

Lima beans on defense: studies of cyanogenesis and the complex relationship of crop plants
and insect herbivores

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To the first farmers, the future farmers, and the many hands that have connected them.

Abstract

Lima beans (*Phaseolus lunatus*) are a globally important crop with great potential to contribute to future food security through their high nutritional value, vigor, drought tolerance, and ability to fix nitrogen. A major limiting factor for the contribution of Lima beans to the global food supply is their susceptibility to herbivory by insects like *Lygus hesperus*. The goal of the research presented in this dissertation is to understand the domestication history, current variability, and breeding potential of the anti-herbivore defense traits in Lima bean with a special emphasis on cultivars adapted to the Central Valley of California, and on cyanogenesis as a mechanism of defense against *L. hesperus*. Chapter 1 is a comprehensive review of the existing research on the effect of domestication on anti-herbivore defense traits. In chapter 2, a genome-wide association study is used to explore the inheritance of cyanogenesis in Lima beans within the Mesoamerican gene pool. This study identified highly significant SNPs for the release of cyanide immediately following tissue disruption that could contribute to a deterrence defense strategy. Significant SNPs were also identified for a more sustained release of cyanide that could contribute to a defense strategy of herbivore intoxication. In chapter 3, the trait of cyanogenesis is characterized and studied for its plasticity in the presence of *L. hesperus* and its effect on the survival and growth of *L. hesperus* populations. This study found that cyanogenesis was not induced by the presence of *L. hesperus* and the survival and reproduction of *L. hesperus* was negatively correlated with the cyanogenic capacity of their Lima bean host. These results advance the study of anti-herbivore defense mechanisms and the complex relationships between crop plants and their insect pests. They will contribute to efforts of crop improvement for reduced pesticide use and increased food security.

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Introduction

Domestication has altered the interactions among crop plants, herbivorous insects, and higher trophic levels of agroecosystems (Chen et al. 2018). While selection has resulted in enhanced agronomic traits like yield, defensive traits such as toxic compounds have been reduced or removed (Rodriguez-Saona et al. 2011). A consistent pattern of reduced defense has not been established across species, but crop plants tend to be more vulnerable to herbivory than their wild relatives (Chen et al. 2015). Domesticated beans (*Phaseolus* spp.) may be more attractive to insect herbivores than their wild relatives, but they are also more effective at recruiting parasitoids (Benrey et al. 1998). This indicates that despite the drastic reduction in defense, some mechanisms have remained in domesticated types or have been recently introgressed by gene flow from wild populations. Identifying and amplifying these anti-herbivore defense mechanisms in modern cultivars, as well as introducing new mechanisms from wild relatives and landraces, could greatly improve productivity and profitability, while limiting the use of toxic agrochemicals.

Like other crops, Lima bean (*Phaseolus lunatus*) has lost many of its mechanisms of defense against insect herbivores during the bottlenecks of domestication and modern breeding programs. This is illustrated by the finding that wild *P. lunatus* seedlings have greater chemical diversity than their domesticated relatives (Lindig-Cisneros et al. 1997). Lima beans have been used as an experimental model in numerous studies of herbivore-induced direct and indirect defenses (Ballhorn et al. 2008). Previous studies have examined the role of cyanogenesis, volatile organic compounds, and extrafloral nectaries as plant defense mechanisms against herbivores (Moreira et al. 2015; Kost and Heil 2008; Ballhorn

et al. 2008; Heil 2004). Due to the high metabolic cost to the plant of producing these defensive compounds, *P. lunatus* makes tradeoffs between direct and indirect defense mechanisms (Ballhorn et al. 2008).

The goal of the research presented in this dissertation is to understand the domestication history, current variability, and breeding potential of the antiherbivore defense traits in Lima bean with a special emphasis on cultivars adapted to the Central Valley of California and cyanogenesis as a mechanism of defense against *Lygus hesperus*.

Lima Beans (Phaseolus lunatus) as the Predominant Grain Legume in California

Lima beans are one of five domesticated species in the genus *Phaseolus*. They were independently domesticated first in Central Mexico and again on the western slope of the Andes Mountains of Ecuador and northern Peru (Gutiérrez-Salgado et al. 1995; Andueza-Noh et al. 2013). Dating of starch grains on human dental remains, indicates that beans were domesticated in Northern Peru approximately 8000 years ago (Piperno and Dillehay 2008). Estimates for the date of domestication of Lima beans in Mexico are less certain but range from 2300-3400 years ago (Kaplan and Lynch 1999; Brown 2006). The domesticated Andean gene pool is characterized by large flat seeds while the Mesoamerican gene pool has smaller round (potato type) or flat (sieva type) seeds (Mackie 1943; Chacón-Sánchez et al. 2012). Lima beans are multi-annual or semi-perennial, with crops typically needing 115-135 days to reach maturity (Long et al. 2014). They are adapted to a range of climates but are especially suited to warm and humid environments (Delgado and Gama López 2015).

Lima beans are grown in many regions of the world, including Africa, Asia, and Central and South America (Heuzé et al. 2015). In the United States, California is the

primary growing region for mature dry Lima beans, where they are an important crop for the agricultural systems of the Central Valley. As a nitrogen-fixing, highly vigorous rotation crop for tomatoes and other high-value crops, Lima beans provide an essential service of sustaining soil fertility and breaking pest and weed lifecycles (Long et al. 2014).

Additionally, Lima beans are very drought tolerant, making them ideal for the perennial water shortages experienced by California in recent decades (Martínez-Nieto et al. 2022).

Two market classes – small (baby) white and large white – are grown in the state. Baby Limas are grown mostly in the region around Sutter and Colusa Counties. Large Limas, which need cooler nighttime temperatures, are grown mostly in Stanislaus County (Lazicki et al. 2016; Long et al. 2014). Approximately 20,200 acres of Lima beans were grown in 2018, representing nearly half (44%) of the dry bean production in the state (USDA 2018). Improved cultivars of Lima bean yield approximately 2,500-3,500 pounds per acre (Long et al. 2014; Wootten 1992). Production of Lima bean in California is limited by its vulnerability to *L. hesperus*. Regular treatment in the field with pesticides, specifically pyrethroids, is the only known effective method of control (Long 2014). This practice is costly for a low-value crop like Lima beans and is unsuitable for organic production.

Lygus hesperus as a Pest of Lima beans in California

Herbivory by the polyphagous, native Californian insect *Lygus hesperus* Knight (Hemiptera: Miridae), negatively affects the yields of several important crops, including alfalfa, strawberries, safflower, peaches, almonds, and dry beans (Metcalf and Flint 1951). Current methods of controlling *L. hesperus* are costly, environmentally toxic, and only moderately effective (Long 2014). In sensitive crops like alfalfa and Lima bean, *L. hesperus*

can cause up to 70% yield loss as measured in sprayed versus unsprayed plots (Bushing et al. 1974; S. Dohle, A. Palkovic, and P. Gepts, unpubl. results).

There are typically four or five generations of *L. hesperus* each summer, with variability due to climate (Beards and Strong 1966). The rate of development is dependent on temperature, but it takes on average 27 days from egg to reproductive adult at 20°C (Butler and Wardecker 1971). Each generation develops from egg to adult with five nymphal instars going through incomplete metamorphosis (Schull 1932). All nymphs are flightless, but adults are highly mobile (Butler 1972; Goodell and Bentley 2003).

L. hesperus are omnivorous but feed mostly on plant tissue (Hagler et al. 2010). Their style of feeding is known as rupture feeding or “lacerate and flush.” Feeding starts with the insect probing the food tissue with its straw-like stylet, causing cells to rupture. Saliva secreted from the stylet has enzymes like polygalacturonase and α -amylase, which further break down the tissue, creating a slurry that the insect can ingest through their stylet tube (Strong 1970). *L. hesperus* feeding on Lima beans results in the abscission of flowers or young pods and consequently, yield loss. When feeding occurs on mature pods seed viability may be reduced and scarring can occur on seeds, thereby lowering market value (Strong 1970; Long et al. 2014). Adults spend about 20% of their time, and nymphs about 30% of their time, probing plants with their stylets. Actual ingestion represents only 3% of the probing time (Cervantes et al. 2016). The mechanical and chemical damage caused by this frequent probing and feeding behavior contributes to the heavy impact that *L. hesperus* have on crop yields.

Research Objectives

Understanding the mechanisms and inheritance patterns of *L. hesperus* tolerance or resistance in Lima bean will aid efforts to breed new varieties that require fewer pesticides and are suitable for organic production. To start, chapter 1 presents a comprehensive review of the literature on how domestication has affected the genetics of insect defense traits. Chapter 2 details the results of a genome-wide association study of cyanogenesis in Lima bean. The goal of this study was to explain how cyanogenesis has been affected by domestication in the Mesoamerican gene pool of Lima beans, with special consideration of the cyanogenic capacity of California cultivars. Chapter 3 will explore the variation and heritability of the tolerance or resistance to *L. hesperus* in cultivars of Lima bean adapted to the Central Valley of California. This will include a study of how cyanogenesis in Lima bean is affected by the presence of *L. hesperus*, specifically to determine the extent to which this trait is constitutive or induced. Analysis of the survival and reproduction of *L. hesperus* on varieties of Lima bean with variable expression of cyanogenesis will also be presented.

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Chapter 1: The Effect of Domestication on Crop Plant Anti-Herbivore Defense Traits

Introduction

The processes of cultivation and domestication have transformed wild species into crop plants that are an invaluable food source for the human population. A shrinking number of these crop species provide a growing share of global calories (Khoury et al. 2014). These same processes have also made crop plants more vulnerable to damage by insect pests than their wild relatives (Whitehead et al. 2017). Globally, insect herbivory accounts for an estimated 18-20% of yield loss during crop production (Sharma et al. 2017). It is expected that these losses will increase if current trends in climate change continue (Deutsch et al. 2018). Recovering the defensive abilities of crop wild relatives in domesticated plants would result in reduced need for pesticides – which are harmful to human and environmental health – as well as an increase in global food security.

Plant defenses against insect herbivores typically consist of complex suites of traits (Agrawal and Fishbein 2006; Barbour et al. 2015; Schuman and Baldwin 2016). These may include resistance traits like chemical deterrents, physical barriers, and reduced palatability, or tolerance traits like increased vigor and delayed phenology (Mitchell et al. 2016). Defensive traits can also involve attraction or resource benefits for beneficial organisms such as parasitoids and predators of insect herbivores (Chen et al. 2015).

Defense traits may be constitutively expressed and may also be induced to a higher level of expression by factors such as the presence of the target herbivore or volatile signals from a neighboring plant (Stout 2014). Induction of a defense trait may occur immediately or slowly over time (Bruce 2015; Frost et al. 2008). The response can also be localized to

the area immediately surrounding the site of damage or be widespread throughout the plant (Karban and Baldwin 1997). Several environmental factors can affect the expression of these traits including light intensity (Roberts and Paul 2006), the interspecific and intraspecific diversity of neighboring plants (Solís-Montero et al. 2020; Abdala-Roberts et al. 2016), photoperiod, temperature, and climate (Jamieson et al. 2012). Control of these traits typically involve the expression of multiple loci, which may be linked to other useful or unfavorable agronomic traits (Ordas et al. 2010; Boerma and Walker 2005).

The process of domestication involves selecting wild plants with desirable agronomic traits. The resulting crop plants typically exhibited some or all a suite of traits known as the domestication syndrome. This can include increased palatability, loss of dormancy, seed retention, increased seed size, and seed number (Gepts 2004, 2014; Hufford et al. 2019). Selection intensity varied across crops and domestication events and there is serious academic debate about the duration and intentionality of this process (Hillman and Davies 1990; Abbo et al. 2011; Purugganan and Fuller 2011).

Identifying the genes that control agronomically important traits and understanding the way in which they have been affected by domestication is foundational to conserving, amplifying, and increasing their utility. This review will focus on the ways in which the process of domestication has altered the genes underlying plant defenses against insect herbivores. Prior reviews have focused on the mechanisms and physiology of plant defense against insect pests as well as the ways in which domestication has affected the interactions between crop plants, insect herbivores, and higher trophic levels (Chen et al. 2015; Mitchell et al. 2016). To my knowledge this is the first review on the subject of how

domestication has affected plant and insect herbivore interactions with a specific focus on crop genetics.

Reductions in genetic diversity within crop species

Domesticated gene pools have significantly less genetic diversity than wild gene pools (Hufford et al. 2019; Khoury et al. 2021). During the transition from wild plant to domesticated crop, diversity is lost during the actual domestication process as well as during cultivation, dispersal outside the center of origin, and later improvement through modern breeding (Meyer and Purugganan 2013; Gepts 2002). This loss of diversity within crop species has contributed to a loss of insect herbivore resistance traits (Johnson 2008; Tooker and Frank 2012; Dar et al. 2021). This is illustrated in maize through a comparison of teosinte, maize landraces from within the center of origin, maize landraces from outside the center of origin, and modern maize cultivars. Each stage of transition resulted in changes to the anti-herbivore defense strategies as well as changes in gene expression (Köllner et al. 2008; Fontes-Puebla et al. 2021). A similar pattern can be seen in an analysis of the *GsRbohA1* locus in soybean of which the *A* haplotype confers resistance against common cutworm (*Spodoptera litura* Fabricius). This allele was only present in 2.2% of modern cultivars compared with 23.5% of landraces and 95.6% of wild accessions (Du et al. 2022).

In the case of some anti-herbivore defense mechanisms, the selection against certain phenotypes had clear benefit to human consumers. For example, selections against genotypes which produce toxic compounds like cyanogenic glycosides, or distasteful physical defenses like trichomes, improved the safety and palatability of food (Benrey et al.

1998; Wittkop et al. 2009; Whitehead et al. 2017). However, several important defense traits such as herbivore-induced volatile organic compounds cannot be perceived by casual observation and have only recently been revealed by careful scientific study (Turlings et al. 1990; Turlings et al. 1995). Despite the impossibility of direct selection for or against these traits prior to their discovery, several studies have identified differences in the expression between wild and domesticated crop plants. For example, in several studies of phytophagous insects and their parasitoids, parasitism was higher for hosts on domesticated rather than cultivated plants (Benrey et al. 1998; Garvey et al. 2020). In other studies, reduced predation or parasitism was attributed to the loss of chemical diversity or volatile signals (Chen and Welter 2002; Souna et al. 2019; Jaccard et al. 2022). The loss or amplification of indirect anti-herbivore defense traits may be due to genetic drift, linkage, pleiotropic effects, or selection for alternate resource allocation. However, these were not intentionally selected against as their function has only recently been discovered (Rodriguez-Saona et al. 2011). Breeding programs with little or no insecticide protection may help maintain insect defense traits compared to programs in which insecticides protect plants and mask susceptibility (Hagel 1978).

Two early steps in the process of domestication were cultivation and storage, the intentional planting of future crop species and the saving of seeds between planting seasons (Wilcox 2012; Fuller and Allaby 2018). Both cultivation and storage created novel selection pressures on crop plants and their insect herbivores. Traits changed in frequency from the wild population when under the selection pressures of cultivation and storage (Chen et al. 2018). For example, in common bean, *Phaseolus vulgaris*, resistance to Mexican bean weevil *Zabrotes subfasciatus* (Coleoptera: Bruchidae) is most likely due to a protein of

the APA family, arcelin (Osborn et al. 1988; Cardona et al. 1990; Acosta-Gallegos et al. 1998). Arcelin is only found in some accessions of wild *Phaseolus vulgaris* from Mesoamerica (Osborn et al. 1986) and is controlled by a single mendelian gene for which arcelin production alleles are dominant over alleles for its absence (Romero et al. 1986; Osborn et al. 1986). Wild collections are diverse across geographic regions and highly heterogeneous within populations, including the presence or absence of arcelin (Bennett 1970). The great variation in their expression of arcelin production, suggests that this seed protein may have a limited effect on fitness. Alternatively, the cost of arcelin production may outweigh the benefits in some settings. This raises the possibility that domestication did not occur in the limited region where arcelin producing accessions are found or by chance during domestication non-arcelin individuals were selected (Gepts 1984; Gepts 1988; Debouck and Tohme 1989; Cardona et al. 1990).

Insect herbivores have exerted selective pressures on both wild and domesticated plants (Campbell 2014). For self-pollinating lineages to evolve and be maintained, the fitness cost of inbreeding depression – the difference in fitness of inbred and outcrossed progeny - cannot be too high (Jarne and Charlesworth 1993; Campbell 2014). Herbivory can increase inbreeding depression, though the interaction between pest and mating system can be complex and varied (Carr and Eubanks 2001; Muola et al. 2011; Schrieber et al. 2021). Autogamy, or self-pollination, and asexual reproduction have been favored over allogamy, commonly known as out-crossing, during domestication (Rick 1988; Allard 1999; Gepts 2004). The combination of selection for inbreeding and inbreeding depression as a result of herbivore induced selection has contributed to the trend of increased susceptibility to insect pests of crop plants as compared to their wild relatives.

Reductions of genetic diversity in agricultural landscapes

The accelerating fragmentation or total clearing of wild ecosystems to make way for farmland has resulted in an incalculable loss of genetic diversity (Tilman 1999; Norris 2008; Raven and Wagner 2021). This loss of biodiversity has increased the pressure from insect herbivores on crop plants by several mechanisms, including the loss of predators and parasitoids, as well as genetic erosion and reduced gene flow between crops and their wild relatives.

Close correlations between plant and insect diversity have been found in wild and agricultural ecosystems (Murdoch et al. 1972; Strong et al. 1984; Zhang et al. 2016). The habitat needs of specialist herbivores as well as predators and parasitoids may not be met by simplified agricultural landscapes. As a result, the ecosystem services they provide in more diverse landscapes will be lost (Root 1973; Keesing and Wratten 1997; Woltz 2012). Overall, crop domestication and the ecological disturbance of agriculture has exerted a re-selection pressure on insect herbivores resulting in the evolution of more serious pests (Horn 2009).

Within the center of domestication, landscape diversity is a reserve of crop diversity and insect diversity (Keesing and Wratten 1997). Loss of genetic diversity within these ecosystems can have several consequences for the future evolution of crops and insect herbivores. Genetic diversity in a population is a prerequisite for evolution by natural and artificial selection (Darwin 1859). This applies to both crop plants and their insect herbivores (Tooker and Frank 2012). Gene flow from wild relatives is an important source of anti-herbivore traits in crop plants. Hence, genetic erosion of crop gene pools is occurring rapidly due the loss of habitat for wild relatives (Maxted et al. 2007). While

modern breeding efforts have sought to identify and incorporate defensive traits from wild relatives, this is slow work and cannot proceed without conservation (Rick and Chetelat 1995; Hodgkin and Hajjar 2007). Additionally, the loss of spatial diversity across agricultural ecosystems counters the ability of balancing selection to maintaining non-neutral genetic variation in crop populations including landraces (Mercer and Perales 2010; Gloss et al. 2013).

In addition to trait maintenance and ease of adaptation to novel circumstances, both intraspecific and interspecific diversity make agricultural landscapes more difficult for herbivores to navigate (Root 1973; Agrawal 2006). In polycultures, insects are less likely to find and stay on their host plants (Strong 1984). Additionally, increased niche partitioning in diverse landscapes leads to more efficient capture of available resources. This increases plant productivity in diverse landscapes as compared to monocultures (Crutsinger et al. 2012; Tooker and Frank 2012)

Changes in Ploidy

Polyploidy is common in plants and is especially prevalent in domesticated species (Renny-Byfield and Wendel 2014). Autopolyploidy is when polyploidy arises from whole genome duplication. Allopolyploidy is when polyploidy arises from the hybridization of two or more whole genomes. Adding copies of the genome can result in new expression and interactions between genes and alleles, thereby affecting anti-herbivore defense traits (Albuzio et al. 1978; Nusimer and Thompson 2001; Wendel et al. 2014; Osborn 2004).

Whether a change in ploidy comes through autopolyploidy or allopolyploidy may affect the outcome for anti-herbivore defense traits. In allopolyploids, some evidence

indicates that there is expression of novel phenolic compounds and enzymatic diversity (Dhawan and Lavania 1996). This greater chemical diversity may help combat the overall loss of chemical diversity that results from the initial domestication event and as a result amplify some anti-herbivore traits (Benrey et al. 1998; Renny-Byfield and Wendel 2014; Salman-Minkov 2016; Dar et al. 2021). However, more research is needed on this subject. By contrast, autopolyploidy has been found to have varied effects on chemical phenotypes including the expression of novel compounds, the absence of compounds found in diploids, and changes in the regulation of tissue-specific chemical production (Levy 1976).

There is evidence to support two main scenarios of insect herbivore response to polyploidization. In the first, polyploidy may create new defenses that allow a host plant to escape from herbivory and coevolutionary relationships with its insect pests (Ehrlich and Raven 1964; Segraves and Anneberg 2016). An example of this is found in the order Brassicales, which includes many domesticated species. The successful evolution of increasingly complex glucosinolate defense chemicals for protection against the cabbage moth (Lepidoptera: Peridae) has been driven by gene and genome duplication (Edger et al. 2015). Duplicated genes in the glucosinolate pathway were retained at a rate of over 95% after whole genome duplication compared to an average rate of 45% maintenance in duplication overall in protein coding genes (Hofberger et al. 2013). This indicates that polyploidization during domestication may have improved antiherbivore defense mechanisms in some cases (Renny-Byfield and Wendel 2014).

In the second scenario, polyploidy may expand the range of hostplants and their herbivores resulting in greater diversification and ecological opportunities for the pest (Segraves and Anneberg 2016). This can be seen in the example of gall midges (*Asphondylia*

spp.), which have species-specific preferences for – and therefore habitat limitation to – cytotypes in creosote bush, *Larrea tridentata* (O'Connor et al. 2019) and the perennial brassica, *Cardamine pratensis* (Avantis et al 2010). While no examples for this scenario can be found in research on domesticated crops, it is likely that polyploidization during domestication may have altered crop plant and insect herbivore interactions by expanding the ecological range of both crops and insect herbivores.

Given the syndrome-like nature of plant defense, the multi-locus control of many individual plant defense traits, the higher load of deleterious mutations, and the gene loss known to occur after polyploidization, it might seem that polyploid crops would be especially sensitive to changes in ploidy and genetic drift during domestication (Browsers et al. 2003; Paterson et al. 2003; Agrawal and Fishbein 2006; Otto 2007). However, there is strong evidence to suggest that the genes controlling specialized metabolic pathways for certain defense traits are clustered (Dar et al. 2021). As a result, polyploidy is, in many cases, an asset to plants for maintaining and evolving anti-herbivore defense mechanisms while undergoing selection during domestication (Renny-Byfield and Wendel 2014; Dar et al. 2021). Additionally, polyploid plants are often clonally propagated – a practice which may maintain advantageous combinations of alleles. Asexual reproduction has been found especially effective in maintaining defenses against specialist herbivores, but the associated loss of chemical diversity may come at a cost of adaptations that defend against generalist herbivores (Johnson et al. 2009; Johnson et al. 2014; Campbell et al. 2014).

Differential expression of defense trait expression in tissue of reproductive and harvested organs

Selection during domestication can have varied effects on the characteristics of crop plants depending on the harvested organ, mating system, and life history of the plant (Zhoray et al. 2004). Humans have found diverse ways of consuming a wide variety of plant organs, though reproductive organs, like fruits and seeds, are favored staples given their high caloric and nutritional value (Klein et al. 2007; Turner et al. 2011). The modular nature of plants and organ-specific genetic control of defense trait expression has allowed for the selection of crop plants with defenses that are differentiated in reproductive and harvested organs (Sánchez-Pérez et al. 2007; McCall and Fordyce 2010; Shang et al. 2014; Whitehead et al. 2017).

Reproductive structures, including flowers, fruits, and seeds, are usually photosynthetic sinks that require nutrient and energy investments from other parts of the plant to build and defend (Herms and Mattson 1992; Whitehead et al. 2017). For crops in which a reproductive organ is also the harvested organ – such as fruits, grains, pulses, and oil seeds – selection for or against herbivore defense traits may have been imposed by consumer preferences as discussed below. However, for crops in which the harvested organ is not a reproductive organ – such as leafy greens, tubers, and biomass crops – the harvested organ may have lost defenses when resources were allocated to yield rather than defense (Herms and Mattson 1992; Huot et al. 2014).

The harvested organs of crops have undergone especially intensive selection during domestication (Darwin 1859). Damage to the harvested organs by insect herbivores can directly affect both the quality and yield of a crop. As a result, selection during

domestication may have been more intense for these organs. For edible crops however, selection may have acted against defense traits, as palatability or safety for human consumers was prioritized. This can be seen in the example of cyanogenic glycosides in almonds. Presence of these compounds in the kernels is an effective defense against some insect herbivores (Zagrobelny et al. 2004), but is also toxic to human consumers (Thodberg et al. 2018). As a result, the trait has been strongly selected against in domesticated almonds (Thodberg et al. 2018). Studies have shown that the pre-cyanogenic compound prunasin is produced outside the kernel and then transported in and stored as amygdalin (Thodberg et al. 2018). While control of prunasin production is multigenic, its presence in kernels is controlled by a single gene (Sánchez-Pérez et al. 2007). This is like other classic domestication syndrome traits which are controlled by single genes or large effect quantitative trait loci (Poncet et al. 2004; Meyer and Purugganan 2013; Olson and Wendel 2013; Parker and Gepts 2021).

A similar genetic effect of domestication on defense compound biosynthesis can be seen in the example of cucurbitacin in the *Cucurbitaceae* family. Cucurbitacin confers a bitter flavor to plant tissue and if consumed in large enough doses it can be fatally toxic to human consumers (Kaushik et al. 2014). While some insects have adapted to tolerate and even benefit from cucurbitacin, it is a strong deterrent to feeding and oviposition to other insect species (Tallamy et al. 1997). Presence of cucurbitacin in the *Cucurbitaceae* is a recessive trait controlled by the *Bi* locus (**Bitterness**). However, just as amygdalin storage in almond kernels is controlled by a single gene, a transcription factor *Bt* (**Bitter fruit**) controls biosynthesis of cucurbitacin from the *Bi* locus in fruits and has undergone strong selection during domestication (Shang et al. 2014). This demonstrates strong and

independent selection during domestication that reduced defense traits in the harvested organ of a crop.

In instances in which the antiherbivore trait is not toxic or unpalatable to human consumers, there is evidence that selection during domestication has maintained defensive traits in harvested organs. This is the hypothesis of Rodriguez-Saona et al. (2011) for the case of cranberries and selection for anthocyanins. Anthocyanins are a class of compounds known to provide defense against insect herbivores in some cases and are also understood to be beneficial for human consumers (de Pascual-Teresa and Sanchez-Ballesta 2008). It was found that anthocyanins have not been maintained as an effective defense in North American highbush blueberries (Rodriguez-Saona et a. 2019). Both highbush blueberries and cranberries were recently domesticated so they are likely still undergoing significant selection in cultivated environments (Mainland 2012; Vorsa and Zalapa 2019).

In some cases, the harvested organs of a crop may have become more susceptible to an insect pest because selection during domestication made them more attractive hosts rather than eliminating defenses. This can be seen in the example of chili peppers, which were domesticated for both ornamental and culinary uses. Culinary peppers are much more susceptible to pepper weevils than their ornamental or wild relatives (Chabaane et al. 2021). This is despite having been selected for both higher and lower levels of the defense compound capsaicin as compared to their wild relatives. The greater susceptibility could instead be due to factors like flower size and pericarp thickness. Similarly, in Lima bean, the larger seed size of domesticated forms has been found to reduce competition among seed beetle larvae, thereby making them more destructive pests (Cuny et al. 2017).

Coevolution – how insect population genetics have been affected by agriculture

Domestication is primarily thought of as affecting the genes of the domesticated species (Gross and Olsen 2010). However, there is substantial evidence that the genetics of insect herbivores have also been affected by crop evolution prior to, during, and after domestication (Vialatte et al. 2011; Midamegbe et al. 2011; Bourguet et al. 2014). This is akin to the situation described for some host-pathogen interactions in wild and domesticated common bean (Guzmán et al. 1995; Geffroy et al. 1997; Parker and Gepts 2021).

Insect herbivores feeding on crop plants can form distinct populations from other members of the same species feeding on their wild host plants (Vialatte et al. 2012) and may even diverge into distinct species (Bourguet et al. 2014). For example, generalist herbivores that feed on multiple crop plants can form distinctive strains associated with a given crop. This was demonstrated in the case of Fall Army Worm, *Spodoptera frugiperda* (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae) (Acevedo et al. 2018). In this study, it was shown that when strains preferring maize or Bermuda grass were moved to the other crop, the plants expressed different induced defenses than when they were attacked by the strain adapted to the same crop. Since these induced defenses can compromise caterpillar growth, strong selection pressure is being exerted on the composition of their saliva to minimize plant defense trait selection (Acevedo et al. 2018).

Experimental evidence has also demonstrated that insect herbivores evolve into pests that are more difficult to control when a genetically variable population undergoes selection in the novel pressures of an agricultural environment (Via 1990). For example, strains of the polyphagous spider mite *Tetranychus urticae* (Trombidiformes: Arachnida)

moved from high-quality common bean host plants to low-quality tomato host plants showed a progressive increase in expression of 7.5% of all genes over five generations (Dermauw et al. 2012). This finding indicates that creating more adverse conditions for pests through the development of resistant varieties and pesticide applications could lead to better adaptation among pests in the future.

The coevolutionary relationship between crop wild relatives and insect pests in the center of origin predates domestication (Delgado Salinas et al. 1988). In some cases, coevolutionary relationships between wild plants and insects were disrupted by domestication (Chen and Welter 2002) but in other cases there is strong evidence of continued coevolution. For example, in apples, it has been found that autumn color has been maintained by coevolution with overwintering aphids (Archetti 2009). Red leaf color in autumn is achieved through the active production of anthocyanins. While aphids lay their eggs in the bark rather than on the leaves, red leaf color is an honest signal of the defenses of the tree and its quality as a host. Aphids have lower fitness on trees with red leaf color in the fall, and overall, these trees attract fewer aphids looking for egg-laying sites in the autumn (Archetti 2009; Holopainen et al. 2009).

The selective pressures of cultivation and storage can also create significant problems for pest management. In the example of bean weevils (Coleoptera: Bruchidae) which feed on both the wild and domesticated seeds of common bean, research has shown that the *Horismenus* parasitoids that control this pest in the wild have been unable to adapt well to conditions in which large quantities of seeds are stored between planting seasons (Laurin-Lemay et al 2013). Seed storage creates an ideal environment for the bean weevil population to quickly amplify through successive generations (Tuda et al. 2006) while the

parasitoids require alternate sources of nutrition such as nectar and pollen to complete their lifecycle (Laurin-Lemay et al 2013).

Recommendations for future research

Domestication has greatly altered the interactions of insect pests and their host crop plants. While this topic has been well studied, it is complex and highly specific to the evolutionary history of each crop and insect pest. Understanding the ways in which domestication has altered the genetic control of anti-herbivore defense traits may help with breeding for recovery of these traits (Mammadov et al. 2018). More research is needed to improve understanding of these relationships in agricultural systems, especially on indigenous crops, which have been understudied but may play an important role in food security as climate change creates adverse conditions for current staple crops (Dawson et al. 2019; Dwyer et al. 2022).

While additional research may provide critical insight into the function and evolution of unitary anti-herbivore defense traits, more consideration should also be given to the interaction of multiple defense traits and what, if any, tradeoffs and synergies may occur between them. Integrating the concept of defense syndrome and domestication syndrome could yield interesting insight into overarching patterns of change within crop and insect pest interactions (Poncet et al. 2004; Agrawal and Fishbein 2006; Meyer and Purugganan 2013; Olson and Wendel 2013; Parker and Gepts 2021). Meta-analyses have also provided helpful insight into the ways in which anti-herbivore defense traits have been altered by domestication (Whitehead et al. 2017; Fernandez et al. 2021). With newly

developed software and machine learning methods improving the ease and accuracy of such studies, more broad patterns may be revealed (Borenstein 2022).

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Chapter 2: Genome-Wide Association Study of Cyanogenesis in Lima Beans (*Phaseolus lunatus*)

Abstract

Cyanogenesis is a common trait in crop plants due to its function in repelling herbivores (Bolarinwa et al. 2016; Jones 1998). However, the production of cyanide, from precursor cyanogenic glycosides, has been selected against in edible tissues during and after crop domestication due to human toxicity (Shlichta et al., 2018; Meyer and Purugganan, 2013). The goal of this study is to better understand the effect of domestication on cyanogenesis in Lima beans (*Phaseolus lunatus*). A genome-wide association study of volatile cyanide production in the first 15 minutes after tissue disruption in both flowers and young pods of a diversity panel of wild and domesticated lines from the Mesoamerican gene pool revealed several highly significant SNPs. Many of these were closely located to matches of the *Li/li* gene from white clover (*trifolium repens*) which controls β -glucosidase production. Additional SNPs were found from the phenotype of cyanide released 15-30 minutes after tissue disruption. Many of these were closely located to matches of the *Ac/ac* gene sequence from white clover. Additionally, a significant SNP on chromosome 5 in the 15-30 minute exposure window was in close proximity to QTL found previously in a biparental recombinant inbred line (RIL) population for cyanogenesis in flowers, immature pods, and leaves. It was also near a match of the white clover gene *Li/li* sequence. These intriguing results will be the basis of future studies designed to identify the genes controlling cyanogenesis in Lima bean and utilize this trait in breeding

Introduction

Cyanogenesis is a trait that has evolved multiple times across diverse plant families (Pichersky and Lewinsohn 2011). The percentage of edible crop plants that are cyanogenic exceeds with statistical significance the percentage of wild plants that are cyanogenic (Jones 1998). This fact has given rise to the theory that cyanogenesis was an advantageous trait selected for by early farmers as it protected crops from herbivores but could be removed by post-harvest processing (Jones 1998; Wilson and Dufour 2002; Ballhorn et al. 2009). Knowledge of detoxification methods such as fermenting, leaching, and cooking predate agriculture and may even predate the evolution of modern humans (Ragir 2000; Wrangham and Conklin 2003). Cyanogenesis in harvested organs was selected against during domestication in some species like cassava, almond, and Lima bean despite the knowledge of detoxification methods and the trait's utility as an anti-herbivore defense (Ballhorn et al. 2009; Shlichta et al. 2018; Sánchez-Pérez et al. 2019; Ospina et al. 2020). This may contribute to higher vulnerability of these and other crops to insect herbivores (Shlichta et al. 2018; Cuny et al. 2019). Analysis of the genes underlying cyanogenesis using a genome-wide association study of a Mesoamerican diversity panel that includes wild and domesticated accessions could elucidate the mechanism by which this trait has been so reduced or eliminated in the domesticated gene pool. This in turn could improve understanding of the domestication history and aid conservation and plant breeding efforts.

Lima beans are one of only a few pulse crops that produce cyanide and are the only species in the genus *Phaseolus* to do so (Jones 1988; National Research Council 2002; Shlichta 2014). Hydrogen cyanide (HCN) has been found in wild Lima beans at levels lethal

to humans, but it is consistently less abundant or undetectable in the seeds of domesticated lines (Vanderborcht 1979; Smartt 1988). Cooking eliminates the cyanide content of mature beans, rendering them safe for human consumption (Adeparusi 2001). Cyanide production in the leaves of domesticated Lima beans has been found to be equal to or greater than concentrations in wild Lima beans (Shlichta et al. 2018). Floral tissue was not tested in the previously referenced study, but expression of cyanogenesis in flowers may be important as they are especially vulnerable to economic damage by hemipteran pests like *Lygus hesperus* (Alvarado-Rodriguez et al. 1986)

The two main cyanogenic glucosides produced by Lima bean are linamarin and lotaustralin (Frehner et al. 1990). Linamarin is synthesized from valine and lotaustralin from isoleucine (Hughes and Conn 1976). Cyanogenic glucosides are stored in the vacuole of the plant cell and released when the tissue is ruptured (Hartmann 2007). At that point, they are hydrolyzed by linamarase which produces glucose and acetone cyanohydrin. The acetone cyanohydrin then spontaneously or with hydroxynitrile lyase splits into acetone and hydrogen cyanide.

Prior research has identified several QTL for volatile cyanide produced in the floral buds, immature pods, and leaves of a biparental recombinant inbred line (RIL) population of Lima beans derived from an Andean and a Mesoamerican domesticated parents (Dohle 2017; Zullo 2021). Additional research has identified the sequence of both the gene that controls production of cyanogenic glucosides and the hydrolyzing enzyme in white clover (*Trifolium repens*), a legume relative of Lima bean (Olsen et al. 2008). During the process of domestication, one or both genes may have been lost – or their expression reduced – resulting in lower cyanogenic capacity of domesticated lines compared to wild lines. While

these data provide clues to the control of cyanogenesis in Lima bean, data from more diverse germplasm would strengthen these results. This study examines the relationship between these previously discovered QTL and the findings of a genome-wide association study in a Mesoamerican diversity panel of wild and domesticated Lima beans. This research aims to elucidate how cyanogenesis has been affected by domestication in the Mesoamerican gene pool of Lima beans with special consideration of the cyanogenic capacity of California cultivars.

Materials and Methods

Plant Materials

A diversity panel of 363 lines of wild and domesticated Lima beans was selected for the study. Of these, 270 lines were drawn from the diversity panel used for the study of Lima bean domestication (Chacón-Sánchez and Martínez-Castillo 2017), 76 lines were from a diversity panel of Lima beans adapted to growth in the Central Valley of California, and an additional 20 wild lines were collected in Mexico and grown for the study. Due to issues with germination, photoperiod sensitivity, and disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic, flower phenotypes were collected for only 207 of these lines and pod phenotypes were collected for only 164 of these lines.

Plants were grown in a greenhouse setting over the course of three plantings initiated in January 2020, September 2020, and January 2021. Plants were grown under natural lighting conditions with a vertical black plastic curtain blocking artificial light from a neighboring greenhouse. Flowers were collected on the first day they opened as judged by their color: white or purple as opposed to the yellow of the second day. Young pods were

collected at approximately 2cm in length. Samples were stored in 96-well plates.

Immediately after collection, tissue samples were taken to a -80 °C freezer and stored until processing.

Colorimetric Assay for Measuring HCN

Cyanogenesis was measured using a colorimetric assay with Feigl-Anger paper (Feigl and Anger, 1966). Samples were removed from the freezer and their caps were removed and replaced with a prepared piece of Feigl-Anger paper. The freezing and subsequent thawing of the samples disrupted the cells, freeing the cyanogenic glucosides from the vacuole and allowing the hydrolyzing enzymes to cleave cyanide from the sugar. The liberated cyanide volatilized and rose to meet the Feigl-Anger paper. Once in contact with the Feigl-Anger paper, the cyanide interacted with the chemical treatments to turn the paper blue. The Feigl-Anger paper was changed after 15, 30, 60 and 90 minutes from the start time of the assay to create four distinct exposure windows. This timing was selected to maximize HCN capture and avoid paper saturation based on the results of a time trial that was conducted prior to analysis of actual samples. The Feigl-Anger paper was scanned and analyzed using the readplate2 plugin on ImageJ 1.52q to measure the intensity of blue colored caused by the volatile cyanide (Schneider et al. 2012; Angelani et al. 2018).

Early observations suggested that the position of a sample on the plate appeared to affect the results. Samples on the outside of the 96-well plate appeared to defrost more quickly than samples in the interior of the 96-well plate. During the time trial, this concern did not arise because fewer samples were included and so the thermal mass of the plate was lower. To correct for a possible influence of plate position, the 'emmeans' package in R version 4.2.1 was used to create a linear mixed effects model with variety as a fixed effect

and plate, row within plate, and column within plate as random effects (Lenth 2022; R Core Team 2022). The phenotypes tested in the GWAS were the estimated means of each tissue type measured in each exposure window for each variety.

Sequencing

The sequence data for 157 of the lines were downloaded from the NCBI Sequence Read Archive (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra/>). Genetic data were acquired for the other 93 lines by first extracting DNA from embryonic radical tissue using a DNeasy 96 Plant Kit (Qiagen). The DNA was then sequenced with genotyping-by-sequencing (GBS) using the restriction enzyme *ApeK1*. This restriction enzyme was selected to ensure compatibility between this dataset and the preexisting dataset (Chacón-Sánchez and Martínez-Castillo 2017). It should be noted for future studies, however, that the *CviAI* restriction enzyme produces more evenly spaced markers when conducting GBS on the genus *Phaseolus* (Ariani et al. 2016).

Sequence data were aligned to the *Phaseolus lunatus* reference genome (Garcia et al. 2021), annotated, and filtered using the Next Generation Sequencing Eclipse Plugin version 4.2.0 (Tello et al. 2022; Cruz et al. 2014). Data used for masking SNPs in repetitive regions of the genome were provided by Jorge Duitama (unpublished). The data was then moved to TASSLE, where it was imputed with the LD-kNNi method (Money et al. 2015). In a test with 1% of the data masked, the error rate of this imputation was 0.023.

STRUCTURE analysis

A STRUCTURE analysis was performed to identify population structure that could cause misleading results in the GWAS. This was done in the command line version of

STRUCTURE software 2.3.4 (Pritchard et al. 2000). The results were analyzed with the Evanno method in R version 4.2.1 (Evanno et al. 2005; R Core Team 2022). Plots were generated using the `evannoMethodStructure` function of the 'pophelper' package in R version 4.2.1 (Francis 2017; R Core Team 2022).

Initially, the parameters were set to run three times per K for K = 1-10, Burnin = 10,000, and Reps = 10,000 with all samples from Chacón-Sánchez and Martínez-Castillo (2017) as well as the California diversity panel included in the analysis (n = 363). These parameters are quite low but were selected to optimize available computing power. This analysis indicated that the optimal K was five. With this result, the analysis was rerun nine times per K for K=1-6, burning = 100,000, and Reps = 100,000. Here again the limiting factor was computer processing time. For future publications, this analysis will be expanded to include ten runs of K for K=1-10.

All samples from the Andean I and Andean II gene pools, as categorized by the STRUCTURE analysis, were removed. Admixed samples with less than 50% of their genome categorized within a single group would have been excluded, but no samples fell within this category. This left 219 Mesoamerican lines for the GWAS analysis. Of these, 162 had cyanogenesis phenotypes for flowers and 119 had cyanogenesis phenotypes for pods. For publication, an admixture threshold of 70% may be considered and tested.

Genome-wide Association Study

The genome-wide association study was conducted using the Bayesian-information and Linkage-disequilibrium Iteratively Nested Keyway (BLINK) Model in the Genomic Association and Prediction Integrated Tool (GAPIT) Version 3 in R version 4.2.1 (Wang et al. 2014; Huang et al. 2019; R Core Team 2022). A Q matrix was not included as a covariate

variable to control for kinship, because all Andean lines were removed from the sample pool following the STRUCTURE analysis. Testing additional analyses with a Q matrix included will be a step taken prior to publication.

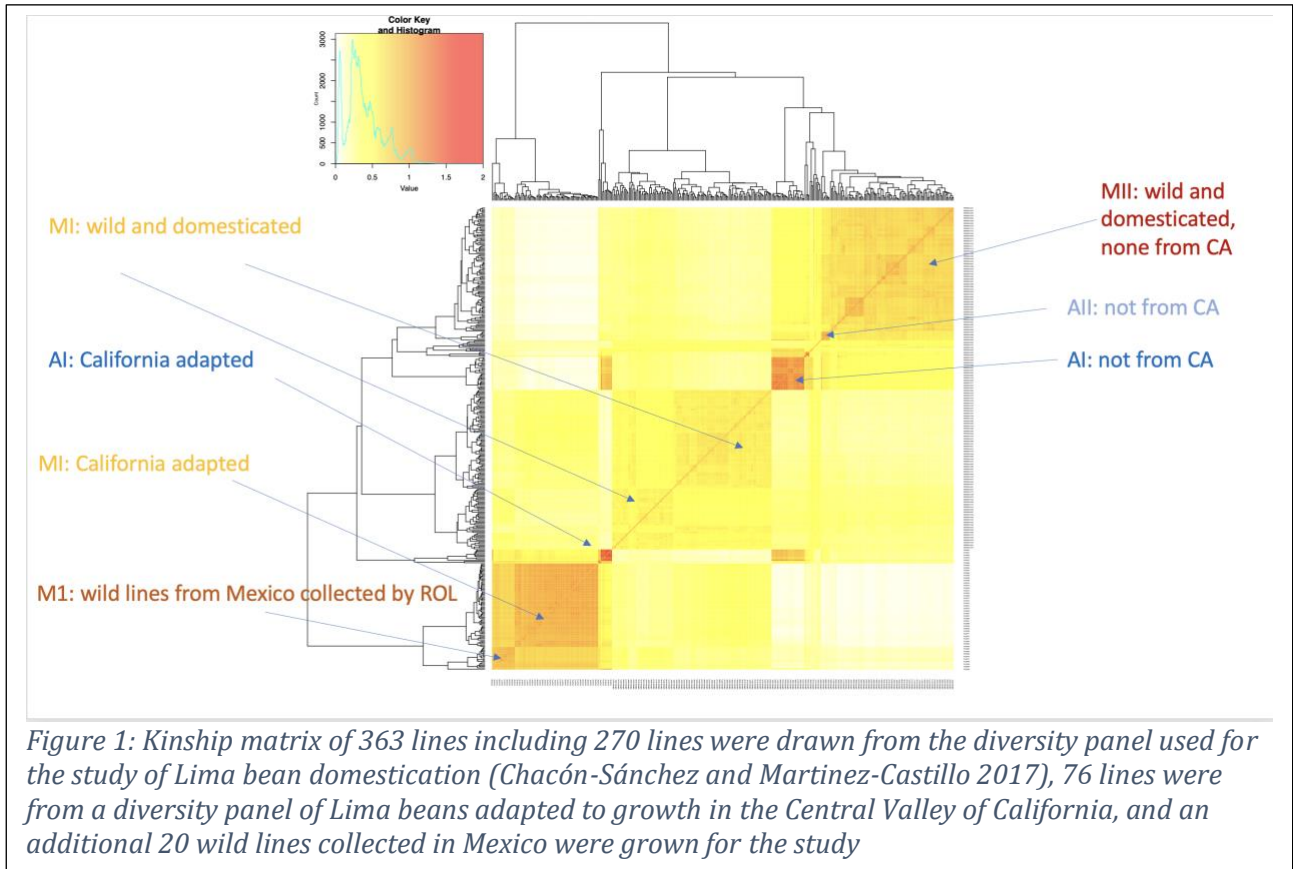
*BLAST Search of White Clover *Li/li* and *Ac/ac* on Lima Bean Reference Genome*

In white clover, cyanogenesis is controlled by two independently segregating Mendelian genes known as *Ac/ac* and *Li/li* (Olsen et al. 2007). *Li/li* controls the presence of the hydrolyzing enzyme linamarase. *Ac/ac* has not been as well characterized as *Li/li* but likely controls the first step in the biosynthesis of cyanogenic glucosides (Olsen et al. 2008). To identify potential homologous genes, a BLAST (Phytozome v13) search of the Lima bean reference genome Plunatus_V1_563 (https://phytozome-next.jgi.doe.gov/info/Plunatus_V1) for the white clover *Ac/ac* and *Li/li* genes was conducted (Altschul et al. 1997; Olsen et al. 2008; Goodstein et al. 2012; Garcia et al. 2021).

Results and Discussion

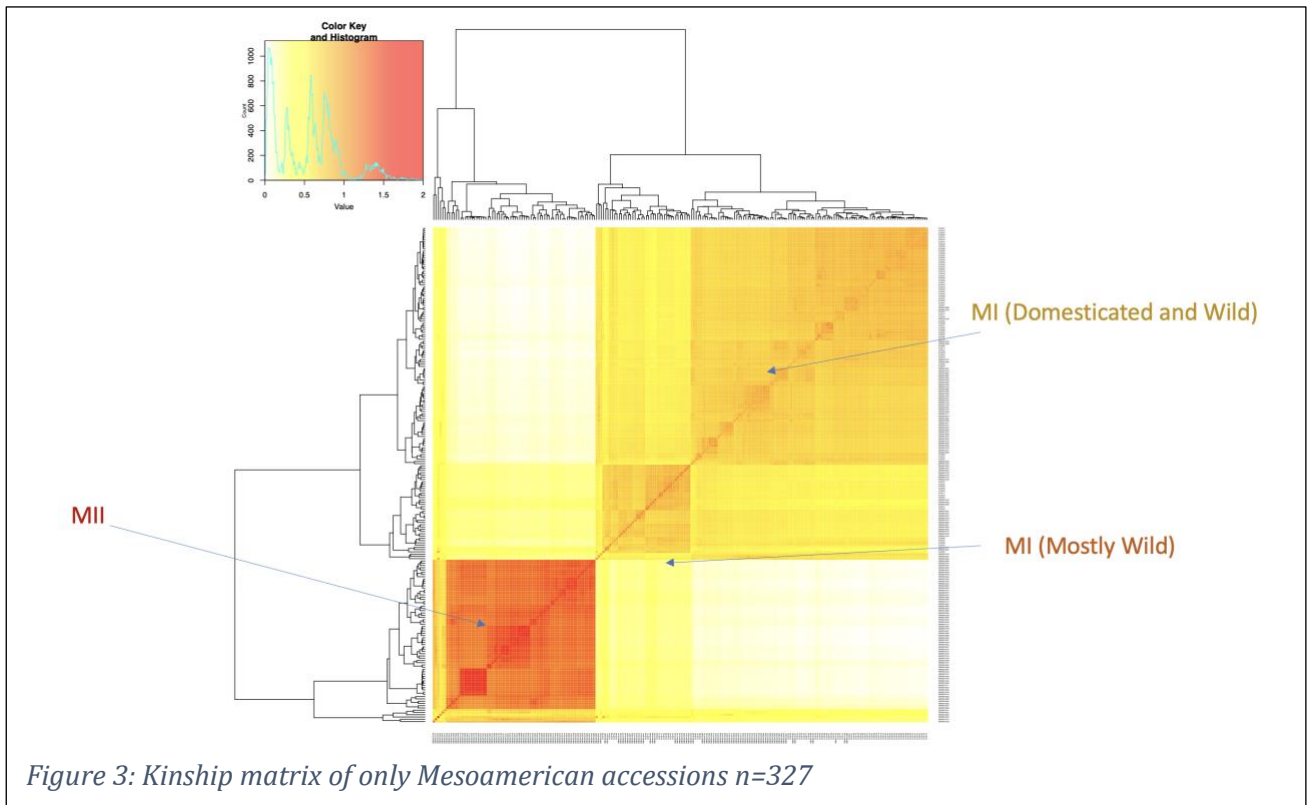
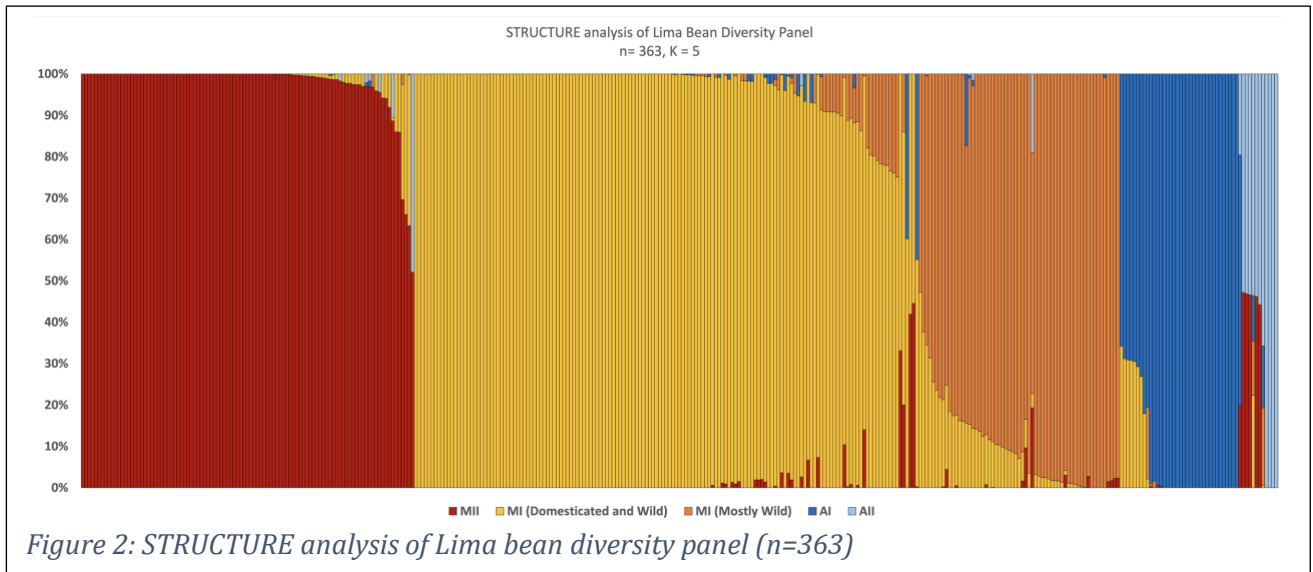
It has long been established that Lima beans were domesticated twice, once in Mesoamerica and once on the western slope of the Andes (Gutiérrez-Salgado et al. 1995). The primary gene pool of Lima bean, including domesticated lineages and the wild populations from which they were derived, can be optimally divided into five subgroups: Mesoamerican I (MI), Mesoamerican II (MII), Andean I (AI), Andean II (AII), and admixed (Chacón-Sánchez and Martínez-Castillo 2017). Given that the accessions included in this study were a diverse mixture of wild, landrace, and elite breeding lines from throughout the Americas, it was important to check for population structure prior to conducting a genome-wide association study, as the linkage disequilibrium between sites with causal

and non-causal alleles in related individuals can lead to artificial associations (Korte and Farlow 2013). As expected, a kinship matrix (Fig. 1) produced by the 'GAPIT' package in R revealed significant population structure within the 363 lines included in this study. Given that most of the available phenotypes came from the Mesoamerican gene pool, removing the Andean lines from the study was the most efficient way to remove biases introduced by this population structure.



A STRUCUTRE analysis found that the optimal K was five (Fig. 2). This is the same number of populations identified by Chacón-Sánchez and Martínez-Castillo (2017). Rather than fitting neatly into the categories of MI, MII, AI, AII, and admixed, these samples were optimally divided into MII, AI, AII and two MI groups. The larger of the MI groups included a mixture of wild and domesticated lines while the smaller MI group consisted mainly of wild accessions collected in Mexico. Based on this analysis, 36 lines identified as belonging

primarily to the two Andean gene pools were removed from the study. For future publication, a higher threshold of admixture may also be considered for removing some additional genotypes. With the Andean lines removed the remaining population (n=327) showed significantly less population structure (Fig. 3)



A GWAS of volatile HCN production in the first 15 minutes of tissue rupture caused by thawing, identified several significant SNPs for flower tissue and one highly significant SNP for pod tissue (Fig 4 and Table 1). The most significant SNPs for flower tissue, on Chromosomes 2 and 4 are located near matches for the BLAST search of the white clover *Li/li* sequence. The SNP identified in pods is not near the significant alignment of the BLAST search against the Lima bean reference genome of the white clover sequence or the QTL identified in the biparental population. When considering cyanogenesis as a defense trait, the immediate release of HCN following tissue disruption deters an insect herbivore and therefore serves as a resistance trait (Ballhorn et al. 2006). As such, it will be most successful against opportunistic, generalist herbivores rather than specialist herbivores which would have experienced coevolution with the crop and had more opportunity to adapt to its defenses (Gleadow and Woodrow 2002). Additional study of these findings may yield great contributions to breeding effort for *L. hesperus* resistance.

Additional significant SNPs were found in the 15-30 minute exposure window (Fig. 5 and Table 1). In flower tissue, SNPs on chromosomes 9, 5, and 7 were closely located to significant matches from the BLAST of the white clover *Ac/ac* gene sequence on the Lima bean reference genome. In pod tissue, a significant SNP on chromosome 6 was also closely located to a match for the *Ac/ac* sequence.

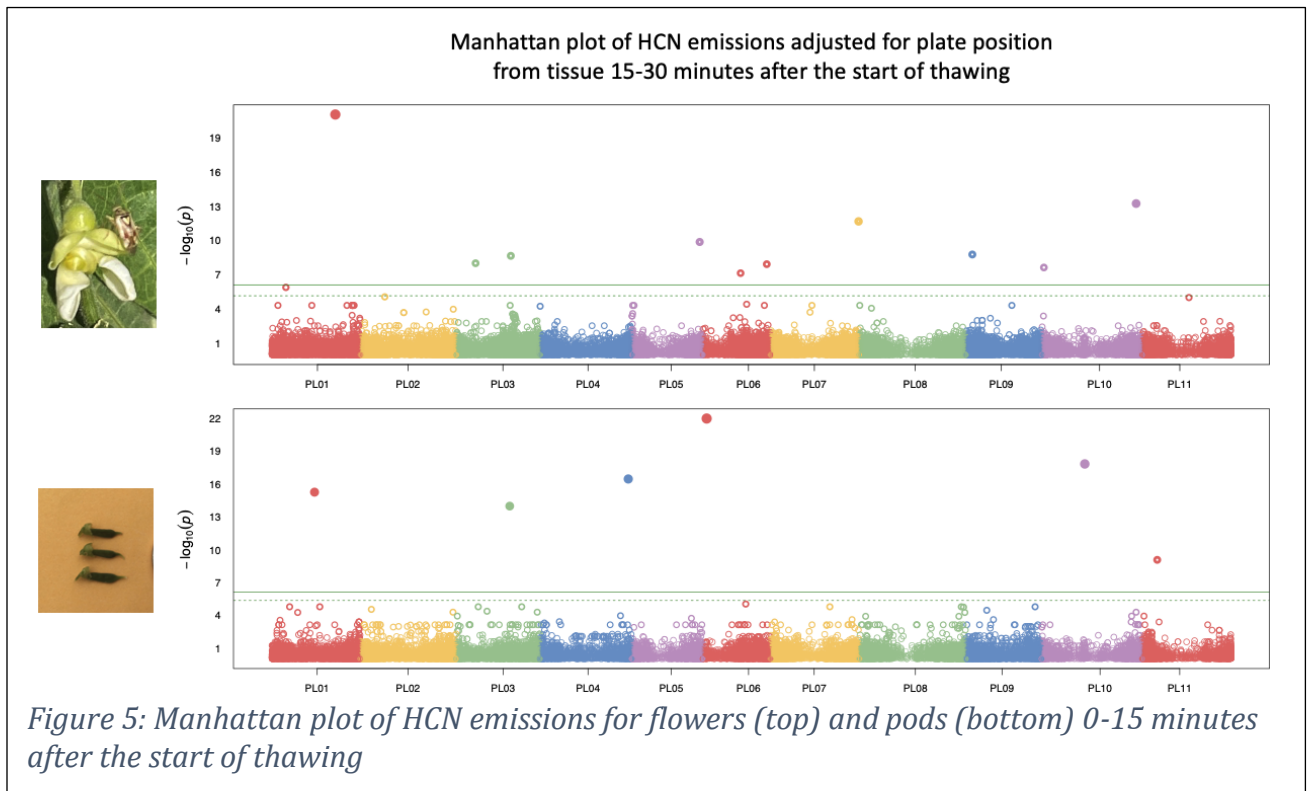
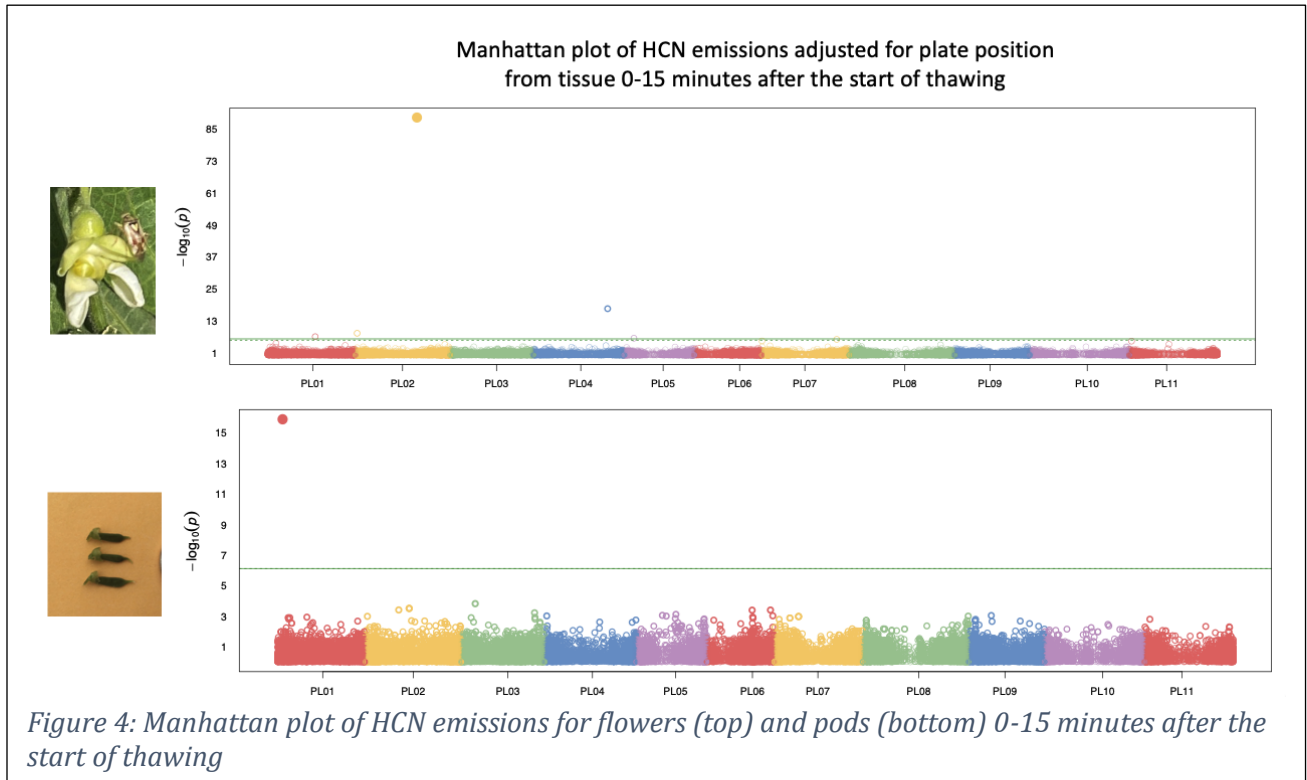


Table 1: Significant QTL identified for HCN emitted including SNP label, chromosome, position, P-value, minor allele frequency, number of observations, adjusted P-value following the Benjamini and Hochberg false discovery rate controlling procedure (Benjamini and Hochberg 1995), the allelic effect estimate, and the percent variation explained.

Significant QTL for HCN emission by flower tissue 0-15 minutes after the start of thawing								
SNP	Chr	Pos	P.value	MAF	nobs	H&B.P.Value	Effect	PVE (%)
SPL02_33506717	PL02	33506717	5.32E-90	0.006	162	3.4E-85	-0.0141	96.31
SPL04_40464404	PL04	40464404	3.48E-18	0.006	162	1.1E-13	0.0052	2.43
SPL02_1004008	PL02	1004008	6.03E-09	0.019	162	1.3E-04	0.0011	0.48
SPL01_25804374	PL01	25804374	1.13E-07	0.006	162	1.8E-03	0.0020	0.31
SPL05_5262950	PL05	5262950	4.43E-07	0.083	162	5.7E-03	-0.0004	0.08
Significant QTL for HCN emission by pod tissue 0-15 minutes after the start of thawing								
SNP	Chr	Pos	P.value	MAF	nobs	H&B.P.Value	Effect	PVE (%)
SPL01_2780894	PL01	2780894	1.34E-16	0.008	119	8.69E-12	-0.003	50
Significant QTL for HCN emission by flower tissue 15-30 minutes after the start of thawing								
SNP	Chr	Pos	P.value	MAF	nobs	H&B.P.Value	Effect	PVE (%)
SPL01_34164695	PL01	34164695	1.09E-21	0.025	162	7.1E-17	-0.0212	9.71
SPL09_3564559	PL09	3564559	1.75E-09	0.012	162	2.3E-05	0.0130	8.64
SPL10_50862236	PL10	50862236	6.33E-14	0.019	162	2.1E-09	0.0132	6.34
SPL05_36471809	PL05	36471809	1.42E-10	0.022	162	2.3E-06	0.0216	6.33
SPL03_10424455	PL03	10424455	1.01E-08	0.031	162	9.3E-05	0.0073	1.74
SPL06_34500698	PL06	34500698	1.22E-08	0.025	162	9.9E-05	0.0072	1.37
SPL03_29372256	PL03	29372256	2.29E-09	0.392	162	2.5E-05	-0.0101	0.99
SPL06_20434217	PL06	20434217	7.42E-08	0.046	162	4.8E-04	0.0089	0.96
SPL07_47371793	PL07	47371793	2.28E-12	0.145	162	4.9E-08	0.0051	0.35
SPL10_1233508	PL10	1233508	2.38E-08	0.182	162	1.7E-04	-0.0034	0.18
Significant QTL for HCN emission by pod tissue 15-30 minutes after the start of thawing								
SNP	Chr	Pos	P.value	MAF	nobs	H&B.P.Value	Effect	PVE (%)
SPL06_2184041	PL06	2184041	1.15E-22	0.008	119	7.4E-18	-0.0206	32.43
SPL01_22985159	PL01	22985159	6.03E-16	0.004	119	9.8E-12	0.0323	23.32
SPL04_47531226	PL04	47531226	3.78E-17	0.008	119	8.2E-13	-0.0227	18.39
SPL10_23229417	PL10	23229417	1.60E-18	0.008	119	5.2E-14	0.0311	9.82
SPL03_28779663	PL03	28779663	1.13E-14	0.303	119	1.5E-10	-0.0083	3.80
SPL11_8225056	PL11	8225056	9.07E-10	0.017	119	9.8E-06	-0.0085	1.75
Significant QTL for HCN emission by flower tissue 30-60 minutes after the start of thawing								
SNP	Chr	Pos	P.value	MAF	nobs	H&B.P.Value	Effect	PVE (%)
SPL06_35243954	PL06	35243954	2.04E-07	0.268519	162	0.013	-0.0134	50
No Significant QTL for HCN emission by pod tissue 30-60 minutes after the start of thawing								
Significant QTL for HCN emission by flower tissue 60-90 minutes after the start of thawing								
SNP	Chr	Pos	P.value	MAF	nobs	H&B.P.Value	Effect	PVE (%)
SPL02_50012693	PL02	50012693	2.05E-09	0.037037	162	0.000	-0.0263	77.99
SPL08_1493876	PL08	1493876	5.29E-07	0.41358	162	0.017	-0.0090	7.34
No Significant QTL for HCN emission by pod tissue 60-90 minutes after the start of thawing								

Table 3: Results of BLAST search of white clover genes on the Lima bean reference genome

<i>Ac/ac</i>				
Chromosome	Score (Bits)	E-value	Position	Length
PI06	590	1.00E-166	PI06:24333127..24335090	1.96 Kb
PI10	527	1.00E-147	PI10:42823180..42826109	2.93 Kb
PI09	127	4.00E-27	PI09:36844721..36844944	224 b
PI07	59	2.00E-06	PI07:42769004..42769171	168 b
PI11	53.6	7.00E-05	PI11:33860033..33860164	132 b
PI01	48.2	3.00E-03	PI01:39235421..39235513	93 b
<i>Li/li</i>				
Chromosome	Score (Bits)	E-value	Position	Length
PI11	309	5.00E-82	PI11:4728127..4732222	4.1Kb
PI01	196	9.00E-48	PI01:10080482..10083186	2.71 Kb
PI04	150	3.00E-34	PI04:37697601..37699769	2.17 Kb
PI05	136	7.00E-30	PI05:35407270..35410168	2.9 Kb
PI03	86	1.00E-14	PI03:6608414..6608693	280 b
PI07	60.8	5.00E-07	PI07:31786574..31786676	103 b
PI02	60.8	5.00E-07	PI02:33417198..33418215	1.02 Kb
PI08	50	8.00E-04	PI08:9447102..9447195	94 b
PI06	46.4	1.00E-02	PI06:14388483..14388576	94 b

Table 2: QTL for HCN identified in a biparental RIL population

Tissue	QTL Peak	Flanking Markers of QTL Peak	LOD	%PVE	Source
Floral Bud	PI05.57.4	PI05_35520814 - PI05_35804750	68.33	93.26	Zullo
Floral Bud	PI10.27	PI10_46286504 - PI10_46521900	9.98	2.79	Zullo
Floral Bud	PI08.24.6	PI08_2715645 - PI08_2791797	5.98	1.53	Zullo
Immature Pod	PI05.56.8	PI05_35359560 - PI05_35364729	53.84	88.69	Zullo
Immature Pod	PI10.29	PI10_49100171 - PI10_50371482	8.3	3.72	Zullo
Immature Pod	PI01.42	PI01_6146858 - PI01_10207081	8.04	3.58	Zullo
Immature Pod	PI11.17	PI11_1100133 - PI11_1568555	5.91	2.5	Zullo
Young Leaves	-	PI0537094525 - PI05_37249873	14.71	44.25	Dohle

Prior QTL analysis of HCN in floral buds, immature pods, and leaves of a RIL population identified significant loci for volatile HCN on chromosome 5 (Table 3) (Dohle 2017; Zullo 2021). This QTL is very close in position to one found by the GWAS analysis of HCN in flowers defrosting for 15-30 minutes, PL05_36471809. There is also a significant alignment with the white clover sequence for the *Li/li* gene in a nearby region of chromosome 5 (Table 2). It is interesting to note that there is evidence of β -glucosidase activity being induced by the presence of insect herbivores (Ballhorn et al. 2009). The greenhouse from which the samples in this study were collected had a stable infestation of thrips but was free of the larger herbivores typically found in field settings. It is therefore possible that if this study were repeated with field-collected samples, this locus would have a stronger effect.

Conclusion

Cyanogenesis is a complex trait in Lima bean with multiple SNPs closely associated with the expression of cyanogenesis. Highly significant SNPs found in flowers during the first 15 minutes after tissue disruption are close matches for the white clover *Li/li* gene sequence. This could contribute to the effectiveness of cyanogenesis as a resistance trait that deters insect herbivores (Gleadow and Woodrow 2002). Additional SNPs on chromosomes 9, 5, 7, and 6 found in the 15-30 minute exposure window may be associated with the biosynthesis of cyanogenic glucosides as they are close to matches of the white clover *Ac/ac* gene sequence. Finally, a QTL on chromosome 5 was in close proximity to previously identified QTL for cyanogenesis in flowers, pods, and leaves as well as the white clover sequence for *Li/li*. Further analysis and research is needed to clarify the function and

expression of genes located near the significant SNPs identified by this study and solidify understanding of the genetic architecture of cyanogenesis in Lima beans.

Several additional steps will be taken to advance this research prior to publication. First, the STRUCTURE and GWAS analyses will be reexamined to consider higher thresholds of admixture. Next, confidence intervals and markers flanking the significant SNPs will be analyzed to increase certainty about the relationship between these findings and the BLAST search matches as well as previously identified QTL from the RIL population. A study of genome annotations and the expression atlas will also be undertaken to identify clues about the function of genes near these significant SNPs. The results from wild and domesticated accessions will also be compared to determine how the matches for *Li/li* and *Ac/ac* genes may have been affected by domestication. Lastly accessions with extreme phenotypes will be identified and their associated genotypes used for breeding, further mapping, and validation studies.

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Chapter 3: Characterization and variation of defense against *Lygus hesperus* in *Phaseolus lunatus*

Abstract

Understanding the defense traits plants have evolved to defend themselves from insect herbivores may help with efforts to improve crop varieties and reduce yield losses. In the specific case of Lima bean (*Phaseolus lunatus*) production in California, more research is needed to characterize the plant's protective adaptations against the native polyphagous insect, the Western Tarnished Plant Bug (*Lygus hesperus*). This chapter presents four related investigations. The first is a study of yield in a diversity panel of Lima beans with and without insecticide protection. This data shows that there is extensive variation in the susceptibility of Lima bean to damage by *L. hesperus*. This is further supported by the second study of field samples of *L. hesperus* from nine Lima bean varieties. Finally, two studies explore cyanogenesis as a Lima bean defense trait. Cyanogenesis is an effective defense against insect herbivores in many crop plants but has been selected against during domestication due to the risk of intoxication. There is strong evidence that cyanogenic capacity is markedly differentiated among different plant organs, ontogenetic stages, and in the presence of some insects. Data on plants in a greenhouse study showed that cyanogenesis in immature pods of Lima bean is increased by the presence of the generalist herbivore *L. hesperus*. There was also a negative correlation between *L. hesperus* populations development and the cyanogenic capacity of young pods. This indicates that cyanogenesis may be induced and contributes to the defense of Lima bean plants against *L. hesperus*.

Introduction

Amplifying defense traits that protect plants from insect herbivores through plant breeding has the potential to increase yields while reducing pesticide use and associated concerns for human and environmental health (Arthurs and Dara 2019, Isman 2020). This is a particularly important strategy for organic systems in which conventional pesticides cannot be used. Lima beans are an important grain legume globally and the most economically important dry bean grown in California where their primary insect pest is the Western Tarnished Plant Bug (*Lygus hesperus*) (Long et al. 2014).

Lima beans are a model experimental organism for studying anti-herbivore defense traits (Arimura et al. 2000, 2002; Heil 2004a, 2004b; Kost and Heil 2005, 2006; Heil et al. 2008; Moreira et al. 2015). Within this body of literature, many studies have focused on the trait of cyanogenesis (Ballhorn et al. 2006, 2008, 2009, 2014; Shlichta et al. 2014, 2018; Cuny et al. 2019; Lai et al. 2020). Several experiments have been conducted in recent years to identify specific mechanisms that contribute to the tolerance or resistance traits that protect some Lima bean accessions from damage by *L. hesperus* (Dohle 2017; Zullo 2021). One mechanism that has been considered is the production of various polygalacturonase inhibiting proteins (PGIP) in the cell walls of Lima bean that bind to *L. hesperus* salivary enzymes and mitigate attempted digestion of the cell wall (Dashner 2016; Zullo 2021). This trait was found to be strongly influenced by environmental variables such as pest pressure and insecticide treatments but the study design did not permit differentiation of these results as the primary goal was QTL mapping (Zullo 2021). Cyanogenesis is a trait of particular interest since it is known to be an effective anti-herbivore defense trait in wild Lima beans that has been selected against during domestication (Vanderborgh 1979;

Baudoin et al. 1991; Ballhorn et al. 2009; Shlichta et al., 2018). Several QTL have been identified for cyanogenesis in flowers, immature pods, and leaves (Dohle 2017; Zullo 2021). However, these studies have not yet determined if cyanogenesis is an effective trait in the defense of Lima beans against *L. hesperus* specifically.

L. hesperus predominantly feed on the flowers and immature pod tissue of Lima bean and if cyanide is an effective deterrent or toxin for *L. hesperus* then increased expression of cyanogenesis in these tissue types could be amplified through breeding without risk to the human consumers of mature seeds which are known to have low cyanogenic capacity (Long et al. 2014; Shlichta et al. 2014). The final part of this study aims to determine how cyanogenesis affects *L. hesperus* survival and development as well as test if cyanogenic capacity can be induced by the presence of *L. hesperus*.

Cyanogenesis in Lima Beans and Related Species

Many economically important crops with high protein content and great importance for indigenous food systems are members of the legume family (Cullis and Kunert 2017; Jimenez-Lopez et al. 2020). Several of these legume crops are cyanogenic (Honig et al. 1983; Okolie and Ugochukwu 1989). It appears that this trait has evolved independently several times in the legume family. Within the legume genus *Phaseolus*, there are five domesticated crop species but only one, Lima bean, is cyanogenic (Baudoin et al. 1991). In addition to Lima bean, five other cross-compatible, *Phaseolus* species within the Polystachios group of section Paniculati are also cyanogenic (Baudoin et al. 1991; Lai et al. 2020). This and other evidence indicate that despite being a widespread trait, cyanogenesis evolved independently multiple times through the recruitment of similar genes (Takos et al. 2011; Lai et al. 2020).

In an extensive screening of wild, weedy, and cultivated forms of Lima bean, all were found to be cyanogenic. However, there is variability within and between populations (Baudoin et al. 1991). Domesticated forms typically have much less cyanogenic potential (HCNp), the amount of stored cyanogenic glucosides, and cyanogenic capacity (HCNc), the amount of cyanide released when damage occurs (Loyd and Gray 1970; Vanderborcht 1979; Lieberei 1988; Adeparusi 2001). Cyanogenic potential is determined by the biosynthesis and accumulation of cyanogenic glucosides (Loyd and Gray 1970). Cyanogenic capacity is primarily determined by genetic factors but there is also a significant influence of plant age and other environmental factors (Lieberei 1988).

Cyanogenesis is typically considered a constitutive trait with strong genetic control by two Mendelian genes (Olson et al. 2008; Ballhorn et al. 2009). However, there is great variation in the trait within populations and even within an individual plant (Till 1987). Previous studies have found cyanogenic potential and capacity to vary based on the age and tissue type being measured (Martin et al. 1938; Gleadow and Woodrow 2000; Ballhorn et al. 2005; Shlichta et al. 2014). For example, in Lima bean, young leaves have higher cyanogenic potential than mature leaves (Ballhorn et al. 2005). Wild Lima bean seeds by contrast have very high cyanogenic potential but low cyanogenic capacity, likely due to the low moisture content inhibiting β -glucosidase activity (Shlichta et al. 2014). Additionally, there is evidence that cyanogenic capacity may be locally induced by the presence of insect herbivores even if cyanogenic potential is constitutive (Ballhorn et al. 2006). Temperature, humidity, seasonal dynamics, water-stress, and nutrient availability may also affect cyanogenesis (Jones 1966; Dement and Mooney 1974; Cooper-Driver and Swain 1976; Kooyers et al 2014).

Cyanogenesis is very nitrogen intensive with a one-to-one ratio of nitrogen and carbon in each molecule of hydrogen cyanide (Kakes 1990). The availability of nitrogen can be a limiting factor for plant growth (Bloom 1977). It has also been shown that cyanogenic glucosides can be catabolized for protein synthesis (Blumenthal-Goldschmidt et al. 1963; Floss et al. 1965; Castric et al. 1972). Therefore, it has been hypothesized that cyanogenic glucosides evolved first as an intermediate nitrogen storage compound and only later evolved into a defense compound (Forslund et al. 2007; Møller 2010; Cuny et al. 2019). In the case of Lima beans, evidence supports the hypothesis that cyanogenic glucosides primarily serve as an anti-herbivore defense more so than a nitrogen storage mechanism (Cuny et al. 2019).

Lima bean plants with high cyanogenic glucoside content in leaves had lower above ground biomass than low cyanogenic glucoside content plants when no herbivores are present, but this difference was less in the presence of herbivores (Ballhorn et al. 2014). This could indicate that there is a high cost to producing cyanogenic glucosides. Alternatively, these plants may be investing in a strong defense of their vegetative tissue so that a smaller above ground biomass can produce higher yield. Additionally, seeds of Lima bean with high cyanogenic glucoside content had lower germination rates but produce seedlings that had high cyanogenic glucoside content and supported lower growth rates of the generalist herbivore *Spodoptera littoralis* (Cuny et al. 2019). In addition to having tradeoffs with growth and vigor, plants with high cyanogenic glucosides have lower investment in other defense mechanisms (Ballhorn et al. 2008). In Lima bean, a negative correlation was found between cyanogenic glucosides and volatile organic compound emissions (Ballhorn et al. 2008). This evidence indicates that in Lima bean, cyanogenic

glucosides serve primarily as an antiherbivore defense compound rather than a nitrogen storage mechanism.

Cyanogenesis as a Defense Against Insect Herbivores

Cyanogenesis is an anti-herbivore defense trait found in many plant families (Poulton 1990; Møller and Seigler 1999). It is especially common in crop plants. While an estimated 11% of all plant species are cyanogenic, the trait is present in approximately 21% of the major world food crops (Jones 1998). Given that humans have long known of several effective methods of detoxifying cyanogenic foods, including leaching, cooking, and fermenting, it is possible that crops with this trait were specifically selected by early farmers for their superior defense against insect herbivores (Jones 1998; Ragir 2000; Wilson and Dufour 2002; Wrangham and Conklin 2003).

Despite its value as an anti-herbivore defense trait, cyanogenesis has been selected against during the process of domestication. With the notable exception of sorghum, most crops have lower levels of pre-cyanogenic compounds than their wild relatives (Ballhorn et al. 2009; Shlichta et al. 2018; Sánchez-Pérez et al. 2019; Ospina et al. 2021; Cowan et al. 2021). This may be because, though satisfactory, our methods of detoxifying foods do not fully eliminate cyanide. Specifically, in the example of Lima bean, the enzyme linamarase rapidly hydrolyzes cyanogenic glucosides during cooking but becomes denatured at 141 °C (Liener 1962). If cyanogenic glucosides remain unhydrolyzed when that cooking temperature is reached, their cyanide will be released within the consumers digestive track (Poulton 1983). This can be tolerated at low levels, but chronic cyanide intoxication can cause severe symptoms including degenerative neuropathy, paralysis, blindness, and premature death (Osuntokun 1969, 1994; Van Heijst et al. 1994; Román 2014). Given the

severe consequence of chronic or acute cyanide intoxication as well as the bitter taste, it is understandable that cyanogenesis was selected against in crop plants (Ladizinsky 1999).

The toxicity of HCN comes from asphyxiation when it binds to cytochrome oxidase, a key enzyme in the mitochondrial respiratory pathway (Antonini et al. 1971; Cooper and Brown 2008). This chemistry makes it toxic to both animal and plant cells. It is therefore necessary for plants to store pre-cyanogenic compounds, typically cyanogenic glycosides, separately from enzymes that cleave the compound and form HCN (Kakes 1990; Vetter 2000). The result of this arrangement is a possible difference in the HCN_p and the HCN_c of a plant. The cyanogenic potential is measured as the amount of pre-cyanogenic compounds contained in the plant tissue (Loyd and Gray 1970). The cyanogenic capacity is measured as the amount of cyanide released by a given quantity of plant tissue over a unit of time (Lieberei 1988). The enzymatic activity, which can be variable across species and genotypes, will determine how closely measurements of cyanogenic potential and cyanogenic capacity correspond (Ballhorn et al. 2005).

The interaction between cyanogenic plants and insect herbivores is complex and maybe be affected by several biotic and abiotic factors (Bernays et al. 1977; Gleadow and Woodrow 2002). As with other chemical defense mechanisms, specialist insect herbivores may have adaptations that protect them from cyanide produced by their host plant including metabolizing it for use of the nitrogen in protein synthesis (Witthohn and Naumann 1984; Engler et al. 2000) or sequestering it for their own defense (Schappert and Shore 2000; Pinheiro de Castro et al. et al. 2020). Generalist herbivores may avoid cyanide intoxication by balancing their diet with cyanogenic and acyanogenic foods (Gleadow and Woodrow 2002; Ballhorn et al. 2005).

As a defense mechanism, cyanogenesis can operate in two ways depending on the cyanogenic capacity of a given plant tissue: deterrence or intoxication (Ballhorn et al. 2006). Cyanogenesis is not a universally effective deterrent and for some insects cyanide may even act as a phagostimulant (Brattsten et al. 1983). Cyanogenesis seems most effective as a deterrent when the cyanogenic capacity is high, release is rapid, and the insect herbivore is an opportunistic generalist rather than a well-adapted specialist (Gleadow and Woodrow 2002). Below a certain threshold, dependent on the herbivore, cyanogenesis is ineffective as a deterrent (Ballhorn et al. 2005). Intoxication by cyanide consumption typically occurs when herbivores consume large amounts of plant material with lower cyanogenic capacity (Ballhorn et al. 2006). In this sort of situation, cyanide may be released within the digestive track, causing lethal damage or inhibiting growth of the insect (Alonso-Amelot and Oliveros Bastidas 2005; Ballhorn et al. 2005). Plants with higher cyanogenic capacity may be rejected before an insect can consume a sufficient dose.

There is variation in the susceptibility of Lima bean to damage by *L. hesperus* but this has only been catalogued within a small number of commercial cultivars. The first step of this study is to catalogue this variation within a more diverse panel of accessions. From this research, the University of California Davis Dry Bean Breeding program will be able to select better parents and introduce more diversity into the Lima Bean breeding pipeline. In addition to characterizing the variation in *L. hesperus* tolerance or resistance, understanding more about the possible mechanisms that contribute to this phenotype will help target selection in breeding. To do this a field study in which multiple varieties were vacuum sampled will be analyzed to demonstrate the choice of *L. hesperus* in the field when multiple varieties are present. It is unknown if cyanogenesis is an effective defense against

L. hesperus in Lima bean. In combination, these studies illustrate the extent of variation in *L. hesperus* resistance or tolerance phenotypes in Lima bean as well as determine if cyanogenesis is induced by *L. hesperus* presence and if there is a negative correlated between cyanide and *L. hesperus* population growth.

Materials and Methods

Diversity Panel Yield Trial of Insecticide-Treated and Non-Insecticide-Treated Plots

To study the phenotypic range of tolerance or resistance to *Lygus spp.* 77 diverse varieties of Lima bean from 18 countries were planted during the 2019 and 2021 field seasons at the Plant Sciences Field Facility (PSFF) of the University of California Davis on June 9, 2019, and on May 14, 2021, at 38°32'03.3"N 121°46'44.9"W and 38°32'16.9"N 121°47'19.2"W, respectively. The experiment was divided into two neighboring blocks separated by a buffer of four rows. One of the blocks received insecticide treatments on August 20, 2019, and July 2, 2021. The other block was a control not treated with insecticides. In 2019, UC 92 plots were vacuumed to in each block to verify that *L. hesperus* levels were lower in the insecticide treated plots. In 2021, the vacuum equipment was unavailable, so water traps were used to verify the difference in *L. hesperus* pressure between blocks.

Both fields were drip irrigated and conventionally managed. Each variety was planted in a single row in eight plots of 4.5 meters (15 feet). The plots were randomized within eight sub-blocks. Field notes on days to flowering, growth habit, seed color, and flower color were taken. Plots were cut and threshed in the field with the same machinery each year. Yield and 100-seed-weight measurements were conducted after harvest. Four of

the lines were excluded from the analysis due to poor germination or photoperiod sensitivity.

Vacuum sampling of a diverse selection of California-adapted Lima bean cultivars

In a small trial at the University of California Davis Student Organic Farm, nine Lima bean varieties were planted on June 1, 2017, at 38°32'32.5"N 121°46'01.3"W (Table 4). The field was flood irrigated and organically managed. Every variety was planted in two plots, one of which was randomly assigned a location within each of two blocks. Each plot was 20 feet long and six 30-inch rows wide. Starting at the time of flowering, July 21, 2017, the middle two rows of every plot were vacuumed each week between 11am and 1pm. Samples for each plot were bagged and then frozen. Insects were then transferred to vials of ethanol and adult *L. hesperus* in the sample were counted and sexed. Adult *L. hesperus* are highly mobile and can readily fly between small plots. Nymph counts would therefore have been a better measurement to take. However, nymphs were not counted because many were crushed by the force of the vacuum or were too small to be accurately identified with the available expertise. The middle two rows of each plot were harvested measured for total yield and 100 seed weight. The variety UC Lee was removed from the study due to poor germination rates.

Table 4. Varieties of Lima bean planted at the UC Davis Student Organic Farm for the vacuum sampling study in 2017

Variety	Growth Habit	Seed Size	Seed Color	<i>L. hesperus</i> Susceptibility
UC Haskell	Vine	Small	White	Low
UC Cariblanco N	Vine	Small	White	High
UC Beija Flor	Bush	Small	White	Low
Henderson Bush	Bush	Small	White	High
UC 92	Bush	Large	White	High
UC Lee	Vine	Large	White	High
Dixie Speckled	Bush	Small	Red, pink	Low
Jackson Wonder	Bush	Small	Brown, purple	Low
Calico Cat (G26451)	Vine	Small	Black, brown, white	Low

*Table 5. List of plant materials used in the Cyanogenic Response to *L. hesperus* study and their known traits*

Variety	Growth Habit	Seed Size	Seed Color	<i>L. hesperus</i> Susceptibility
UC Haskell	Vine	Small	White	Low
UC Beija Flor	Bush	Small	White	Low
Henderson Bush	Bush	Small	White	High
UC 92	Bush	Large	White	High
UC Lee	Vine	Large	White	High

Cyanogenic Response to L. hesperus

Five cultivars (Table 5) of California-adapted Lima bean were selected for this study with the aim of representing the diversity of seed size, growth habit, cyanogenic capacity, and tolerance of *L. hesperus* (Long et al. 2014; Dohle 2017; Zullo 2021; Gibson, Palkovic, and Gepts unpublished results). All the varieties had white seed coats as this is the market standard for dry Lima beans produced in California. Prior research found that there is not a correlation between seed coat color and cyanogenesis (Baudoin et al. 1991). Originally, one wild accession was included for comparison but due to photoperiod sensitivity and delayed phenology, it proved infeasible to collect samples from these plants in synchrony with the others.



In four greenhouse plantings, plants of each variety were individually germinated from seed in azalea pots with approximately two liters of UC Agronomy potting soil mix. Each pot was placed in its own cage (BugDorm-2120 Insect Rearing Tent, MegaView Science Co., Ltd., Taichung, Taiwan) with drip line for water and fertilizer (Fig. 7). Each cage was randomly assigned a position in the greenhouse. Three flowers and three young pods

of each plant were collected one, two, and three weeks after flowering. Flowers were selected with white petals, indicating that the day of sampling was their first to open. Immature pods were approximately 2cm long (Fig. 8). Additionally, succulent mature seed tissue was collected four weeks after flowering were sampled. Mature seed samples consisted of a slice of the bean from the opposite side of the hilum from the micropyle of approximately 200mg that would fit into a 96-well plate collection tube (Fig. 8). All samples were frozen at -80°C and later analyzed for cyanogenic capacity using the Feigl-Anger paper assay (Feigl and Anger 1966). While some have critiqued this method for being only semiquantitative, it was selected based on the available resources and practicality for analyzing large numbers of samples (Ballhorn et al. 2005).



Figure 8. (Left) Flowers were sampled on the first day they were opened. This was determined by their color which was white on the first day and yellow thereafter. (Top right) Pods were sampled based on approximate size rather than a specific developmental age. (Bottom right) Mature seeds were harvested, shelled from their pods, and then sliced on the opposite side of the hilum from the micropyle to create a piece of approximately 200 mg that would fit into a 96-well plate collection tube.

Half of the plants were randomly assigned to a treatment group which had adult *L. hesperus* added to their bug dorm one week after flowering. In the pilot study, 25 adult *L. hesperus* were added. The resulting level of herbivory was high and, as a result, the susceptible varieties, UC 92 and UC Lee, had insufficient flowers survive for sampling or pod development. In the subsequent rounds of the experiment a total of only 14 adult *L. hesperus* were added, seven one-week-old adult males and seven one-week-old adult females. This level of herbivory preserved sufficient flowers for sampling and pod development on susceptible plants. The one-week-old adult insects were added after the week one flower and pod samples were collected so that those samples had no interaction with the *L. hesperus*. All cages had a low level of thrips infestation; however, the greenhouses were not treated with insecticide during the study.

All *L. hesperus* introduced to cages in the experiment were one-week post-emergence adults reared in a colony founded by individuals collected from Lima bean and alfalfa fields in the fall of 2019 and 2020 (Fig. 9). The colony was maintained at 20°C and 12 h of photoperiod. Adults were held in 30.5cm cube collapsible cage (BioQuip Products, Rancho Dominguez, CA) with a bedding of shredded white printer paper, a water-soaked organic cotton round (Swisspers®, Parkdale Inc., Gastonia, NC), hulled sunflower seeds, and fresh organic green beans supplied three times a week. The egg-laid beans were moved to rearing tubs (1-Gallon Ice Cream Tub with Lid, Polyfarm, Amazon.com) where they emerged in approximately 7-10 days. Nymphs were supplied with a bedding of shredded white printer paper and green beans three times per week and moved to adult cages at the time of emergence.



Figure 9. Colony of *L. hesperus* maintained in the laboratory for this experiment

The pilot study, September 2019-December 2020 was conducted in a small greenhouse at the Orchard Park Greenhouse Facility at UC Davis (38°32'36.0"N 121°45'49.3") and included only two plants of each variety. The second round conducted in December 2019-March 2020 was conducted in the same greenhouse. In round two, six plants of each variety were planted and divided equally between the two treatment groups. The third round, March 2020-May 2020, was conducted in a neighboring greenhouse that had been enclosed with black plastic drapes to exclude all-natural light. Artificial lights lit the greenhouse in a 12-hour photoperiod. This was done in an attempt to include a photoperiod sensitive wild Lima bean accession in the study but even with this treatment, it was not possible to synchronize its flowering with that of the commercial cultivars. In round three, six plants of each variety were planted and divided equally between the two treatment groups. In the fourth round of the study, January 2021-April 2021, the

experiment was planted in a neighboring greenhouse with natural light. In round four, eight plants of each variety were planted and divided equally between the two treatment groups.

In each round of the experiment, an equal number of plants for each variety and treatment group were planted. However, due to poor germination, not every plant survived to participate in the study. Across the three plantings there were a total of 16 replicates of each variety divided between two treatment groups – so eight plants per treatment. In all rounds of the studies, cages were randomly assigned positions within the greenhouse using the Microsoft Excel random number generator function.

All the flower and pod samples were frozen at -80°C for several months before they were processed with a colorimetric assay with Feigl-Anger paper (Feigl and Anger, 1966) (Fig. 4). Defrosting samples were exposed to Feigl-Anger paper for 0-15 minutes, 15-30 minutes, 30-60 minutes, and 60-90 minutes after being removed from the freezer. The results of the assay were scanned and analyzed using the readplate2 plugin on ImageJ 1.52q (Schneider et al. 2012; Angelani et al. 2018). This semiquantitative method provided a measurement of the intensity of blue produced by the interaction of volatilized HCN and the chemical treatment of the Feigl-Anger paper. Since the volatilized HCN had to be synthesized from enzymatic activity in thawing sample tissues, a standard of KCN in NaOH solution, used in other studies, was not considered sufficiently comparable to use in estimating the quantities of cyanide released from tissues during each exposure window.

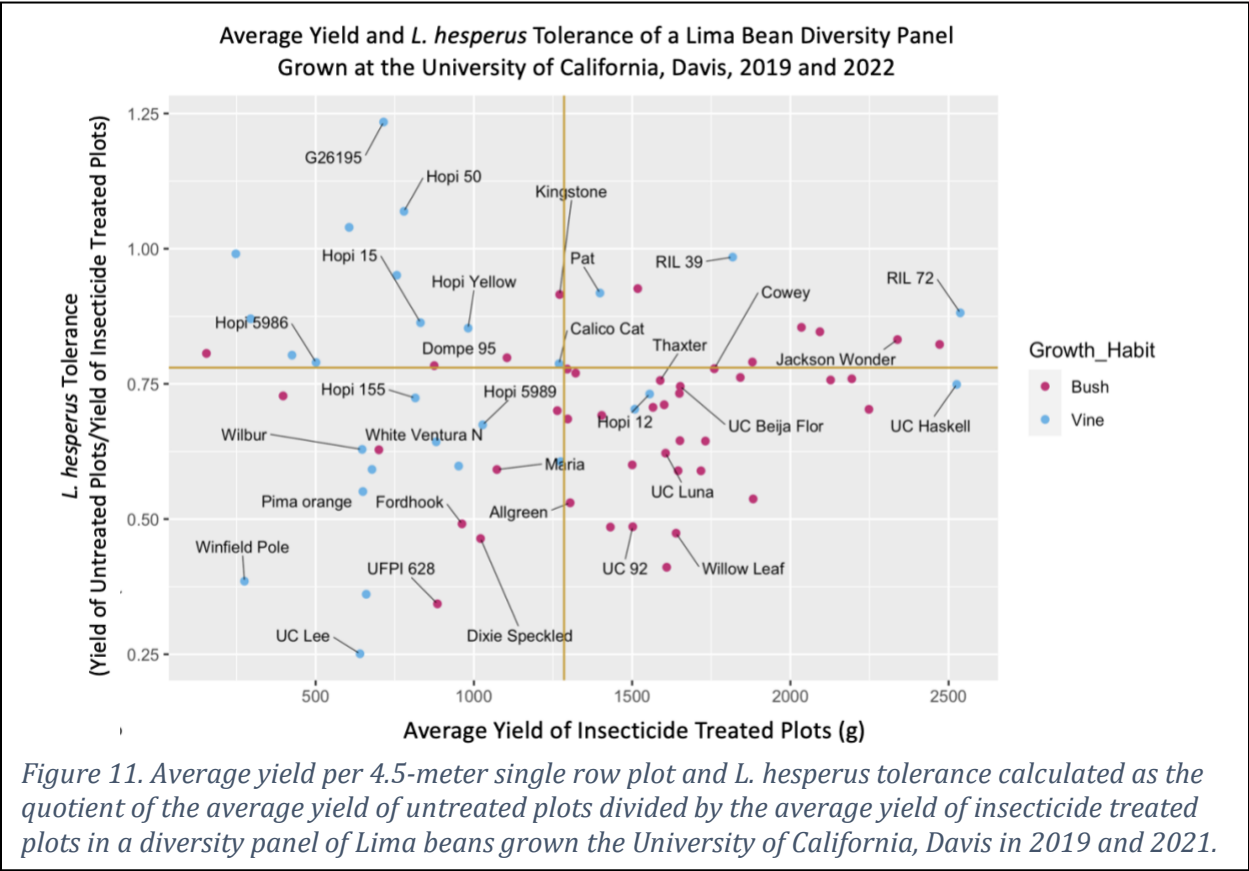
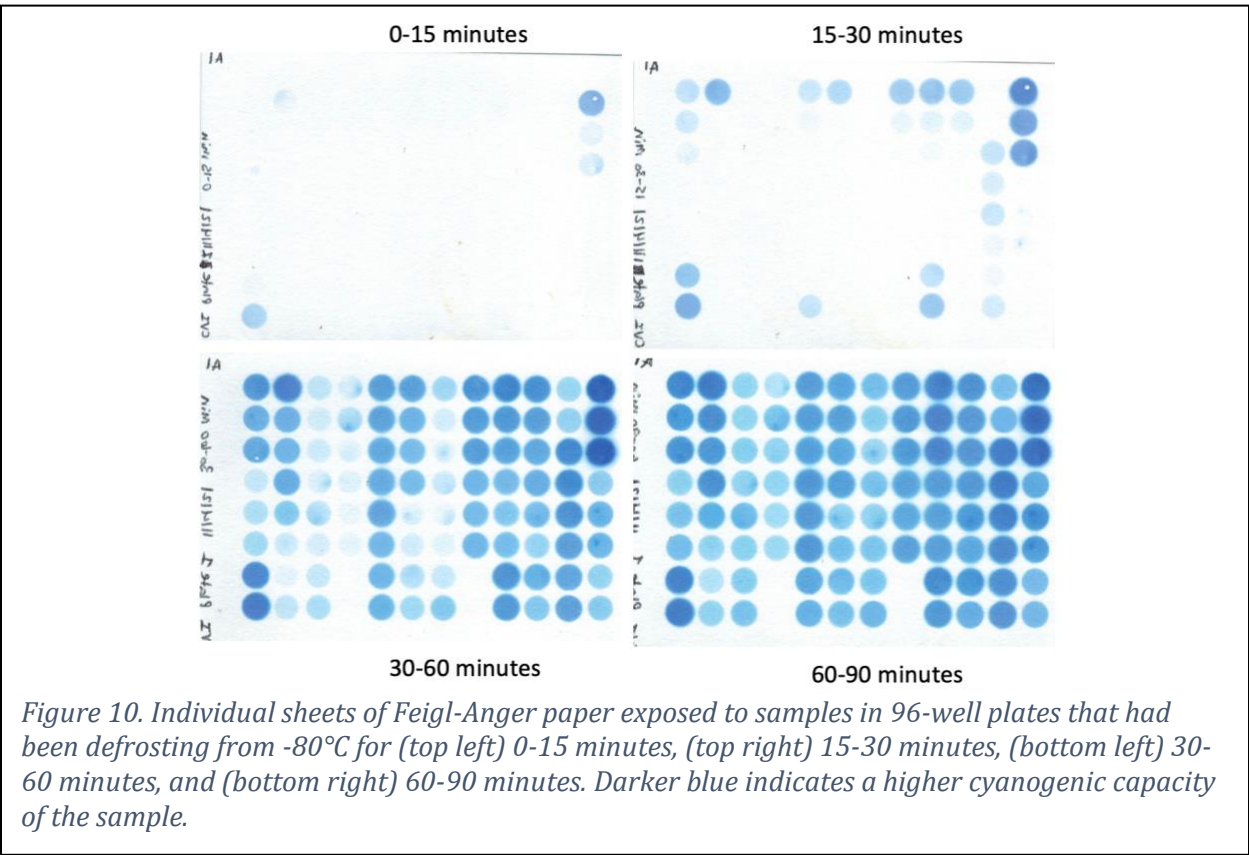
L. hesperus Survival and Reproduction

To understand how well *L. hesperus* survive and reproduce on varieties of Lima bean, populations founded by adult *L. hesperus* added to cages in the cyanogenic response

experiment were collected and analyzed after three weeks. The development of *L. hesperus* is temperature dependent but takes approximately 4 weeks at 20°C, with this being the approximate temperature of the greenhouses in which this experiment was conducted (Butler and Wardecker 1971). Three weeks is therefore not enough time for eggs to be laid and the resulting offspring to develop into adults and so the adults collected were survivors of the initial introduction rather than newly developed adults. The number of surviving adults and nymphs were counted for each cage in the treatment group. In rounds three and four, the nymphal instars were identified to indicate the speed of development for *L. hesperus* on the various varieties of Lima bean.

Analysis

All statistical analysis was conducted in R version 4.2.1 (R Core Team 2022). For the final analysis, only the 60–90-minute exposure window was used due to concerns that plate position may have affected the results of earlier windows since samples on the outside of the 96-well plate may have defrosted more quickly than samples in the interior of the 96-well plate (Fig. 10). This design flaw was not apparent in the time trial since a smaller number of samples were used and so the thermal mass of the plate was lower. It has been noted as an important lesson in experimental uniformity. Prior to publication, a statistical model including plate position may be tested to analyze results from earlier exposure windows.



Results and Discussion

Diversity Panel Yield Trial of Insecticide-Treated and Non-Insecticide-Treated Plots

Plots of UC 92 were vacuumed in 2019 and monitored with water traps in 2021 to check the difference in *L. hesperus* densities. In 2019, plots in the sprayed block had on average 0.5 *L. hesperus* while plots in the unsprayed block had on average 1.5 *L. hesperus*. In 2021, water traps collected every 3 days for 2 weeks after the insecticide treatment indicated that in UC 92 plots there were an average of 0.125 *L. hesperus* in the sprayed section and an average of 0.375 *L. hesperus* in the unsprayed section. These data indicate that there was a difference in *L. hesperus* densities between the two treatment blocks.

High tolerance of damage by *L. hesperus* was defined by dividing the yield of untreated plots by the yield of insecticide treated plots (Fig. 11). If the quotient was high, the variety was highly defended against *L. hesperus*. The most desirable varieties for breeding are those with high tolerance to *L. hesperus* and high yield. It should be noted that the term “tolerance” is used here as a place holder for the true mechanism of resilience. It is possible that some varieties may be resistant rather than tolerant. A resistant variety can avoid damage while a tolerant variety can recover from damage.

Sixteen commercial cultivars from the United States were included in this study (Table 3). On average, these elite lines yielded 65% as much in conditions unprotected by insecticide as compared to conditions with protection of insecticide. Pat (92%) and Kingstone (92%) had the highest *L. hesperus* tolerance while UC Lee (25%), UC 92 (49%), and Fordhook (49%) had the lowest. UC Haskell performed the best when both yield (2525.5 g/plot) and *L. hesperus* tolerance (75%) are accounted for.

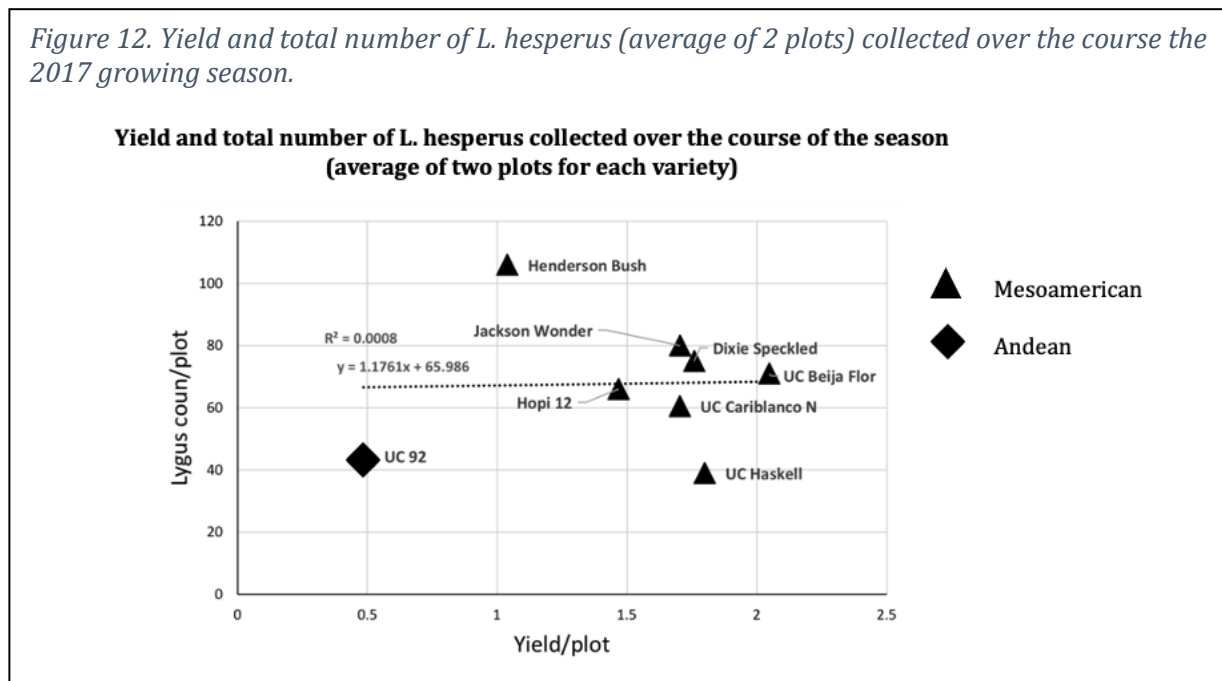
Variety	Growth Habit	Yield with Insecticides (g/15ft plot)	Yield w/out Insecticides (g/15ft plot)	% Change in Yield (No Insecticides/ Insecticides)
UC Lee	Vine	640.0	160.6	25%
UC 92	Bush	1501.8	729.7	49%
Fordhook	Bush	962.2	472.6	49%
Allgreen	Bush	1304.0	691.2	53%
Maria	Bush	1072.4	634.5	59%
UC Cariblanco N	Vine	951.7	569.2	60%
UC Luna	Bush	1605.5	998.4	62%
White Ventura N	Bush	699.6	439.4	63%
Wilbur	Vine	646.8	406.8	63%
Henderson Bush	Bush	1296.4	888.1	69%
UC Beija Flor	Bush	1651.9	1231.3	75%
UC Haskell	Vine	2525.5	1891.4	75%
Thaxter	Bush	1588.6	1201.5	76%
Dompe 95	Bush	874.5	685.4	78%
Kingstone	Bush	1270.8	1163.1	92%
Pat	Vine	1398.3	1283.6	92%

Among the 56 heirloom and international cultivars, the average yield in unprotected conditions compared to protected conditions was 73%. Noir De Kisenyi - G26196 (123%), a baby, black-and-white-seeded, bush type from Rwanda, and Hopi 50 (106%), a baby, white-seeded, vine type from the United States, were the least susceptible to *L. hesperus* but did not compete well on overall yield. The American heirloom variety, Jackson Wonder, had the best combination of high *L. hesperus* tolerance (90%) and an average yield of 2338.4 g/plot when treated with insecticide and 1945.4 g/plot when unprotected by insecticide. Many of the international and heirloom varieties included in this study have already been incorporated into the UC Davis Lima Bean Breeding Program. These results will offer additional guidance in parent selection and the choice of varieties used in future research on insect defense mechanisms.

Vacuum sampling of a diverse selection of California-adapted Lima bean cultivars

When comparing total number of *L. hesperus* per plot and yield per plot, yield did not appear to be affected by the density of *L. hesperus*, as shown by the nearly horizontal trend line (Fig. 12). In this group of varieties, UC 92 appeared to be an outlier with low yields but also a low number of *L. hesperus*. UC 92 is the only variety in this study from the Andean gene pool of Lima bean. While the yields of Andean and Mesoamerican varieties are comparable, Andean lines tend to have much larger seeds. As a result, the loss of a single seed due to *L. hesperus* herbivory would constitute a loss of a higher percentage of yield than when a single small seed is lost (Chacón-Sánchez and Martínez-Castillo, 2017).

Figure 12. Yield and total number of *L. hesperus* (average of 2 plots) collected over the course the 2017 growing season.



It should also be noted that data from this experimental design may over represent resistance or tolerance traits. On a typical California farm, a single variety will be planted across several if not tens of acres. While *L. hesperus* adults are highly mobile, they have less choice in an actual farm setting than in this experimental field. Nymphs were not considered in this study because they were crushed by the strong pressure of the vacuum

and difficult to identify with the available expertise. Nymphs are much less mobile than adults and therefore would have less ability to choose between varieties.

It is interesting to note the strong difference in the average number of *L. hesperus* per plot between the two highest yielding varieties, UC Haskell and UC Beija Flor. The large difference in average *L. hesperus* might be attributable to sampling bias caused by the denser canopy of the indeterminate UC Haskell compared to the determinate UC Beija Flor. It could also be that these two varieties have different mechanisms of resistance or tolerance to *L. hesperus*. UC Haskell and UC Beija Flor share as a parent UC Cariblanco N, but their resistance probably comes from their other respective parents. UC Beija Flor is an F10 progeny from a cross of UC Cariblanco N and CIAT accession G25165 (USDA 2010a; Genesys-PGR: <https://www.genesys-pgr.org/10.18730/PH1KM>). This accession was included in the diversity panel yield comparison under insecticide treated and untreated conditions described above. It has an average sprayed yield of 1650.8 g per plot and an average unsprayed yield of 1106.4 g per plot. This puts its average yield with insecticide protection above average but its estimated tolerance of *L. hesperus* below average. UC Haskell is an F10 progeny from a cross of UC Cariblanco N and an accession introduced from CIAT accession "P&T 4255" (USDA 2010b). This accession has been less well studied at it is unknown what degree or mechanism of resilience it may offer to insect herbivory.

These results open several avenues of research to pursue in the future. From further analysis of these and other data it may be possible to distinguish resistance and tolerance traits. Another area of future exploration should be the differences between the defense phenotypes of Lima beans in the Andean and Mesoamerican gene pools. Unlike the Mesoamerican gene pool, the range of Andean Lima beans falls completely outside the

native range of the genus *L. hesperus* and therefore may have fewer defense adaptations to it and closely related species (Kelton 1975; Gutiérrez Salgado et al. 1995). In figure 12, the only Andean variety, UC 92, supports very low *L. hesperus* densities. However, as shown in Figure 11, it is very sensitive to *L. hesperus* with nearly a 50% drop in yield in the unsprayed plots compared to the sprayed plots. This combination of data may indicate that the variety has some resistance traits but very little tolerance to *L. hesperus* herbivory. Future studies should include additional Andean lines for a more robust comparison of defense phenotypes between the two gene pools.

Cyanogenic response to L. hesperus

There was a very significant effect of variety on levels of cyanide in flowers, but the effect was not significant in pods (Tables 7A and 7B). Large-seeded Lima beans, UC 92 and UC Lee had significantly less cyanide in their flowers than UC Haskell. Henderson Bush and UC Beija Flor had intermediate levels of cyanide in flowers that were not significantly different from UC Haskell, UC 92, or UC Lee (Table 8). Cyanide was not detectable in the mature seeds.

The presence of *L. hesperus* had no effect on the level of cyanide in flowers but it did affect the level of cyanide in pods (Tables 7A and 7B). Pods collected from plants with *L. hesperus* had higher levels of cyanide (Table 9). This may be due to increased enzymatic activity increasing the cyanogenic capacity rather than potential as this was found in Lima bean leaves (Ballhorn et al. 2005). There was no significant difference in cyanide levels when considering the interactions between treatment and variety. The duration of the *L. hesperus* presence, as measured by “Time” in the study, did not affect the level of cyanide in

flowers or pods. Nor was there a significant difference in cyanide levels when considering the interaction of treatment and time, or time and variety.

<i>Table 7A. Type III Analysis of Variance Table with Kenward-Roger's Method - Flowers</i>							
	Sum sq	Mean sq	NumDF	DenDF	F value	Pr(>F)	Significance
Time	0.00200	0.00200	1	564.8	3.20	0.0743	
Treatment	0.00005	0.00005	1	65.92	0.08	0.7786	
Variety	0.01393	0.00348	4	55.27	5.57	0.0008	***
Treatment*Variety	0.00332	0.00083	4	65.88	1.33	0.2694	
Time*Treatment	0.00005	0.00005	1	569.83	0.07	0.7857	
Time*Variety	0.00410	0.00103	4	568.79	1.64	0.1621	

<i>Table 7B. Type III Analysis of Variance Table with Kenward-Roger's Method - Pods</i>							
	Sum sq	Mean sq	NumDF	DenDF	F value	Pr(>F)	Significance
Time	0.00070	0.00070	1	307.98	0.56	0.4559	
Treatment	0.00952	0.00952	1	32.79	7.56	0.0097	**
Variety	0.00146	0.00036	4	29.41	0.29	0.8827	
Treatment*Variety	0.00421	0.00105	4	29.89	0.83	0.5139	
Time*Treatment	0.00175	0.00175	1	302.81	1.39	0.2393	
Time*Variety	0.00316	0.00079	4	299.70	0.63	0.6430	

<i>Table 8. Compact Letter Display of All Pairwise Comparisons - Flowers</i>						
Variety	pmmean	SE	df	lower.CL	upper.CL	Group
UC 92	0.038	0.011	1.28	0.038	0.038	1
UC Lee	0.039	0.011	1.26	0.039	0.039	1
Henderson Bush	0.047	0.012	1.34	0.046	0.047	12
UC Beija Flor	0.054	0.011	1.28	0.054	0.054	12
UC Haskell	0.062	0.011	1.30	0.062	0.063	2

<i>Table 9. Compact Letter Display of All Pairwise Comparisons - Pods</i>						
Treatment	pmmean	SE	df	lower. CL	upper.CL	Group
No <i>L. hesperus</i>	0.052	0.003	24.40	0.052	0.052	1
<i>L. hesperus</i>	0.063	0.003	43.80	0.063	0.063	2

L. hesperus Survival and Reproduction

From the greenhouse experiment of cyanogenic capacity with and without the presence of *L. hesperus*, insects from each of the cages (Fig. 7) were counted four weeks after flowering and three weeks after the *L. hesperus* had been introduced. For thorough counts, all plants were completely deconstructed with each leaf carefully checked for nymphs and the surface of the potting soil carefully searched. The count per cage of each variety was averaged to estimate survival and reproduction (Table 10). It is interesting to note that the two varieties known to be resistant or tolerant of *L. hesperus*, UC Haskell and UC Beija Flor, have very different numbers of surviving adults and new nymphs. It is possible that cyanogenesis may be responsible for this difference. In quantified studies of greenhouse grown samples without *L. hesperus*, UC Beija Flor was estimated to have a cyanogenic capacity of 153.4 nM/30 minutes of volatile HCN released from floral bud samples and 224.1 nM/30 minutes of volatile HCN released from immature pod samples (Zullo 2021). In the same study, UC Haskell only had a cyanogenic capacity of 126.86 nM/30 minutes of volatile HCN released from floral bud samples and 63.4 nM nM/30 minutes of volatile HCN released from immature pod samples. Given that survival of adult and nymph *L. hesperus* is more strongly correlated with cyanide in immature pods than in flowers (Figs. 8 and 9) this difference in cyanogenic capacity could be contributing to the higher number of insects surviving on UC Haskell as compared to UC Beija Flor. It should be noted however that this was a no-choice experiment and in the field collected vacuum samples, in which there were many varieties to choose from, more *L. hesperus* were captured on UC Beija Flor than UC Haskell. This could be due to sampling bias due to the

denser canopy of the indeterminate UC Haskell or it could indicate that a mechanism other than cyanogenesis is contributing to *L. hesperus* preference and survival.

Table 10. Average numbers of L. hesperus captured in cages with plants of each variety 3 weeks after 14 1-week post-emergence adults were introduced

Variety	Average Adults	Average Nymphs	Average Total
Henderson Bush	4.6	101	105.6
UC 92	3.7	40.3	44
UC Beija Flor	4.5	46.7	51.2
UC Haskell	8	112.7	120.7
UC Lee	3.5	48.3	51.8

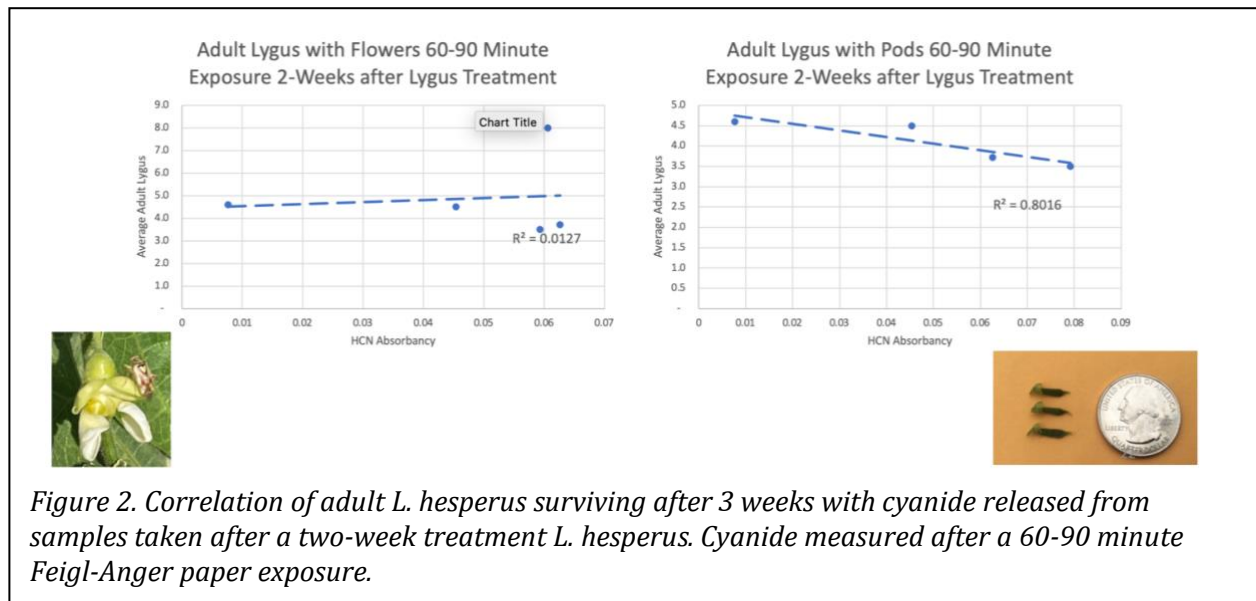


Figure 2. Correlation of adult L. hesperus surviving after 3 weeks with cyanide released from samples taken after a two-week treatment L. hesperus. Cyanide measured after a 60-90 minute Feigl-Anger paper exposure.

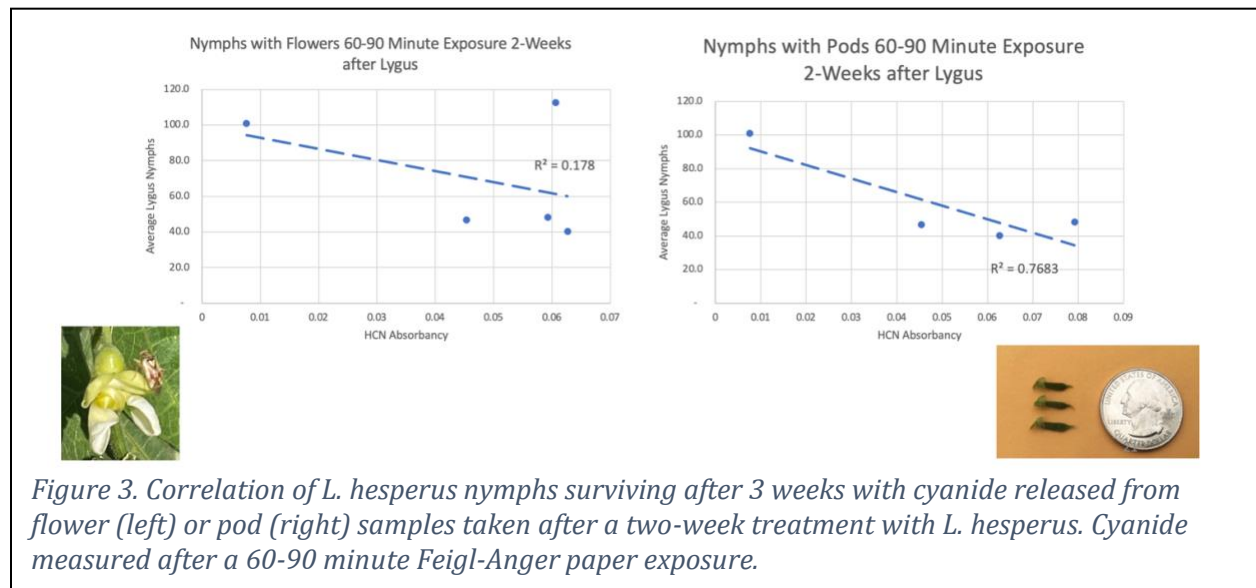


Figure 3. Correlation of L. hesperus nymphs surviving after 3 weeks with cyanide released from flower (left) or pod (right) samples taken after a two-week treatment with L. hesperus. Cyanide measured after a 60-90 minute Feigl-Anger paper exposure.

This study has several limitations. One is that no wild or weedy types were included for comparison with the domesticated forms. While growing these accessions can be challenging in confined greenhouse space, including them in a similar analysis could shed light on how the trait of cyanogenesis has been affected by domestication. Another limitation of the study was the use of discrete semiquantitative measurements using Fiegl-Anger paper. While this method of measuring cyanogenic capacity is well established, safe, and high throughput, it does not provide a true quantitative measurement, or the continuous sampling provided by the enclosed detection systems used for studies of volatilized cyanide (Ballhorn et al. 2005).

Conclusion

This study found that the survival and reproduction of *L. hesperus* was negatively correlated with the cyanogenic capacity of their host plant. This indicates that selecting plants with higher cyanogenic capacity in their flowers and young pods may be an effective way to control *L. hesperus*. The evidence does not support the hypothesis that cyanogenic capacity was induced by the presence of *L. hesperus*. For consumer safety, future research should determine if there is a relationship between the cyanogenic glucoside content of flowers, immature pods, and the mature seeds they grow into as a correlation has been found between the cyanogenic content of mature seeds and the cotyledons from the seedlings those seeds grow into (Shlichta et al. 2014)

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Conclusion

Plants and insects have a long coevolutionary history that was complicated by the domestication of crop plants and rise of agriculture approximately 12,000 years ago (Vialatte et al. 2011; Midamegbe et al. 2011; Bourguet et al. 2014). While mobile insects have evolved new ways to utilize plants for food and shelter, stationary plants are evolving physical and chemical ways of defending themselves (Ehrlich and Raven 1964). The domestication of crop plants has given insects a significant advantage by narrowing genetic diversity and imposing selection pressures that prioritize agronomic traits over defense (Johnson 2008; Tooker and Frank 2012; Dar et al. 2021). This can be seen in the reduction of physical defense mechanism that are unpalatable as well as in chemical defense mechanism that are toxic (Mitchell et al. 2016). However, several mechanisms of anti-herbivore defense have survived in crop plants and even been selected under the pressures of cultivation and domestication. The goal of my doctoral research was to study the evolution of anti-herbivore defense mechanisms during domestication and specifically the trait of cyanogenesis as a defense mechanism in Lima beans under pressure from the insect pest, *Lygus hesperus*, commonly known as the Western Tarnished Plant Bug. This was accomplished through a comprehensive literature review of how domestication has affected the genetics of anti-herbivore defense traits in crop plants and three research chapters which presented results from a genome-wide association study of cyanogenesis and lima beans, and a collection of studies characterizing defense phenotypes against *L. hesperus* in Lima beans.

Reviewing the literature on the genetic effect of domestication on anti-herbivore defense mechanisms in crop plants yielded several insights in chapter 1. First, reductions in

genetic diversity of gene pools under domestication has led to a general trend of reduction in anti-herbivore defense mechanisms, especially those which may be unpalatable or toxic to human consumers (Evans 1993; Benrey et al. 1998; Wittkop et al. 2009; Mitchell et al. 2016; Whitehead et al. 2017). Polyploidization, a recurrent phenomenon in plants that is especially common in crop plants, has also affected anti-herbivore defense compounds (Renny-Byfield and Wendel 2014). While the evidence is mixed, some research indicates that novel biochemistry in polyploids may serve as a source of natural variation from which crop plants can evolve or retain defense mechanism (Renny-Byfield and Wendel 2014). Selection under domestication has also resulted in differential expression of anti-herbivore defense mechanisms in harvested organs and reproductive tissues of crop plants (Zhoray et al. 2004). Genes that stop the expression of defense mechanisms in these tissues while allowing expression elsewhere in the plant provide compromises between the selection pressure of domestication and selection pressures from insect herbivores (Sánchez-Pérez et al. 2007; McCall and Fordyce 2010; Shang et al. 2014; Whitehead et al. 2017).

While many of the examples presented in the review are drawn from other crops, Lima beans are a valuable model organism for the study of anti-herbivore defense traits in crop plants. The availability of diverse accessions from two domestication groups and from wild populations makes possible facilitates comparison and association studies (Gutiérrez-Salgado et al. 1995; Andueza-Noh et al. 2013). Investigations in this system are also aided by advanced genetic resources including a reference genome, recombinant inbred line population, and large collection of sequenced accessions (Chacón-Sánchez and Martínez-Castillo 2017; Dohle 2017; Zullo 2021; Garcia et al. 2021). The experiments presented in

the remaining chapters build on this existing body of research and raise new questions for future studies, especially those that consider the evolutionary dynamics of multi-trait defense syndromes under domestication.

In chapter 2, a genome-wide association study of cyanogenesis in a Mesoamerican diversity panel of Lima beans was conducted to elucidate the genetic architecture of cyanogenesis in Lima bean and to ascertain the effect of domestication on this trait. Several significant SNPs were identified for the phenotype of volatilized cyanide collected 0-15 minutes and 15-30 minutes after tissue disruption. When the known sequences of genes for cyanogenesis in white clover were BLAST searched against the Lima bean reference genome, there were many close matches in location to the significant SNPs identified by the GWAS. Some of the SNPs for the 0-15 minute collection were close to matches for the *Li/li* gene that controls synthesis of the β -glucosidase which cleaves cyanide from a cyanogenic glucoside. By contrast, some of the SNPs for the 15–30 minute collection were close to matches for the *Ac/ac* gene which controls synthesis of the cyanogenic glucoside. A significant SNP on chromosome 5 was closely located to QTL identified for cyanogenesis in flowers, pods, and leaves of a biparental recombinant inbred line population of Lima beans (Dohle 2017; Zullo 2021). Further analysis will be conducted prior to publication to check the confidence intervals and flanking markers to increase certainty about a relationship between the significant SNPs, QTL, and BLAST matches. Additional study of the genome annotations and expression atlas for clues about the function of genes near these regions will also be undertaken. To examine the effect of domestication on cyanogenesis genes, the GWAS results of wild and domesticated accessions will be compared. Finally, accessions

with extreme phenotypes and their associated genotypes will be identified for use in breeding and further mapping and validation.

In chapter 3, four related experiments were presented to characterize the phenotypes of defense against *L. hesperus* herbivory in Lima beans. First, to explore the variation in the resistance or tolerance to *L. hesperus* herbivory, a diversity panel of California-adapted Lima beans was grown in a yield trial under treatment with and without insecticides. This revealed that there is variation in the trait or suit of traits that contribute to *L. hesperus* tolerance or resistance. Second, a study of the cyanogenic response to *L. hesperus* was conducted in which flowers, young pods, and mature succulent seeds were sampled for volatile cyanide at 1, 2 and 3 weeks after the start of flowering from plants with and without exposure to *L. hesperus* adults. This study demonstrated that there is a significant effect of variety on level of cyanide in flowers and a significant effect of *L. hesperus* exposure for cyanide levels in pods. This indicates that cyanogenesis may be induced by *L. hesperus* in pods. This same study design was used to examine the effect of cyanogenesis on *Lygus* survival and reproduction. Insects that had been introduced to the cages 1 week after flowering were found after 4 weeks to have rates of survival and reproduction that were correlated with the cyanogenic capacity of each variety. These four studies combine to indicate that cyanogenesis may be part of the defensive mechanism in Lima beans under pressure from *L. hesperus*. Future research should be done to study how cyanide affects nymphal development and what the lethal dose of cyanide is for *L. hesperus* at each life stage.

This work was built on a body of prior research on anti-herbivore defense traits in crop plants generally and Lima beans specifically. By increasing understanding of the

mechanisms and multi trait dynamic that contribute to plant defense against insects, targeted breeding and management practices may be undertaken to reduce yield loss from insect pests and improve global food security. Future research is needed to continue this endeavor. In the case of Lima beans and *L. hesperus* future work should focus on clearly identifying the operative mechanism or mechanisms of resistance or tolerance. With the existing data, more analysis can be conducted to identify target genes for breeding differential expression of cyanogenesis in reproductive tissues for increased protection. Additionally, further study of nymphal development of *L. hesperus* on cyanogenic Lima beans may indicate additional strategies for reducing herbivory. Ongoing research in these areas will be of great value to Lima bean producers in California and will likely also contribute to understanding of how to defend other crops from similar generalist herbivores.

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