

A demo-genetic model of root-knot nematod dynamics with applications to the deployment of plant resistance

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A demo-genetic model of root-knot nematode dynamics with applications to the deployment of plant resistance

Ludovic Mailleret

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Introduction

Nematodes

- very small slender worms (0.1-2.5 mm)
- over 40,000 species, present in virtually any ecosystem
- free living and parasites of animals and plants

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Plant parasitic nematodes

- \sim 4,000 species, causing billions of dollars of crop losses each year (temperate & tropical agrosystems)
- root knot nematodes (RKN) rank first in terms of damage at the world scale

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- root knot nematodes (RKN) rank first in terms of damage at the world scale

Root knot nematodes

- polyphagous ($> 5,000$ host plants), distributed worlwide, but sedentary
- cause galls on roots, which alter plants development

RKN control methods

Long relied on hardcore chemical use

- soil fumigation
- restricted or banned

Biological control offers limited options

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Resistant plant based control

- powerful eco-friendly method
- few R-genes
- R can be broken down by virulent strains, which limits the durability of the method

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Aim of this work

• understand if and how it is possible to optimize the use of resistant cultivars to control RKN in seasonal agrosystems (market gardening)

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In the soil, near a plant root

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In the soil, near a plant root

- free living infective juveniles
- contact with the root and penetrate it
- giant cells formation
- maturate and produce eggs (clonal)
- released into the soil and hatch

At the plant root system scale

- parasites with a free-living stage
- causing an epidemic within a population of roots

An epidemic among a growing population

Along the course of a season

- plant root system grows
- recruits new infective nematodes

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Nematode infection represses plant roots development

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An epidemic among a growing population

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Nematode infection represses plant roots development

An unusual epidemic

- parasites with a free-living stage
- developing on a growing population
- whose growth is negatively affected by infection
- in a seasonal context

Compartmental model

$$
\begin{cases}\n\dot{P} = -\beta PH - \eta P + rI \\
\dot{H} = \mu f(H, E, I) - \epsilon \beta PH \\
\dot{E} = \epsilon \beta PH - \lambda E \\
\dot{I} = \lambda E - \alpha I\n\end{cases}
$$

- \bullet *P* free living nematodes
- H healthy root sites
- \bullet E maturating nematodes
- I egg laying nematodes

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Model fitting

Parameterization

- most parameter values were found in literature
- some had to be estimated from experimental data: β , $f(.)$
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Model fitting

Parameterization

- most parameter values were found in literature
- some had to be estimated from experimental data: β , $f(.)$
- Scenarios derivation
	- \pm 30% parameters
	- low, medium (default), high, extreme scenarios

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 P_{ν}

- nematode pop. structured in avirulent and virulent phenotypes
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-
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- plants are either R or S
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- avirulents do not develop on R plants
-
-

- plants are either R or S
- nematode pop. structured in avirulent and virulent phenotypes
- avirulents do not develop on R plants
- both avirulents and virulents develop on S plants
- a fraction δ of avirulent offspring turns into virulent

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Fitness costs of virulence

- infectiveness: $\beta_v = (1 w_\beta)\beta_a$
- reproduction: $r_v = (1 w_r)r_a$

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Seasonal context, crop rotations, optimization

Seasonal agrosystems

- crops planted and harvested sequentially over time
-

$$
\overline{CHRD} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{\text{seasons}} \int_0^T H(\tau) d\tau
$$

Seasonal context, crop rotations, optimization

Seasonal agrosystems

- crops planted and harvested sequentially over time
- cultivar rotations to enhance crop yield (vs. pure S and pure R)

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Yield proxy

• Cumulated Healthy Root Density

$$
\overline{CHRD} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{\text{seasons}} \int_0^T H(\tau) d\tau
$$

Optimal cultivar rotation

default scenario, 10 seasons

• computation of all periodic crop rotations over given time horizon

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Optimal cultivar rotation

default scenario

- R efficacy quickly drops with temporal horizon
- optimal periodic rotation nearly as efficient as the best strategy

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Optimal cultivar rotation

default scenario

- R efficacy quickly drops with temporal horizon
- optimal periodic rotation nearly as efficient as the best strategy

• optimal R plants ratio much lower than agricultural practice (pure R)

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R characteristics: fitness costs of virulence

- no advantage of rotations when high or low fitness costs
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R characteristics: fitness costs of virulence

- no advantage of rotations when high or low fitness costs
- experimental data (Mi-tomato): >30% gain with optimal rotations

R characteristics: fitness costs of virulence

- no advantage of rotations when high or low fitness costs
- experimental data (Mi-tomato): >30% gain with optimal rotations

 w_r and w_β have symmetrical influence but interact negatively

$$
R_{0,v} = f(1-(1-w_{\beta})(1-w_r)) = f(w)
$$

Fitness cost \times epidemiological scenarios

15 seasons, different virulence emergence rates

- strong influence of disease severity on advantage of rotations: increases with severity
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Fitness cost \times epidemiological scenarios

15 seasons, different virulence emergence rates

- strong influence of disease severity on advantage of rotations: increases with severity
- gain maximized for medium fitness costs

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Fitness cost \times epidemiological scenarios

15 seasons, different virulence emergence rates

- strong influence of disease severity on advantage of rotations: increases with severity
- gain maximized for medium fitness costs

• mild influence of virulence emergence rate on advantage of rotations: decreases with rate

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Robustness

15 seasons, $\pm 10\%$ on all parameter values

- sub-optimal rotations always outperform pure R strategies
- benefit of optimal rotations little affected by uncertainty on parameters

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Alternating R and S cultivars

- more efficient than classical agricultural practice
- optimal periodic rotations approach best deployment performance

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Fitness costs of virulence

- interact negatively
- 1 large cost $+$ 1 small cost $>$ 2 medium costs

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Alternating R and S cultivars

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Fitness costs of virulence

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Optimal rotations significantly outperform pure R

- when nematode infestation is moderate to severe
- when fitness costs are medium
- over longer time scales (not shown)

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Optimal rotations significantly outperform pure R

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Robustness

• optimal rotation efficacy preserved despite uncertainty in model parameter estimates

Thank You !

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Appendix: $R_{0,v}$

Season-to-season basic reproduction number of virulent nematodes

$$
R_{0,\nu} = \phi \exp\left(\left[\left((1 - w_\beta)(1 - w_r)\frac{\epsilon r}{\alpha} - 1\right)\left(H_0 + \frac{\mu T}{2}\right)\beta - \eta\right]T\right)
$$

- \bullet obtained from the \dot{P}_v/P_v dynamics
- in the limit $P_a, P_v \rightarrow 0$
- assuming E and I at quasi-equilibrium