

## Chapter 4

# The Development of Encapsulation Dehydration

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### 4.1 Introduction

The application of cryopreservation to plants is relatively recent as the first report of successful cryopreservation was published by Sakai in 1960 with silver birch twigs, and *in-vitro* cultured flax cells were frozen by Quatrano in 1968. The first protocols developed in the 1980s included pre-treatment with cryoprotectants followed by controlled rate cooling. These protocols were based on freeze-induced dehydration (Sakai 1985; Kartha and Engelmann 1994; Engelmann 1997). Such protocols were applied to numerous species, especially from temperate origin; however, there were cases, particularly for plants of tropical origin, where such controlled cooling protocols did not produce good results (Bagniol et al. 1992; Haskins and Kartha 1980). Further research was thus carried out and at the beginning of the 1990s a set of new, vitrification-based protocols became available (Engelmann 2000, 2003). Vitrification can be defined as the transition

of water directly from the liquid phase into an amorphous phase or glass, while avoiding the formation of crystalline ice (Fahy et al. 1984). Among these vitrification techniques a new technique termed encapsulation dehydration was developed for cryopreservation of pear and potato shoot-tips (Dereuddre et al. 1990; Fabre and Dereuddre 1990). This method is based on the technology developed for producing synthetic seeds, i.e. the encapsulation of explants in calcium alginate beads (Redenbaugh et al. 1986). Encapsulated explants are then precultured in liquid medium with a high sucrose concentration and partially desiccated before exposure to liquid nitrogen (LN). Encapsulating the explants allows exposure to extreme treatments including preculture with high sucrose concentrations and desiccation to low moisture contents (MCs) that would be highly damaging or lethal to non-encapsulated samples. Due to the extreme desiccation of explants, most or all freezable water is removed from cells, and vitrification of internal solutes takes place during rapid exposure to LN, thus avoiding lethal intracellular ice crystallization (Engelmann 1997). As a consequence, the whole or a large part of the frozen explant is kept intact after rewarming, which results in high survival, rapid and direct regrowth and reproducible results after cryopreservation (Engelmann 2000).

The encapsulation–dehydration technique was applied to other species from temperate climates including shoot tips of eucalyptus (Poissonnier et al. 1991) and grape (Plessis et al. 1991) and carrot somatic embryos (Dereuddre et al. 1991). Later, it was experimented with plants from tropical origin, notably apices of cassava (Benson et al. 1992), sugarcane (Gonzalez-Arno et al. 1993a, b; Paulet et al. 1993) and coffee (Mari et al. 1995). The technique was successfully extended to over 70 different plant species (Table 4.1). In this chapter we present and discuss the optimal conditions of the successive steps of an encapsulation–dehydration protocol and make a brief overview of the current application of the technique.

**Table 4.1** Plant species whose shoot tips (or other explants – specified in the column Plant species) were cryopreserved using the encapsulation–dehydration technique

Plant species	Reference
<i>Acacia mangium</i>	Sudarmonowati and Rosmithayani 1997
<i>Actinidia chinensis</i>	Wu et al. 2001
<i>Actinidia chinensis</i>	Suzuki et al. 1996
<i>Actinidia spp.</i>	Bachiri et al. 2001
<i>Amgddalus communis</i> L.	Al-Ababneh et al. 2003
<i>Anacamptis morio</i> seeds + fungal symbiont	Wood et al. 2000
<i>Anthirrinium microphyllum</i>	Gonzalez-Benito et al. 1998
<i>Armoracia rusticana</i> hairy root cultures	Hirata et al. 1995

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<i>Armoracia rusticana</i> hairy root cultures	Phunchindawan et al. 1997
<i>Auricularia</i>	Hirata et al. 1996
<i>Beta vulgaris</i>	Vandenbussche and De Proft 1996
<i>Brassica napus</i> microspore embryos	Uragami 1993
<i>Camellia sinensis</i> L.O. Kuntze	Aoshima 1997
<i>Catharantus roseus</i> cell suspension	Bachiri et al. 1995
<i>Centaurium rigualii</i> Esteve	Gonzales-Benito and Perez 1997
<i>Ceratopetalum gummiferum</i>	Shatnawi and Johnson 2004
<i>Chichorium intybus</i>	Vandenbussche et al. 1993
<i>Chrysanthemum morifolium</i>	Sakai et al. 2000
<i>Citrus aurantium</i>	Al-Ababneh et al. 2002
<i>Citrus madurensis</i>	Cho et al. 2002
<i>Citrus spp.</i>	Gonzalez-Arno et al. 1998
<i>Citrus spp.</i> Embryonic axes	Santos and Stushnoff 2002
<i>Citrus spp.</i> Ovules and somatic embryos	Gonzalez-Arno et al. 2003
<i>Cocos nucifera</i>	Hornung et al. 2001a
<i>Coffea racemosa</i>	Mari et al. 1995
<i>Coffea sessiliflora</i>	Mari et al. 1995
<i>Cosmos atrosanguineus</i>	Wilkinson et al. 1998
<i>Cynodon sp.</i>	Reed et al. 2006
<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i> seeds + fungal symbiont	Wood et al. 2000
<i>Daucus carota</i> somatic embryos	Dereuddre et al. 1991
<i>Dianthus caryophyllus</i> L.	Tannoury et al. 1995
<i>Dianthus hybridus</i> cv Sakuranadesiko	Fukai et al. 1994
<i>Digitalis obscura</i>	Sales et al. 2001
<i>Dioscorea alata</i>	Malaurie et al. 1998
<i>D. bulbifera</i>	Malaurie et al. 1998
<i>Dioscorea spp.</i>	Mandal et al. 1996
<i>Ekebergia capensis</i>	Perán et al. 2006
<i>Eucalyptus gunnii</i>	Poissonnier et al. 1991
<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	Pâques et al. 1997
<i>Eucalyptus grandis</i> x <i>E. camaldulensis</i>	Blakesley and Kiernan 2001
<i>Fragaria x ananassa</i>	Clavero-Ramirez et al. 2005
<i>Holostemma annulare</i>	Decruse et al. 1999
<i>Iopomea batatas</i>	Pennycooke and Towill 2001
<i>Iris nigricans</i>	Shibli 2000
<i>Laminaria digitata</i> L. gametophytes	Vigeneron et al. 1997
<i>Lilium</i>	Matsumoto and Sakai 1995
<i>Lolium sp.</i>	Chang et al. 2000
<i>Malus spp.</i>	Zhao et al. 1999
<i>Malus x domestica</i> Borkh.	Paul et al. 2000; Wu 1999
<i>Manihot esculenta</i> Crantz.	Manrique 2000; Escobar-Pérez 2005
<i>Medicago sativa</i> L. cell suspensions	Shibli et al. 2001
<i>Mentha spicata</i>	Sakai et al. 2000
<i>Microalgae</i>	Hirata et al. 1996
<i>Morus bombycis</i>	Niino et al. 1992
<i>Olea europaea</i> somatic embryos	Shibli and Al-Juboory 2000
<i>Oncidium bifolium</i> seeds and protocorms	Flachsland et al. 2006
<i>Paeonia lactiflora</i> Pall. zygotic embryos	Kim et al. 2004
<i>Pelargonium spp.</i>	Grapin et al. 2003
<i>Polygonium aviculare</i> cell suspension	Swann et al. 1998

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<i>Poncirus trifoliata</i> (L.) Raf. x <i>Citrus sinensis</i> (L.)	Wang et al. 2002a
<i>Populus tremula</i> x <i>alba</i>	Accart et al. 1993
<i>Primula pubescens</i>	Hornung et al. 2001b
<i>Prunus dulcis</i>	Shatnawi et al. 1999
<i>Pyrus communis</i>	Dereuddre et al. 1990
<i>Pyrus communis</i> cv Beurré Hardy	Scottez et al. 1992
<i>Pyrus syriaca</i>	Tahtamouni and Shibli 1999
<i>Quercus ilex</i> embryonic axes	Gonzales-Benito et al. 1999
<i>Quercus suber</i> embryonic axes	Gonzales-Benito et al. 1999
<i>Ribes</i> spp.	Reed and Yu 1995; Reed et al. 2005
<i>Rhododendron simsii</i> Planch.	Verleysen et al. 2005
<i>Rubus idaeus</i> L.	Wang et al. 2005
<i>Rubus</i> spp.	Gupta and Reed 2006
<i>Saccharum</i> spp.	Gonzalez-Arno et al. 1993a, b
<i>Saintpaulia ionantha</i> Wendl.	Moges et al. 2004
<i>Salix</i>	Blakesley et al. 1996
<i>Solanum</i> spp.	Fabre and Dereuddre 1990
<i>Solanum tuberosum</i>	Grospietch et al. 1999
<i>Syngysium francissi</i>	Shatnawi et al. 2004
<i>Theobroma cacao</i> L. somatic embryos	Fang et al. 2004
<i>Vaccinium pahalae</i> (Ohelo) cells	Shibli et al. 1998
<i>Vinca minor</i> L. hairy root cultures	Hirata et al. 2002
<i>Vitis</i> spp.	Wang et al. 2000
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> L.	Plessis et al. 1991
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> L.	Zhao et al. 2001
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> L.	Wang et al. 2002b
embryogenic cell suspension	
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> L. somatic embryos	Miaja et al. 2004
<i>Wasabia japonica</i>	Matsumoto et al. 1995
<i>Zoysia</i> sp.	Chang et al. 2000

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## 4.2 Successive Steps of the Protocol

An encapsulation–dehydration protocol comprises the successive steps listed below. Conditions for each step require optimization to achieve maximal recovery of explants after cryopreservation. The basic steps of preconditioning, preculture, encapsulation, osmoprotection and dehydration before exposure to LN apply in all cases.

### 4.2.1 Physiological Status of the Plant Material

The physiological status of the plant material is of paramount importance for the success of cryopreservation. Samples are generally excised from actively growing mother plants, thus ensuring that they are composed of actively dividing meristematic cells (Engelmann 1997; Escobar et al.

1997). For example, kiwi are excised 14 days and *Citrus* shoot tips 20 days after the last subculture (Bachiri et al. 2001; Gonzalez-Arno et al. 1998), i.e. when *in vitro* plantlets are in full growth. On the opposite side, apple shoot tips were sampled on mother plants that were not subcultured for 70 days and grape for 3–4 months (Zhao et al. 1999, 2001). The hypothesis of the authors, to explain the higher recovery noted after cryopreservation of such explants in comparison with those sampled on more frequently subcultured mother plants, is that the moisture content of apices of non-subcultured plants is lower. In the case of somatic embryos, they are cryopreserved at a given developmental stage to optimize recovery. Torpedo stage carrot somatic embryos give the highest recovery (Dereuddre et al. 1991), while with *Citrus* globular, torpedo and heart stage embryos are the material of choice for cryopreservation (Gonzalez-Arno et al. 2003).

#### **4.2.2 Preconditioning**

Preconditioning corresponds to the culture of the mother plants under conditions different from standard ones, which aim at conditioning explants to withstand cryopreservation protocols. Preconditioning can involve various manipulations of the culture conditions such as culturing mother plants at low temperature in the case of cold-tolerant species (Wu et al. 2001; Matsumoto and Sakai 1995; Hirata et al. 1996; Zhao et al. 1999; 2001; Sakai et al. 2000; Dereuddre et al. 1990), or on medium with high sucrose content (Decruse et al. 1999; Grospietch et al. 1999).

#### **4.2.3 Preculture**

Preculture corresponds to the culture of the explants for several hours or days after excision and before encapsulation. Sugarcane and coffee apices are cultured overnight on standard solid medium after excision (Paulet et al. 1993; Gonzalez-Arno et al. 1993a; Mari et al. 1995). Kiwi, strawberry, chrysanthemum and wasabi shoot tips are cultured from one to several days on agar-based medium with a high sucrose concentration (Bachiri et al. 2001; Clavero-Ramirez et al. 2005; Sakai et al. 2000). *Citrus madurensis* shoot tips are first cultured on solid medium with 0.1 M sucrose, then on medium with 0.3 M sucrose and 0.5 M glycerol (Cho et al. 2002). Black currant shoot tips are either cold acclimated for 2 weeks or cultured for 7 days on 0.75 M sucrose solid medium before encapsulation (Reed et al. 2005).

#### **4.2.4 Encapsulation**

For preparation of alginate beads the plant material is suspended in calcium-free liquid basal medium with 3% sodium alginate (low viscosity, 250 cps) (Gonzalez-Arno and Engelmann 2006). This solution generally contains sucrose at the level used in the normal culture medium. In some cases, explants may also be encapsulated in a medium with a slightly higher sucrose concentration. The mixture is dropped with a pipette into liquid culture medium containing a high concentration of calcium chloride (usually 100 mM  $\text{CaCl}_2$ ). This induces the polymerization of alginate in presence of an elevated concentration of calcium, thereby producing beads around the explants. These spherical beads are usually 4 or 5 mm in diameter and contain one apex or more. They are held in the calcium solution for 20–30 min after the last bead is formed to guarantee a good polymerization. Bead polymerization can be controlled visually since beads are translucent immediately after their formation and become progressively opaque as polymerization progresses. Beads should be transferred to the sucrose pre-culture medium only when they are completely opaque, i.e. when polymerization seems to be complete.

#### **4.2.5 Osmoprotection**

Osmoprotection corresponds to the treatment of encapsulated explants in medium with sucrose for several hours or days immediately before desiccation and cryopreservation. Beads containing the explants are placed in Erlenmeyer flasks in agitated liquid medium with between 0.50 and 1.25 M sucrose. The sucrose concentration most commonly employed is 0.75 M. Sucrose treatment durations vary from 16 to 18 h as for sugarcane (Paulet et al. 1993; Gonzalez-Arno et al. 1993a) to 7–10 days in the case of coffee (Mari et al. 1995) and yam (Maurie et al. 1998). With some plant materials osmoprotection of samples directly in a medium with high sucrose concentration is toxic and produces very low regrowth. In such cases a progressive increase in sucrose concentration by daily transfers of the plant material in medium with higher concentration may result in reducing the toxic effect of the high osmotic stress and in increasing regrowth. Gradual increase of sucrose by 0.25 M incremental steps ensured over 80% survival for shoot tips of grape for 1 M final sucrose concentration and 70% for 1.5 M (Plessis et al. 1991), whereas direct exposure to these media led to very low recovery. Recovery of apple shoot tips was maximal after daily increase of the sugar concentration with the following sequence: 0.1 M/0.3 M/0.7 M/1.0 M (Zhao et al. 1999). Some plant materials are treated with a

mixture of osmoprotectants. Lily shoot tips were protected with a mixture of 0.8 M sucrose and 1 M glycerol (Matsumoto and Sakai 1995) and *Citrus madurensis* apices with 2 M glycerol and 0.6 M sucrose (Cho et al. 2002). In an alternative treatment for cryopreservation of encapsulated explants they are treated with highly concentrated vitrification solutions (Sakai 2000) and frozen directly in LN without air dehydration. This technique, termed encapsulation vitrification, is described in detail by Sakai (see Chap 3).

#### **4.2.6 Dehydration**

After osmoprotection beads are rapidly surface dried on sterile filter paper to remove any remaining liquid medium and are submitted to physical dehydration by evaporation at room temperature. Two desiccation methods can be employed: dehydration under the air current of a laminar flow cabinet or dehydration in sealed containers with dry silica gel. Desiccation under the laminar flow can produce variable desiccation rates depending on the airflow rate, air temperature, and relative humidity. By contrast desiccation in airtight containers with silica gel provides reproducible conditions from one experiment to the next and is, thus, highly recommended, especially in tropical countries where the relative humidity is usually very high (Gonzalez-Arno and Engelmann 2006). In general, the bead water content that ensures highest regrowth after cooling in LN is around 20%, which corresponds to the amount of unfreezable water in the samples. At such water contents, only glass transitions are recorded by differential scanning calorimetry when samples are plunged in LN (Sherlock et al. 2005). This value may vary depending on the species and the type of samples. For example, bead water content was 27% for pear shoot tips encapsulated in larger alginate beads (Scottez et al. 1992), 33% for encapsulated meristems of apple and mulberry (Niino and Sakai 1992), and microspore embryos of oilseed rape survived best at 18–20% MC (Uragami 1993).

#### **4.2.7 Cryopreservation**

After dehydration, beads are placed in 1 or 2 ml polypropylene sterile cryotubes for cryopreservation. In most cases vitrification is employed by direct immersion of the cryotubes in LN. In some cases, including grape (Plessis et al. 1991; Zhao et al. 2001), potato (Fabre and Dereuddre 1990) and *Citrus* (Gonzalez-Arno et al. 1998) shoot tips, controlled rate cooling using a programmable freezer followed by immersion of samples in LN was required to obtain higher regrowth after cryopreservation. For storage,

cryotubes are usually immersed in LN or held in LN vapors in storage tanks.

#### **4.2.8 Rewarming**

With the encapsulation–dehydration technique, rewarming is usually carried out slowly at room temperature since samples are sufficiently dehydrated before freezing and there is no risk of ice recrystallization upon warming (Gonzalez-Arno and Engelmann 2006). Thus regrowth becomes independent of the rewarming method. For slow rewarming, beads are taken out of the cryotubes and placed in open Petri dishes in the laminar air flow cabinet for about 5 min or they are transferred directly onto the recovery medium. In cases where rapid warming is performed the cryotubes are stirred in a water bath for 2–3 min at 40°C as in the case of lily and wasabi (Matsumoto and Sakai 1995; Matsumoto et al. 1995), 1 min at 45°C for blackberry (Gupta and Reed 2006) or at 25°C as for mulberry and chicory (Niino et al. 1992; Vandebussche et al. 1993). In some cases the beads are rehydrated with the addition of liquid culture medium for 5–10 minutes (Chang et al 2000; Gupta and Reed 2005; Reed et al. 2006).

#### **4.2.9 Recovery**

Regrowth generally takes place on standard semi-solid culture medium. Explants are transferred under standard conditions as in the case of citrus, apple and almond shoot tips (Gonzalez-Arno et al. 1998; Zhao et al. 1999; Shatnawi et al. 1999). The composition of the recovery medium may be transiently modified to eliminate the phenolic compounds produced by dead cells either by adding activated charcoal to the medium as in the case of sugarcane apices (Paulet et al. 1993; Gonzalez-Arno 1996) or to stimulate proliferation of frozen explants by modifying the growth regulator content of the medium as with sugarcane and yam apices (Paulet et al. 1993; Malaurie et al. 1998). In some cases it is necessary to extract the explants from the beads and to place them directly on the recovery medium to ensure their regrowth, as in the case of microspore embryos of oilseed rape (Uragami 1993), apices of grape (Plessis et al. 1991) and mulberry (Niino et al. 1992). A softer medium is used in some cases to facilitate shoot regrowth (Gupta and Reed 2005; Reed et al. 2006). The environmental conditions are also important for regrowth. It is beneficial to perform the post-warming recovery in the dark for a short period (around 1 week) for organized structures such as meristems (Gonzalez-Arno and



Engelmann 2006), to prevent or decrease detrimental photo oxidation of cryopreserved samples (Benson 1990).

#### **4.2.10 Viability Assessment**

The ultimate viability assessment after a cryopreservation experiment is the direct production of new tissues from the cryopreserved explants. Direct regrowth without intervening callus formation is required to maintain genetic stability. Most plants recovered from encapsulation dehydration grow without the production of callus.

### **4.3 Current Development and Use of Encapsulation Dehydration**

Encapsulation dehydration was successful with over 70 plant species (Table 4.1). However there are few cases where this technique has been tested on a large number of accessions of the same species or species of the same genus. Sugarcane apices of 15 commercial varieties representing a broad genetic diversity were successfully cryopreserved with recovery ranging between 24 and 91% (Gonzalez-Arno 1996). Apple shoot tips from over 20 commercial cultivars were frozen using the encapsulation–dehydration technique (Wu et al. 1999; Zhao et al. 1999). Shoot tips of 25 genotypes in nine *Rubus* species and nine *Rubus* hybrids representative of the diversity in the genus *Rubus* were successfully cryopreserved with recovery of 60–100% using the encapsulation–dehydration protocol (Gupta and Reed 2006). A wide range of *Ribes* germplasm, including 9 species and 19 cultivars, was tested with encapsulation dehydration with a mean regrowth of 58% (Reed et al. 2005). More than 35 accessions of Bermudagrass (*Cynodon*) were successfully stored by encapsulation dehydration (Reed et al. 2006). The most advanced development and application by far of encapsulation dehydration is with cassava apices. CIAT (Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical, Cali, Colombia) is responsible for the maintenance of the world germplasm collection of cassava (which includes 5941 accessions). The core collection, which represents 630 clones, was cryopreserved using encapsulation dehydration (Manrique 2000; Escobar Pérez 2005). Around 75% of these clones display recovery above 30%. A safety cryopreserved duplicate of this collection is being established.

#### 4.4 Genetic Stability

The effect of encapsulation–dehydration cryopreservation on the stability of plants was assessed after regrowth for several species. No modifications were revealed at the morphological, agronomical, chromosomal, biochemical and/or molecular levels for sugarcane (Gonzalez-Arno 1996), apple (Hao et al. 2002), yam (Sangeeta et al. 2002; Sonali-Dixit et al. 2005), kiwi and grape (Zhai et al. 2003).

#### 4.5 Conclusions

Encapsulation dehydration is a very efficient cryopreservation technique which is simple to implement. One of its advantages from a practical point of view is its user-friendliness. Encapsulated explants are very easy to manipulate throughout the freezing protocol. Encapsulation dehydration was successfully implemented with a large number of species, both from temperate and tropical origin. It was applied to a broad number of genotypes within the same species in several cases, thereby demonstrating its efficiency and practicality. Cryopreservation represents the only safe, efficient and cost-effective long-term storage option to facilitate the conservation of genetic resources of plant species. Encapsulation dehydration is one more technique to place in the hands of researchers or genebank curators to meet germplasm conservation goals.

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