

# DECAPITATION AND GENETIC MARKERS AS RELATED TO HAPLOIDY IN *SOLANUM TUBEROSUM*<sup>1</sup>

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## INTRODUCTION

Haploids ( $2n = 24$ ) of the common potato ( $2n = 48$ ) offer exciting potential for genetic study and breeding (HOUGAS and PELOQUIN, 1958). Stockpiles of haploids, derived from a wide range of *Solanum tuberosum* germ plasm, are the initial prerequisite for the exploitation of this potential.

Interspecific matings (*S. tuberosum* ♀ – *S. diploid* sp ♂), utilizing suitable genetic markers, have proved effective in obtaining haploids of the common potato (HOUGAS, PELOQUIN and ROSS, 1958). This paper is concerned with the problem of increasing the efficiency of obtaining haploids from interspecific matings by use of 1. a decapitation technique and 2. effective genetic markers.

## DECAPITATION TECHNIQUE

Decapitation of the pistillate *S. tuberosum* parent and culture of the "decapitant" in tap-water or nutrient solution is an effective means for increasing seed set in certain difficult intraspecific matings (MCLEAN and STEVENSON, 1952) and in certain interspecific matings (PELOQUIN and HOUGAS, 1958). This technique has proved very useful in the search for *Solanum* haploids conducted at the Potato Introduction Station, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. A brief description of the method follows. The "decapitants" (8–10 inches of the apical stem including leaves and inflorescence) are collected from the field in water-filled containers when the first flowers of the inflorescence begin to open. The "decapitants" are transported to an air-conditioned (about 24°C) greenhouse and placed in quart containers filled with tap-water (FIG. 1). It is advisable to add a bactericide, such as 5–10 ppm streptomycin sulphate, to the water for control of soft-rot infection. All open flowers are then removed and discarded. As the buds reach the "petal-color" stage the pollen-fertile parents are emasculated.

Pollen is collected in gelatin capsules from the "pollinator" plants by use of a mechanical vibrator. The pollen may be used directly or stored under refrigeration in

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moisture-free containers (FIG. 2). *Solanum* pollen remains viable for several months when properly stored at sub-zero temperatures (BEAMISH, 1954; HOWARD, 1958; KING, 1955). The pollen may be applied 1. by inserting the stigma and style in the capsule or 2. by first transferring the pollen from the capsule to an ordinary 1 · 3 inch microscope slide (FIG. 1). Four to six flowers of each inflorescence are pollinated. The remaining young buds are removed and discarded. The "decapitants" are moved from the air-conditioned house 4-6 days after pollination to allow for the next cycle of emasculations and pollinations.

The decapitation technique has several advantages. First, it results in a significant increase of fruit and seeds per pollination in difficult matings (*S. tuberosum* ♀

– *S. diploid* species ♂) (PELOQUIN and HOU GAS, 1958). Second, the technique is readily adapted to large-scale operations (more than 75,000 pollinations were made during the summer of 1958 at the Potato Introduction Station, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin). Third, matings can be easily conducted under various controlled environments (temperature, light, day length and nutrients).

The frequency of haploids per 100 pollinations, measured from preliminary data, ranged from 0-4,2 in field pollinations and from 0-5,6 in decapitation-technique pollinations. These preliminary data also indicate that the choice of both the *S. tuberosum* parent and the diploid "pollinator" appears to have a marked influence on haploid frequency.

FIG. 1. Decapitants of *S. tuberosum* in the greenhouse



FIG. 1. *Décapitées de S. tuberosum en serre*

ABB. 1. *Dekapitanten von S. tuberosum im Gewächshaus*

FIG. 2. Pollen-storage container

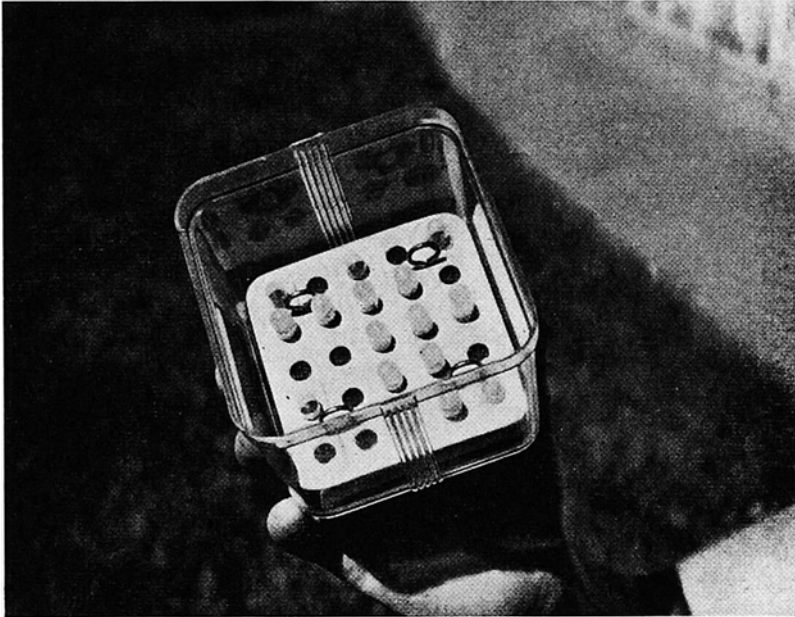


FIG. 2. *Réceptient pour la conservation de pollen*  
ABB. 2. *Behälter zum Aufbewahren von Pollen*

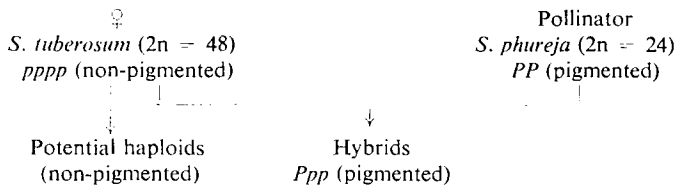
#### GENETIC MARKERS

##### *Diploid "Pollinators"*

Haploids are known to occur in rather low frequency in *S. tuberosum* following interspecific matings (HOUGAS *et al*, 1958). Therefore, it is highly essential that some reliable, efficient method of haploid detection be employed in large-scale searches for haploid individuals.

Several characters in *Solanum* which may be useful as genetic markers are known. Dominant genes for winged stem, broad leaf and leaf-margin hairs are among those known in the wild species. These three characters are not reliably recognized in very young seedlings. Genetic markers readily identified prior to the transplant stage of the seedling would therefore be more useful. Two dominant genetic factors affecting plant pigmentation are found in certain of the tuber-bearing diploid *Solanum* species (DODDS and LONG, 1955). The presence of either of two genes, *P* or *R*, produces pigmentation in the young seedling. The following diagram illustrates the use of such markers in a search for haploids:

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*P* seems to be a particularly useful gene for this purpose since 1. it is not found in any of the modern commercial varieties of North America and is only rarely found among the *S. tuberosum* breeding stock collections of the United States and 2. the pigmentation which it conditions is readily detectable in the seedling a few days after emergence.

The early elimination of hybrid individuals minimizes the amount of space, time and effort involved in the search for haploids. In this respect the ideal marker would be one which could be detected in embryos of the hybrid seeds. Such a marker is available in certain selections of the tuber-bearing diploid species, *S. phureja*. The dominant genes  $B^c$  and  $B^d$  in the presence of *P* or *R* ( $P\_B^c$  or  $P\_B^d$  = blue spot;  $pp\ B^dR\_$  = red spot;  $pp\ B^cR\_$ ,  $pp\ B^cR^{pw}R^{pw}$  or  $pp\ B^dR^{pw}R^{pw}$  = no spot) were found by DODDS and LONG (1956) to condition either a blue or a red spot at the cotyledonary node of the embryo.

Dr. K. S. DODDS, Director of the John Innes Horticultural Institute, England, generously supplied the writers, in late 1957, with two lots of *S. phureja* seeds carrying the genes for embryo spot. A search was also made among the *Solanum* stocks of the Inter-Regional Potato Collection, in early 1958, for other selections possessing embryo spot. Embryo spot was found in the following introductions of *S. phureja*: P.I. 225698, 225702, 225708, 225710, 243461, 243462, and 243466.

Matings were made with several individuals grown from these nine different seed lots. Unfortunately none of the plants proved to be homozygous for both *P* and *B* or *R* and *B* ( $PPB^cB^c$ ;  $PPB^dB^d$ ;  $RRB^dB^d$ ). One "pollinator" was of the genotype  $PPB^cB^c$ . Therefore approximately half of the  $F_1$  population of the matings with this pollinator possessed embryo spot and were eliminated as the ungerminated seed. Attempts are being made to synthesize "pollinators" homozygous for the genes conditioning embryo spot.

*Progeny Testing of Potential "Pollinators"*

The effective use of genetic markers obviously requires that the "pollinator" be homozygous for the gene or genes conditioning the marker character. Whether the potential "pollinators" are homozygous for the gene or genes conditioning pigmentation may be tested by crossing them with either unpigmented haploids ( $2n = 24$ ) of *S. tuberosum* or unpigmented selections of diploid *Solanum* species (e.g. *S. phureja*). The  $F_1$  seeds from such matings are planted and the percentage of young, pigmented seedlings is determined. The utility of the gene  $B^d$  was demonstrated, more or less by chance, in these matings in that  $F_1$  seeds of certain combinations were noted to possess

embryo spot. (It was known that the "pollinators" used in these matings did not carry the gene  $B^d$ .) It was subsequently determined that the genotype of one of the female parents, an *S. phureja* selection, was  $ppB^dbR^{pw}R^{pw}$ .

Unpigmented selections which carry the gene  $B^d$  provide a quick, efficient means for determining the homozygosity of the  $P$  and  $R$  loci of pigmented "pollinators". This is done by determining the color and frequency of embryo spot in the ungerminated  $F_1$  seeds from matings of the pigmented "pollinators" and unpigmented selections carrying the gene  $B^d$ . TABLE 1 illustrates this by use of the previously mentioned *S. phureja* selection as a tester.

A more efficient tester, of course, would be one homozygous for  $B^d$  ( $ppB^dB^dR^{pw}R^{pw}$ ).

TABLE 1. Genotype determination of potential pollinators by using *S. phureja* as a tester

Genotype of		F <sub>1</sub> Seed Phenotypic Ratios		
Potential Pollinator	Tester <i>S. phureja</i>	Embryo spot		
		Blue	Red	None
$P/P, —$	$p/p, B^d/b, R^{pw}R^{pw}$	1	: 0	: 1
$P/p, R/R$	" " "	1	: 1	: 2
$p/p, R/R$	" " "	0	: 1	: 1
$p/p, R/r$	" " "	0	: 1	: 3
$P/p, R/r$	" " "	2	: 1	: 5
$p/p, r/r$	" " "	0	: 0	: 1

Genotype		Semences F <sub>1</sub> proportions phénotypiques		
pollinisateur potentiel	plante-test	tache embryonnaire		
		bleu	rouge	aucune
Genotyp		F <sub>1</sub> -Samen Spaltungsverhältnisse		
der potentiellen Vaterpflanze	Testpflanze	Embryofleck		
		blau	rot	kein

TABLEAU 1. Détermination du génotype de pollinisateurs potentiels à l'aide de la plante-test *S. phureja*

TABELLE 1. Bestimmung des Genotyps der potentiellen Vaterpflanze durch Anwendung von *S. phureja* als Testpflanze

*Tetraploid Pollinators*

The technique for obtaining haploids reported by the authors in previous papers as well as the work reported heretofore in this paper involves tetraploid-diploid matings. Fruit and seed set are normally very low following such matings. Since both these handicaps can easily be overcome by intra-specific matings of *S. tuberosum* (or through matings of *S. tuberosum* with such closely related "pollinators" as *S. andigenum* or induced tetraploids of *S. phureja*) it would seem worthwhile to explore this alternative approach. Although seed-set-per-pollination would be high, the frequency

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of haploids would probably be very low, in most instances, following such matings. Consequently a very efficient genetic marker system would be required. Such an efficient marker is found in the purple hypocotyl pigmentation conditioned by the dominant gene *P* (LUNDEN, 1937). (*P* is found in *S. andigenum*, in *S. phureja* and occasionally in selections of *S. tuberosum*.) With a tetraploid "pollinator" homozygous for this marker (*PPPP*), hundreds of thousands of seedlings could be efficiently screened, in the pre-transplant stage, for haploid individuals of *S. tuberosum*. Attempts are presently being made to synthesize pollinators quadriplex for the gene *P*.

### SUMMARY

Numerous haploids of *S. tuberosum* are required if their value for breeding and genetic studies is to be adequately explored. Genetic markers, particularly pigmentation of the pre-transplant seedling, allows for early elimination of hybrids and consequently the ready detection of potential haploids among the  $F_1$  from interspecific

matings. Decapitation is an effective means of markedly increasing the number of seeds per pollination following such interspecific *Solanum* matings. The combined use of suitable genetic markers and decapitation substantially increases the efficiency of detecting haploids.

### RÉSUMÉ

#### L'APPLICATION DE LA DÉCAPITATION ET DE GÈNES-SIGNAL POUR L'OBTENTION D'HAPLOÏDES DANS *Solanum tuberosum*

1. A l'avis de nombreux chercheurs, la pomme de terre ( $2n = 48$ ) est autotétraploïde. Vu le mode de transmission tétrasomique que l'on rencontre dans les autotétraploïdes, l'étude génétique et la sélection de cette plante se trouvent considérablement entravées.

Grâce à leur mode de transmission génétique disomique beaucoup plus simple, les haploïdes ( $2n = 24$ ) offrent de grandes possibilités sous ce rapport. Pour cela, il faut tout d'abord disposer d'haploïdes d'un grand nombre de variétés différentes de la pomme de terre. Les haploïdes de variétés de la pomme de terre commune peuvent être obtenus par pollinisation avec du pollen d'espèces diploïdes.

2. Ces hybridisations interspécifiques ont une assez faible formation de semences. La technique de la décapitation permet d'obtenir une formation de semences plus importante. Cette méthode consiste à rassembler sur le champ des tiges de 20-30 cm portant des feuilles et des inflorescences (les "décapitées"), dont les premières fleurs commencent à s'ouvrir. On les place dans des récipients que l'on loge ensuite dans une armoire climatisée (24 °C). Les récipients sont remplis d'eau de ville ou d'une solution nutritive, additionnées de 5 à 10 millièmes de sulfate de

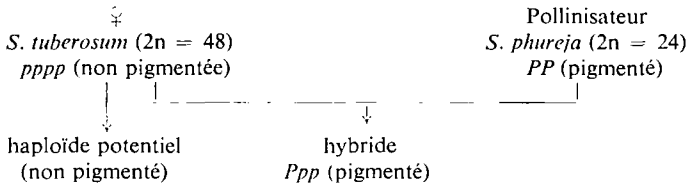
streptomycine pour empêcher la putréfaction.

Au moyen d'une "abeille artificielle" (vibrateur), le pollen des géniteurs est recueilli dans des capsules en gélatine. Si on ne l'utilise pas aussitôt, il est conservé au-dessous de 0°. On féconde ainsi 4 à 6 fleurs par inflorescence. Environ 5 jours après la dernière pollinisation, les décapitées sont transférées ailleurs pour faire place à une autre série. De la sorte, un grand nombre de pollinisations peut être exécuté chaque saison.

3. Le nombre d'haploïdes obtenus en 100 pollinisations exécutées en plein champ variait de 0 à 4,2 et dans les essais suivant la méthode de décapitation de 0 à 5,6. Ce nombre s'est trouvé être dépendant de la plante-mère *S. tuberosum* ainsi que du pollinisateur diploïde.

4. Des plantes  $F_1$  obtenus par pollinisation de *S. tuberosum* par des espèces diploïdes, seule une très petite partie est haploïde. L'utilisation de pollinisateurs possédant des gènes-signal permet de distinguer aisément les haploïdes potentiels des hybrides.

Comme gènes-signal, les gènes *P* et *R* conviennent, qui produisent l'un et l'autre une pigmentation des jeunes plants de semis. Le diagramme suivant illustre l'utilisation de tels gènes-signal :



Il semble que *P* surtout est un gène très approprié, parce qu'il est très rare dans les variétés de l'espèce *S. tuberosum* et que la pigmentation est déjà visible quelques jours après l'apparition des jeunes plants, de sorte que les plants hybrides peuvent être éliminés très jeunes.

A ce dernier sujet, l'emploi des gènes dominants *B<sup>c</sup>* et *B<sup>d</sup>*, que l'on trouve dans certaines sélections de *S. phureja*, peut être considéré comme une possibilité idéale. C'est que ces gènes causent en présence des gènes *P* ou *R* pour la pigmentation une tache de couleur sur le noeud de l'hypocotyle embryonnaire, laquelle tache est visible à travers le tégument séminal. Par croisement on essaie d'obtenir des pollinisateurs qui soient homozygotes pour ces gènes-signal.

5. Pollinisateurs tétraploïdes.

Si l'on utilise des espèces diploïdes pour la pollinisation, la formation de fruits et de semences sera généralement minime. Comme on peut aisément supprimer cet inconvénient en utilisant comme pollinisateurs *S. tuberosum*, *S. andigenum* étroitement apparentés ou des tétraploïdes de *S. phureja*, il semble justifié de faire l'essai de cette méthode alternative.

Bien qu'il doive se produire une forte formation de semences par pollinisation, la fréquence des haploïdes sera probablement extrêmement basse. Aussi l'emploi d'un gène-signal particulièrement efficace est-il indispensable. Le gène dominant *P*, qui provoque une pigmentation pourprée de l'hypocotyle, convient comme tel. On s'efforce de synthétiser de pollinisateurs qui soient homozygotes (*PPPP*) pour ce gène-signal.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

DIE ANWENDUNG VON DEKAPITATION UND VON SIGNALGENEN ZUR ERZIELUNG VON HAPLOIDEN BEI *Solanum tuberosum*

1. Nach Ansicht vieler Forscher ist die Kartoffel (2n = 48) autotetraploid. Der tetrasome Modus der Vererbung, wie er bei Autotetraploiden vorkommt, erschwert in erheblichem Masse die genetische Analyse und die Züchtung.

Wegen des viel einfacheren disomen Modus von Vererbung bieten Haploide (2n = 24) in dieser Hinsicht grosse Möglichkeiten. Voraussetzung dabei ist zunächst, dass man über Haploide einer grossen Anzahl verschiedener Kartoffelsorten verfügt. Haploide der gewöhnlichen Kartoffelsorten können in der Weise erzielt werden, dass man sie mit Pollen diploider Kartoffelarten bestäubt.

2. Die Samenbildung bei diesen Artkreuzungen ist ziemlich geringfügig. Durch Anwendung der Dekapitationstechnik wird eine bessere Samenbildung erzielt. Hierbei werden 20 bis 30 cm lange Stengel mit Blättern und Blüten ("Dekapitanten"), bei denen die ersten Blüten sich gerade öffnen, auf dem Felde gesammelt und in Behältern in einen klimatisierten Schrank (24 °C) gestellt.

Diese Behälter werden mit Leitungswasser oder einer Nährlösung, der zur Verhütung von Fäulnis 5 bis 10 Millionstel Teile Streptomzinsulfat zugesetzt ist, gefüllt.

Mittels einer "künstlichen Biene" (Vibrator) wird in Gelatinekapseln der Pollen der Vaterpflanzen gesammelt. Falls er nicht sofort verwendet wird, wird der Pollen bei einer Temperatur unterhalb 0 °C aufbewahrt. Je Blütenstand werden 4 bis 6 Blumen bestäubt. Etwa 5 Tage nach Vornahme der letzten Bestäubung werden die Dekapitanten nach anderwärts verbracht, um einer neuen Serie Platz zu machen. In dieser Weise können je Saison eine sehr grosse Anzahl von Bestäubungen vorgenommen werden.

3. Die Zahl der erzielten Haploide je 100 Bestäubungen schwankte bei der auf dem Felde ausgeführten Bestäubungen von 0 bis 4,2 und bei der Dekapitationsmethode von 0 bis 5,6. Es ergab sich, dass diese Anzahl sowohl von dem verwendeten *S. tuberosum*-Elter wie vom benutzten diploiden Bestäuber abhängig war.

