

Strategies for the implementation of a certification program for virus-tested plant material in Colombia

Joseph Cutler¹, Juliane Langer¹, Marlon Hans Rodriguez¹, Gerhard Fischer², Orlando Acosta Losada², Fánor Casierra-Posada³, Adriana Castañeda Cárdenas⁴, Mónica Betancourt Vasquez⁵, Wilmer Cuellar⁶, Eduardo Arvydas Stasiukynas⁷, Carmen Büttner^{1*}

¹ Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Germany ² Universidad Nacional de Bogotá, Colombia ³ Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia (UPTC), Tunja, Colombia ⁴ Instituto Colombiano Agropecuario, Bogotá Colombia, ⁵ Corporación Colombiana de Investigación Agropecuaria, Bogotá, Colombia ⁶ International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) Cali, Colombia, ⁷ Hacienda Misiones, Mesitas del Colegio, Cundinamarca, Colombia

* phyton.ed@hu-berlin.de



Background

The goal of this research is to develop a pilot protocol for routine diagnosis that can be applied in a certification program for virus- tested plant material for several Colombian horticultural products. Three important exports from Colombia, *Physalis peruviana* (physalis), *Passiflora edulis* Sims (purple passion fruit), and *Rosa hybrida* (ornamental rose) have been selected as model plants for experimentation. A table of viruses affecting the three cultivars was collected for publication in Rodriguez et al (2016). Biotest experiments, ELISA and Next Generation Sequencing (NGS) were conducted to explore the inventory of known and novel viruses present in the departments of Cundinamarca and Boyacá.

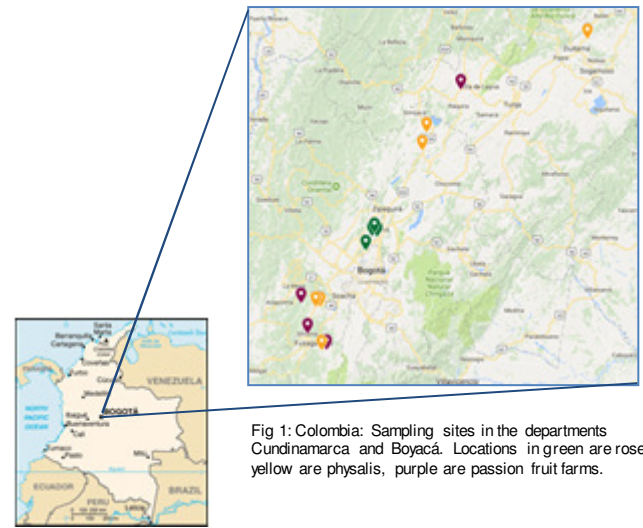


Fig 1: Colombia: Sampling sites in the departments Cundinamarca and Boyacá. Locations in green are rose, yellow are physalis, purple are passion fruit farms.

Materials and Methods



Fig 2: Virus suspected symptoms: blistering of leaves (a-c), and deformation of passion fruit (b). Local leaf blistering (d), mottling, and yellowing (e,f) of physalis leaves. Oak leaf pattern (g-i) in rose leaves.

Table 1 ELISA	DAS PVY	DAS TMV	DAS TSW V	PTA Poty	
<i>Physalis peruviana</i>	3/61	0/61	0/23	10/61	
<i>Passiflora edulis</i> Sims	0/33	0/33	0/33	4/44	
	DAS PNRSV	DAS TSV	DAS ArMV		DAS ToRSV
<i>Rosa hybrida</i>	17/37	3/37	0/23	1/24	0/14

Selection of farms was carried out based on size and economic importance. Initial visual plant symptom appraisal (Fig. 1) led collection of 67 physalis, 77 purple passion fruit, and 47 ornamental rose samples from 14 farms. ELISA was carried out at BIOREBA (CH) using antibodies of known viruses described in literature. A pooled sample of total RNA of blistered passion fruit (Fig. 2 a,c) and physalis (Fig. 2 d-f) was subjected to RNA-Seq. cDNA was synthesized with random hexamers and analysed by BaseClear (NL). *Passiflora edulis* Sims seeds from one farm were germinated under greenhouse conditions and inoculated onto *Chenopodium quinoa*, *Nicotiana benthamiana*, *N. tabacum* cv. Samsun, *N. clelandii* and *Cucumis sativus* cv. Vorgebirgstraube to understand whether the observed blistering symptom was as seed and/or mechanically transmissible.

Results and Conclusion

ELISA revealed known *Potato virus Y*, *Prunus necrotic ringspot virus*, *Tobacco streak virus*, *Arabis mosaic virus*, and viruses belonging to the genus *Potyvirus* in different cultivars (Table 1). Biotest experiments (Fig. 3) revealed blistering symptoms in germinated passionfruit, mottling in *Nicotiana benthamiana*, leaf deformation in *N.b. Samsun* and leaf roll in *Cucumis sativus*. NGS analysis of one *Passiflora edulis* Sims sample responded with 57% identity to Lilac ring mottle ilarvirus movement protein and with 65% identity to Tomato necrotic streak ilarvirus replicase. A second *Passiflora edulis* Sims sample from a different farm responded with 45% identity to *Poinsettia mosaic virus* replicase associated protein (genus *Tymovirus*) and with 65% identity to Tomato necrotic streak ilarvirus replicases. Based on this set of contigs, further confirmation by PCR using specific primers will be used on current and future samples to discover the distribution of the novel ilarvirus and tymovirus in Colombia.

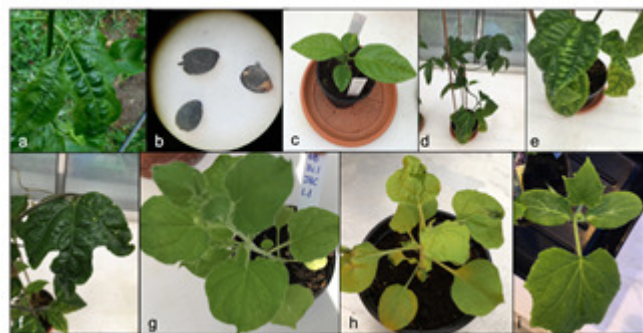


Fig 3: Biotest experiments: Blistering symptoms were observed in passion fruit in the field (a). Seeds were germinated (b). After initial emergence (c), the plant (d) began to express blistering symptoms on leaves (e,f). A first mechanical inoculation of blistered leaves onto *Nicotiana benthamiana* did not express symptoms (g). Leaf deformation was observed upon a second passage of *N.t.* cv. Samsun (h). Leaf curling was expressed in a third passage onto *Cucumis sativus*.

Reliable and practical diagnostic tools will be developed for the most important viruses leading to a national agricultural certification program that will be established in a common project between German and Colombian universities, the Colombian Agricultural Institute (ICA), the Colombian Corporation of Agricultural Investigation (CORPOICA), and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT).

Literature

Rodríguez, MH, et al. (2016). Certificación de material vegetal sano en Colombia: Un análisis crítico de oportunidades y retos para controlar enfermedades ocasionadas por virus. Revista Colombiana de Ciencias Hortícolas 10:164-175.

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Special thanks to our partners for diagnostic and logistical support:



Drawings: Ellen Paterson