUB271PR</td>
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<td>ERubLR_SQ01_P18unk</td>
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<td>Ri26Sprot</td>
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<td>RiSnf1</td>
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<td>ERubLR_SQ07_1_E10TF</td>
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<td>RUB279a</td>
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<td>Rub177a</td>
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<td>ERubLR_SQ12.4_A04DMO</td>
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<td>P13MS-112</td>
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<td>P12M121-127</td>
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<td>P13MS-55-98</td>
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<td>A454C6570 ISPH</td>
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<td>Rub242a</td>
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<td>E41M31-153</td>
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<td>E41M31-147</td>
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<td>P13MS-55-251</td>
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<td>RIC15</td>
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<td>E41M40-136</td>
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<td>RUB238h</td>
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<td>Rub259b</td>
<td>188.3</td>
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</table>

Volatiles QTL and some of the underlying genes:
- Phytoene synthase
- PMR
- ISPH
- CTR1
- IPPI
Vaccinium

- Mapping of key traits
- Mapping population developed (Draper x Jewel), segregating for:
  - Fruit size
  - Firmness
  - Flavour
  - Sugar/acid ratios
- Tetraploid mapping developed at JHI for potato used to map traits
Linkage Analysis and QTL Mapping

- Separate markers into linkage groups, based on independent segregation
- Order markers to obtain linkage maps
- Relate marker data to phenotypic traits to identify regions containing QTLs
Vaccinium Fruit Quality QTL

- Putative quality-related QTL mapped using TetraploidMap software
- Identification of linked markers in progress
- Berry Weight
- Total Anthocyanins (Cyanidin-3-glucoside equivalents mg/L)
- Sugar:Acid ratio
Summary

- Marker-assisted breeding in berry fruit offers potential for faster cultivar development and reduction in both time and costs of breeding programmes
- Exploitation of genomics resources now possible even for minor crops
- Focus must be on quality traits important to industry and end-users
- Combining markers for both quality and agronomic traits is the long-term aim
- Improved phenotyping methods are essential
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