



Training in organic breeding

Module 2: Phenomics: approaches and tools for genetic resources and breeding material characterization

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

Author: Pedro Mendes Moreira (PUC-ESAC, PT)



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).



UK Research
and Innovation

CONTEXT: Training in LIVESEEDING project

<https://liveseeding.eu/trainings-summer-school/>

The screenshot shows the LiveSeeding website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the LiveSeeding logo and a search bar. Below the navigation bar, a table lists various training packages under the heading "Training Packages & Summer School". The table has four columns: "Training Packages & Summer School", "Info & Materials", "Upcoming Sessions", and "Target Groups". The first row, "Organic plant breeding", is highlighted with a red border. To the left of the table, there is a vertical sidebar with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Email, and LinkedIn. At the bottom right of the table, there is a "NEWS LETTER" sign-up button. The browser's address bar shows the URL "liveseeding.eu/trainings-summer-school/".

Training Packages & Summer School	Info & Materials	Upcoming Sessions	Target Groups
Organic plant breeding	More info	Register here	breeders, researchers, students
Organic cultivar testing	More info	Register here	farmers, breeders, examination and certification offices, researchers, national/regional authorities, citizens/consumers
High-quality organic seed production	More info	Register here	farmers, seed producers and multipliers, seed savers, breeders, examination and certification offices, researchers
Regulatory and policy aspects of the organic seed market and organic seed databases	More info	Register here	farmers, seed producers and multipliers, seed traders, seed savers, breeders, examination and certification offices, expert groups, national/regional authorities, actors of long value chains, actors of local value chains, private and public procurement bodies/officers
Entrepreneurship in the organic seeds and breeding sector	More info	Register here	farmers, seed producers and multipliers, seed traders, actors of long value chains, actors of local value chains, private and public procurement bodies/officers
Embedding organic seed and cultivated diversity in city food policies	More info	Register here	farmers, seed producers, seed savers, researchers, national/regional authorities, private and public procurement bodies/officers, citizens/consumers, media, students
Summer School	More info	Register here	

Training in organic breeding organized in 5 Modules

- 1. Module 1** - Plant Genetic Resources (PGRs): collection, conservation and exchange to support the increase of agrobiodiversity in farming systems
- 2. Module 2** - Phenomics: approaches and tools for genetic resources and breeding material characterisation - FEBRUARY 3rd 2025, 9:00 to 17:30 CET
- 3. Module 3** - Breeding methods fundamentals - FEBRUARY 13th 2025, 9:00 to 18:00 CET
- 4. Module 4** - Development and application of molecular methods in organic breeding - MARCH 4th 2025, 9:00 to 18:00 CET
- 5. Module 5** - Organic heterogeneous material (OHM) design and development - MARCH 7th 2025, 9:00 to 18:00 CET



February 3rd 2025 - 9:00 to 17:30 CET



Unit 2.1: Main descriptors used worldwide in characterizing plant genetic resources

- 9:00-10:30 - UPV (Adrian Rodríguez-Burruezo)
- 10:30-11:00 Break

Unit 2.2: Intro to ShineMas: a web tool dedicated to Seed Lots History, Phenotyping and Cultural Practices¹

- 11:00-12:30 - INRAe (Yannick de Oliveira, Isabelle Goldringer)
- 12:30-14:00 Lunch Break

Unit 2.3: Guidelines and examples of good practices in data management

- 14:00-15:30 - INRAe (Yannick de Oliveira, Isabelle Goldringer)
- 15:30-16:00 Break

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

- 16:00-17:30 - IPC (Pedro Mendes Moreira)

Unit 2.5: Methods for phenotyping and selection of added-value traits (e.g. taste and nutritional value)²

ITAB (Solenne Jourden)

1 - An extra practical session to use the tool with own data is scheduled for FEB 10th (9-12h)

2 - Unit 2.5 planned for the end of March 2025. Registrants will be invited for this extra training lesson



T1.4 Training in Organic Breeding

Module 2 – Phenomics: approaches and tools for genetic resources and breeding material characterization

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

Pedro Mendes-Moreira

Polytechnic University of Coimbra
Agriculture School of Coimbra



Module 2 – Phenomics: approaches and tools for genetic resources and breeding material characterization

Planned for today

DYNAMIC MIXTURE OF:

1. *Presentation about main topics on Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming: utility, types, examples of descriptors, management of data, knowledge, additional material (50 min)*
2. Fast quiz (about 10 min) ***
3. Debate, Wrap up & Proposed homework (about 10-15 min) ***
4. QUESTIONS: THROUGH THE CHAT (Petra Jelincic will manage)

*** = IMPORTANT for CERTIFICATES (ALL THE UNITS!!!!)

Module 2 – Phenomics: approaches and tools for genetic resources and breeding material characterization

Where are the plant traits?

In U2.1 you have already contacted with the descriptors from BIOVERSITY, however... **Do all the traits have the same importance?... Never forget the phenology!**

Why we do not take all the data, described in the descriptors during all phases of a plant breeding program? More traits measured are needed for registration phase.

$$P = G + E + S + G \times E \times S \dots$$

Traits(n) x Plants/Plot x Plot x Locations x Managing Systems

Cost to measure

How can we be more effective with our resources?



A screenshot of a web browser displaying the Bioversity Descriptors website. The browser's address bar shows the URL "https://cgspace.cgiar.org/brow...". The page header includes navigation links: "Home", "CGIAR research centers", "Bioversity International", "Bioversity Descriptors", and "Browse by Subject". The main heading is "Bioversity Descriptors" with a permanent URI: "https://hdl.handle.net/10568/56589". Below this is a "Browse" section with a table of filters: "Recent Submissions", "By Issue Date", and "By Au". A search bar is present with the text "Search the repository" and a filter instruction "Filter results by typing the first few letters". A button labeled "All browse results" is visible. The main content area shows two items. The first item is "Descriptors for maize" (Book, 1991) with a thumbnail image of the book cover. The second item is "Key access and utilization" (Brief, 2009) with a thumbnail image of a document. At the bottom right, the logos for CIMMYT and IBPGR are displayed. The book cover on the right side of the screenshot features the text "DESCRITORES PARA MAIZ", "DESCRIPTORS FOR MAIZE", and "DESCRIPTEURS POUR LE MAIS" in white on a blue background with a green vertical stripe.

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

Unit 2.4: Methods for **phenotyping** and selection of **agronomic traits** of interest in organic farming

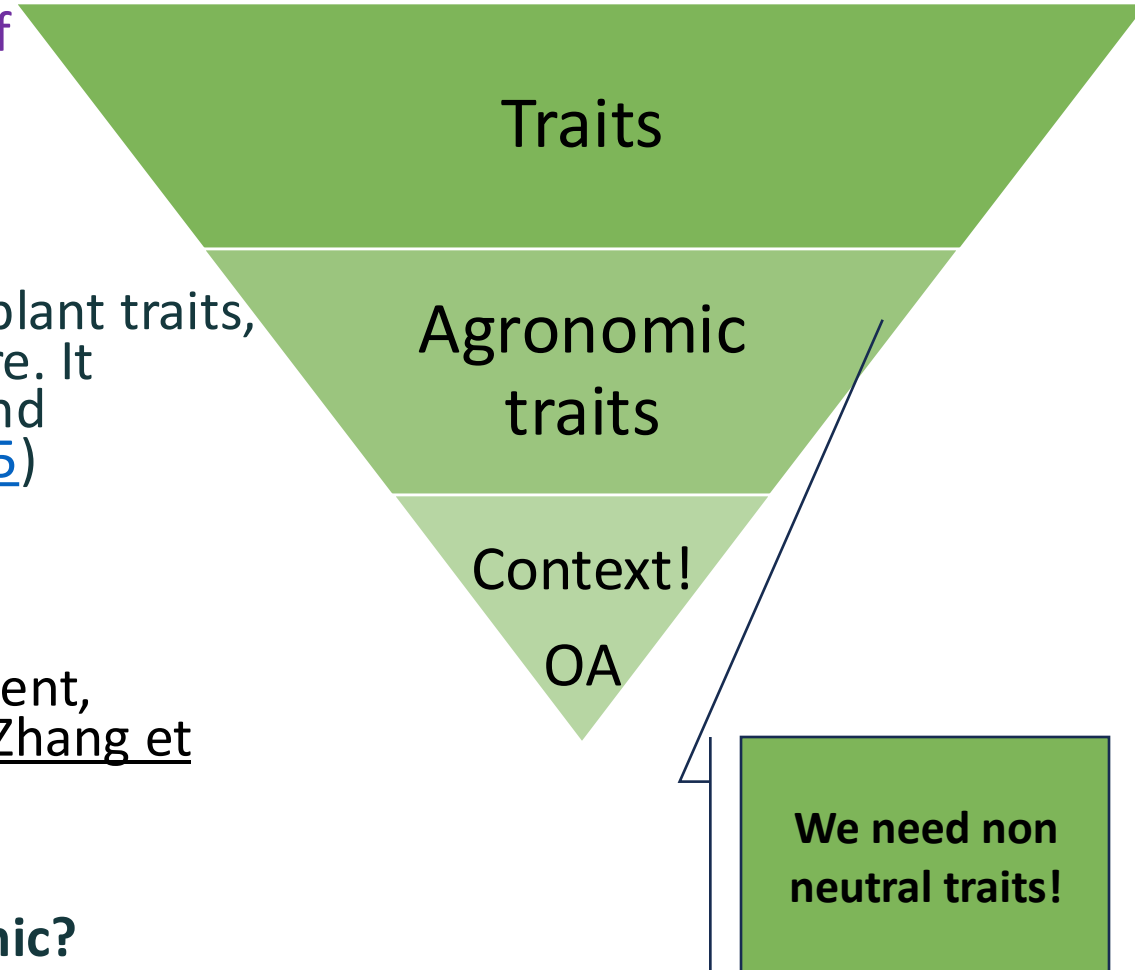
What is phenotyping?

Plant phenotyping, the quantitative **description** of plant traits, is crucial for plant breeding and precision agriculture. It involves characterizing anatomical, physiological, and biochemical properties of plants ([Walter et al., 2015](#))

What are Agronomic traits?

Agronomic traits are **key targets** for crop improvement, encompassing yield, quality, and stress resistance ([Zhang et al., 2021](#))... And what about Organic...

But why we care about Agronomic Traits for Organic?



Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

But why we care about Agronomic Traits for Organic?

Conventional varieties often **lack traits essential for organic production!**

Traditional breeding in high-input environments has led to:

- traits with negative **side-effects** in organic settings, like reduced disease resistance and lower nutrient-use efficiency ([Bueren et al., 2011](#)).

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

But why we care about Agronomic Traits for Organic?

Conventional varieties often lack traits essential for organic production!

- **Nutrient use efficiency from organic inputs,**
- **Weed competitiveness** (improving crop performance in organic systems and contributes to sustainable agriculture)
- **Pest and disease resistance** (Bueren et al., 2011; Rempelos et al., 2023).

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

But why we care about Agronomic Traits for Organic?

Conventional varieties often lack traits essential for organic production!

- **nutrient use efficiency from organic inputs,**
 - Can enhance soil health, microbial biomass, and carbon content, potentially improving NUE over time (Toda et al., 2023).
 - A function of improved cultivars, best management practices, soil health factors ([Baligar et al., 2001](#)).

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

But why we care about Agronomic Traits for Organic?

Conventional varieties often lack traits essential for organic production!

- **weed competitiveness** (improving crop performance in organic systems and contributes to sustainable agriculture practices),
 - key traits for cereals, include plant height, early vigor, tillering capacity, and early maturity ([Mason et al., 2007](#))
 - heterozygosity levels in faba beans ([Ghaouti et al., 2016](#))
 - For soybeans, a direct selection system using crop species mixtures as competitors has been developed to screen for weed-tolerant genotypes ([Horneburg et al., 2017](#)).
 - adaptation to specific environments, and PPB ([Wolfe et al., 2008](#))
 - enhanced crop competitiveness on organic maize to sustain yield ([Ryan et al., 2009](#)).

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

But why we care about Agronomic Traits for Organic?

Conventional varieties often lack traits essential for organic production!

- **pest and disease resistance** ([Bueren et al., 2011](#); [Rempelos et al., 2023](#)).
 - Organic management practices can enhance natural pest control by altering plant resistance to insects, mediated by rhizosphere microbial communities and salicylic acid accumulation ([Blundell et al., 2020](#)).
 - Arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi can induce plant disease resistance, suggesting their importance in organic plant breeding ([Hohmann and Messmer, 2027](#)) .

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

But why we care about Agronomic Traits for Organic?

- Organic breeding programs should focus on traits prioritized by farmers, processors, and consumers ([Rempelos et al., 2023](#)).

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

The correspondence between descriptors by BIOVERSITY and Breeders indicate a GAP!

Knowing that fact [ECPGR EVA programs](#) are trying to fill that GAP

In 2011 an attempt was made to indicate some important traits



Solibam

Strategies for Organic and Low-input integrated Breeding and Management

Grant agreement number: FP7- KBBE-245058

Collaborative project (Large-scale integrating project)

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

Deliverable 1.5

Determination of traits most relevant for model species of cereals, grain legumes and vegetables

Due date: M12

Actual submission date: March, 11th 2011

Project start date: March 1st, 2010 Duration: 54 months

Workpackage concerned: 1

Concerned workpackage leader: Véronique CHABLE

Dissemination level: PU

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming



3 – Traits of Maize (*Zea mays* L.)

List of characters to be scored, from Pedro Mendes-Moreira:

Characterisation to be carried out according to a randomized block design with replications.

Data preferably to be collected on single plant basis (10-20 plants per genotype per each replicate) or per plot.

Traits	Prescriptive		Codes		Description
	Plot	Pl/Ears			
Days-to-silk, n° †	1*		Fi	days	The beginning of days to silk (from planting until 50% of the plants in the plot begin silk emergence).
Days-to-silk, n° † end	1*		Ff	days	The end of days-to silk (from planting until 50% of the plants in the plot begin and finish silk emergence).
Days-to-anthesis, n° †	1*		Mi	days	The beginning of days-to anthesis, i.e., from planting until 50% of the plants in the plot begin anthesis
Days-to-anthesis, n° † end	1*		Mf	days	The end of days-to anthesis (from planting until 50% of the plants in the plot end silk emergence)
Height	1		H	cm	Average plant height, from the stalk basis to the last leaf insertion before the tassel
Uniformity	1		U	score	1 - minimum uniformity and 9 - maximum; 1-5 to populations and 6-9 to inbreds.
aNgle-leaf	1		N	score	Angle of the adaxial side of the leaf above the ear with the stalk (5=45°, <5 =<45° and >5 = >5=45°C)
Tassel	1		T	score	Tassel branching. 1- absent tassel (Inbreds and hybrids) 9- a much branched tassel (frequent in populations with abnormal fasciated ears).
Ear placement	1		E	score	5- indicates that the ear is located in the middle of the plant.
Root lodging %	1		R	%	Percentage of plants leaning more than 30° from vertical
Stalk lodging %	1		S	%	Percentage of plants broken at or below the primary ear node, related with the quality of the stalk and the stalk damage caused by some insect attack.
Yield	1		Yield	Mg ha ⁻¹	Grain yield (Mg ha-1) 15% moisture, a1) hand harvest (Portugal), Grain yield = Ear weight x (Grain weight/Ear weight) five shelled ears are used for determination of this ratio and for moisture content

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming



- What do we search for our program?
- What is our context?

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

VASO 1.0 - Genesis reasons in 1984



The Majority of the germplasm that I work with is used for human consumption



To solve the problems of small Portuguese farmers with limited land, dense population, and an inadequate productivist model, where big corporations have little interest in this market.

To respect local culture promoting the selection and breeding of genetic resources increasing the yield, maintaining the quality.

To keep germplasm evolving with time!

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming



About us ▾

All journals

All articles

Submit your research

Frontiers in Nutrition

Sections ▾

Articles

Research Topics

Editorial board

About journal ▾

REVIEW article

Front. Nutr., 07 January 2022

Sec. Nutrition and Food Science Technology

Volume 8 - 2021 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnut.2021.683399>

Traditional Foods From Maize (*Zea mays* L.) in Europe



Pedro Revilla^{1*}



Mara Lisa Alves²



Violeta Andelković³



Carlotta Balconi⁴



Isabel Dinis⁵



Pedro Mendes-Moreira⁵



Rita Redaelli⁴



Jose Ignacio Ruiz de Galarreta⁶



Maria Carlota Vaz Patto²

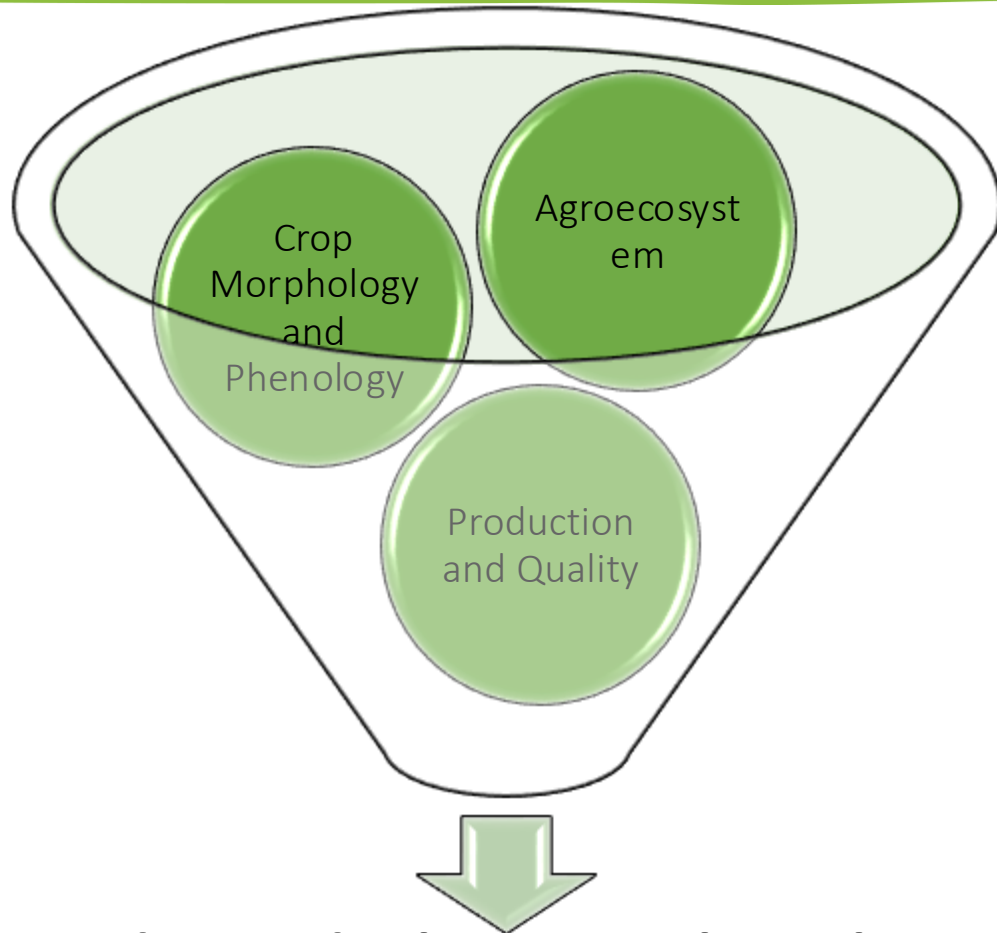


Sladana Žilić⁷



Rosa Ana Malvar¹

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming



Breeders and other actors best choices

(This illustrates part of the GAP information needed by breeders)



Yield maintaining quality?

Desirable stand?

Pest and diseases?

Can we know more about our populations flowering behavior?

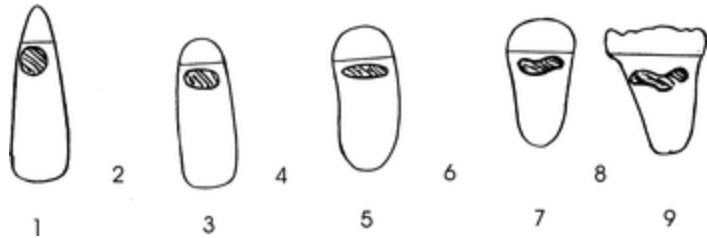
...

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

Neutral marker

What germplasm are you working in?

Do you have fasciation?



If your germplasm do not have fasciation your result will be always “1” so it is a neutral marker. But for us! You need to know what are your materials and what you want from them! Case they have



Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

Broad diversity? Prebreeding Work

The **HUNTERS** (Hight, Uniformity, aNgle, Tassel, Ear, Root lodging and Stalk lodging) analysis was developed as a method of evaluation

1–9 scale (1: very low, 2: very low to low, 3: low, 4: low to intermedium, 5: intermedium, 6: intermedium to high, 7: high, 8: high to very high and 9: very high) defining an average value per plot ([Vaz Patto et al., 2007](#); [Mendes Moreira et al., 2008](#))

H: Plant high (m) from the stalk basis to the last leaf insertion before the tassel.

U: Uniformity, complementary to diversity, where 1 is the minimum of uniformity and 9 the maximum. In general 1–4 applies to populations and 5–9 to inbreds.

N: Angle of the adaxial side of the leaf above the ear with the stalk. <5 - angles inferior to 45° and >5 , angles higher than 45 . Five = 45 angle.

T: Tassel branching. One - almost absent tassel common in inbreds and hybrids, and 9 a very branched tassel, frequent in populations with abnormal fasciated ears.

E: Ear location. Five indicates that the ear is located in the middle of the plant.

R: Root lodging. It indicates the percentage of lodged plants and is related with the quality of the root system.

S: Stalk lodging. Percentage of broken plants. Is normally related with the quality of the stalk and the stalk damage caused by some insect attack.



Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

Yes! We can easily connect this traits with SEEDLINKED



Unit 2.4

(A) - Immediately **before the pollen shedding**, detasseling all the undesirable plants (pest and disease susceptible, weakest and plants that do not fit the desirable ideotype);

(B) - **Before harvest**, besides selecting for the best ear size, the plants are foot kicked at their base (first visible internodes) to evaluate their root and stalk quality. Indirect measurement evaluation for pest and disease tolerance. If the plant breaks, it is eliminated. select prolific plants;

(C) - **At the storage** facilities, after harvest, selection is performed (normal and prolific ears) for ear length, kernel-row number, prolificacy, and the elimination of damaged/diseased ears. The selected ears are shelled and mixed together to form the next generation seed. The farmer selection pressure ranged from 1 to 5%

A. Antes da floração

Olhe para as plantas! - Desbandeira as "doentes e anormais"



B. À colheita (ou uma semana antes)

- 1º Produção - Olhe para a espiga!
 - a) Tamanho
 - b) Mais que uma? (Prolífica)
 - 2º Sanidade - Olhe para as folhas e caule e...pontapé!
 - a) Doenças (fungos)
 - b) Pragas (insetos)
 - c) Raiz
 - 3º Arquitetura - Olhe para as plantas
 - a) Altura
 - b) Inserção da espiga
 - c) Encamisamento
 - d) Ângulo das folhas
- use dois sacos: normais
 prolíficas

C. No espigueiro (Armazém)

Olhe para a espiga!

- 1º Comprimento
- 2º Carreiras de grão
- 3º Sanidade - (observa as bases do carolo!)
- 4º Determinada vs indeterminada



5º Elimine os dois extremos

Figura 3. Esquema de duas seleções de controle parental no campo, Fase A e B ao que se segue a Fase C no espigueiro ou armazém.

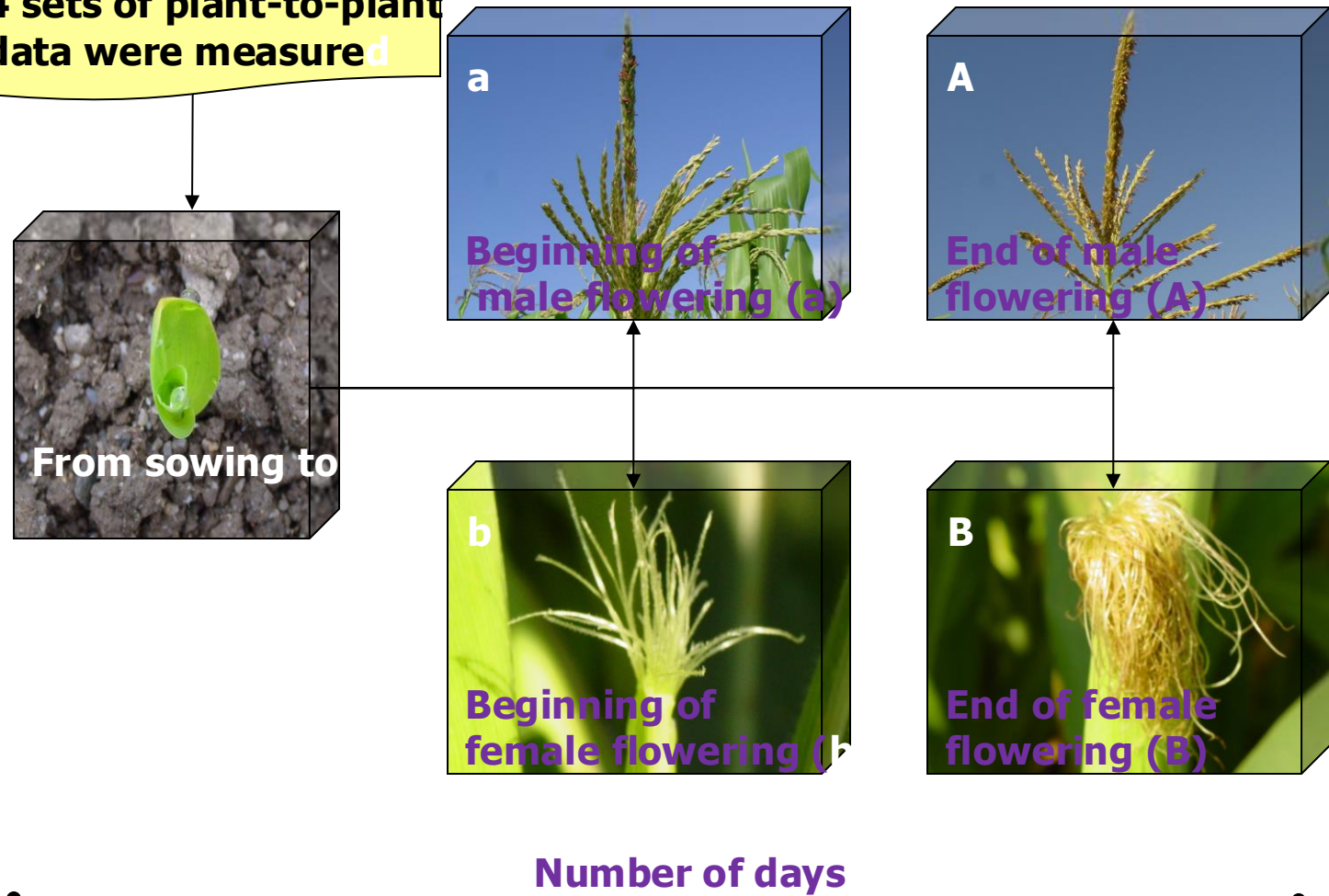
Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

826 plants – VA Lousada

4 sets of plant-to-plant data were measured

The theoretical reasoning employed consists in **assuming** that all the **polinization** occurs **only under gravity influence**, so that when maize plant has the hypothesis of flowering overlapping, this selfing probability will have a direct effect on the inbreeding depression.

This method enables the knowledge of a population concerning the relative amount of theoretical allogamy versus autogamy.



Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

$$OI = \frac{(B-b) + (A-a) - |B-A| - |b-a|}{2(B-b)}$$

$$OI = \frac{(B-b) + (A-a) - |B-A| - |b-a|}{2(B-b)}$$

The number of days from planting, to the beginning (a) or end (A) of male flowering; or to the beginning (b) or end (B) of female flowering.

Evaluation of the overlapping index (OI) conditions:

OI is limited to 1 (100 %)

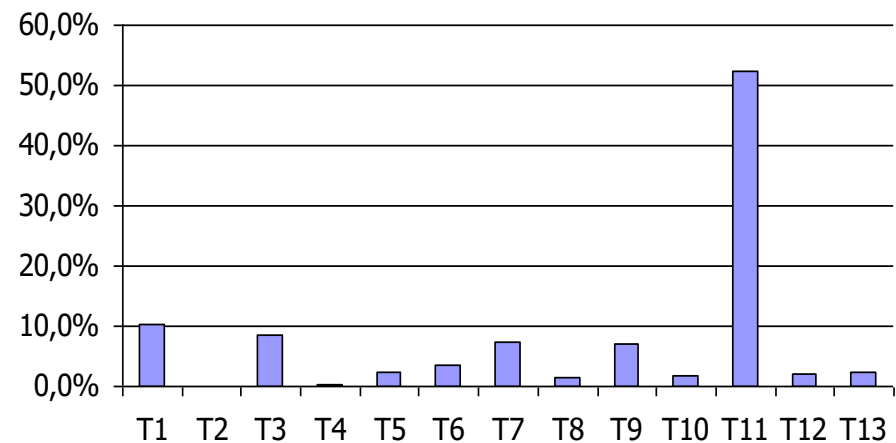
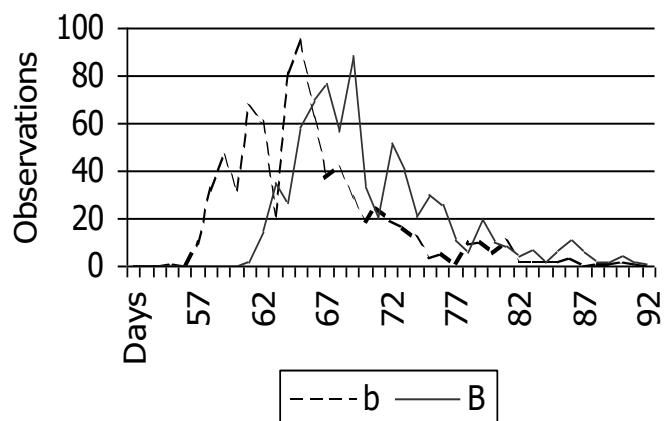
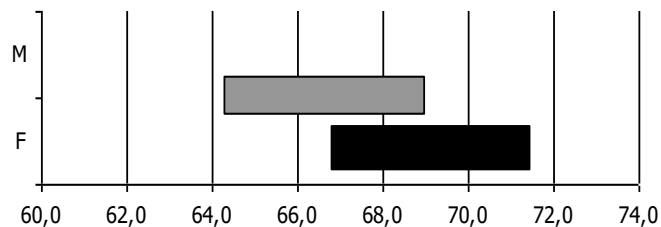
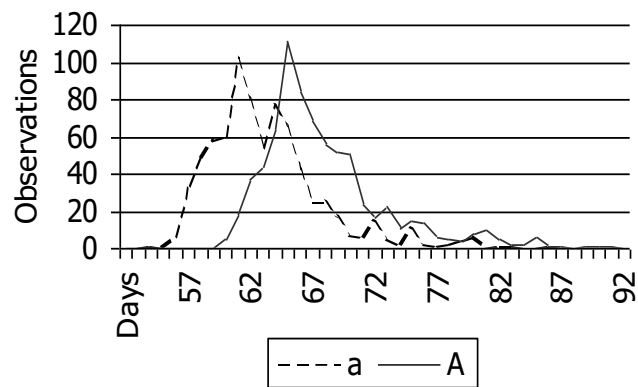
OI is either positive (some overlapping) or negative (overlapping does not occur).

Maize breeders always look for high functional allogamy, so the selection for negative values of OI is pursued.

The proposed evaluation method can be conducted in only one year time, based on 13 possible overlapping types (T1-T13) (Figure 1).

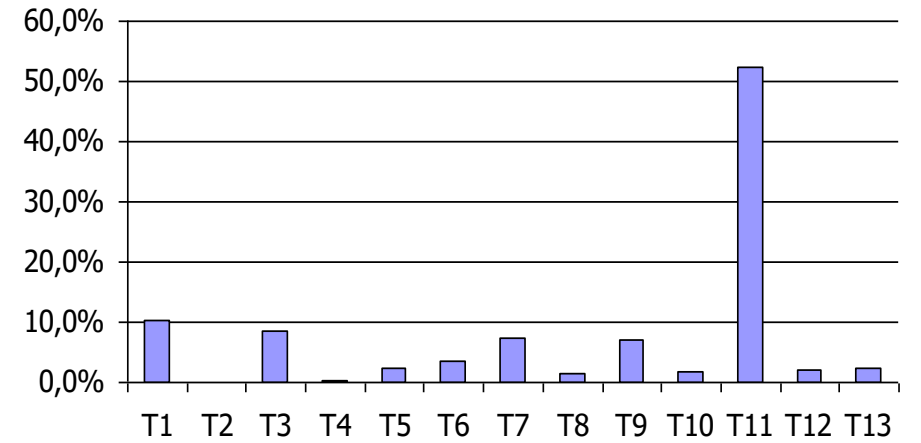
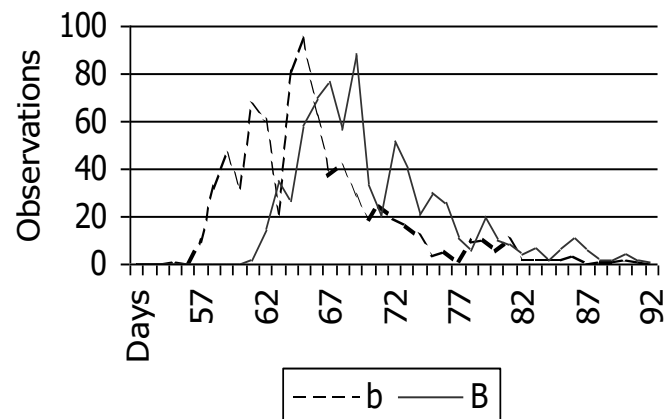
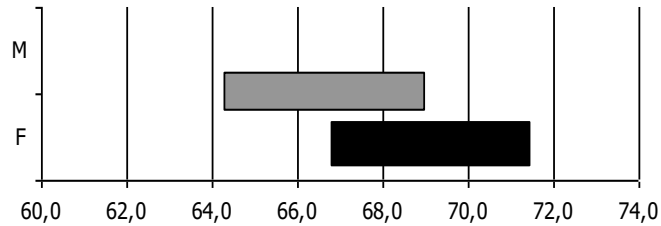
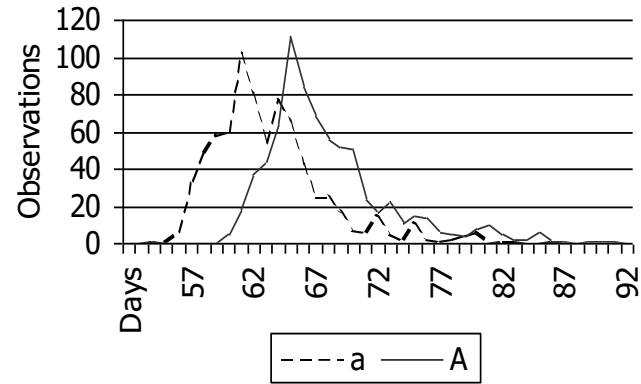
Moreira, P. M., & Pêgo, S. (2003)

OI		Obs.	%
OI<0	a A	76	10,33
	T1 b B		
	a A		
T2 b B	1	0,14	
OI=0	a A	62	8,42
	T3 b B		
	a A		
T4 b B	2	0,27	
OI=1	a A	17	2,31
	T5 b B		
	a A	27	3,67
	T6 b B		
	a A		
T7 b B	55	7,47	
T8 b B	11	1,49	
0<OI<1	a A	53	7,20
	T9 b B		
	a A	14	1,90
	T10 b B		
	a A	385	52,31
	T11 b B		
	a A		
T12 b B	16	2,17	
T13 b B	17	2,31	
Total		736	100



- Verbal de Aperrela:
 - ~19 % of no overlapping (OI ≤ 0, complete allogamy); ~15 % of complete overlapping (OI = 1, possible selfings all along the ear); ~66 % of partial overlapping (0 < OI < 1, possible selfings in specific parts of the ear).
- The population is represented in more than 50 % of the cases by partial overlapping of the type T11 (52.3 %). Even in this case (T11), our results show that 46.3 % of the kernels could have been selfed, while 53.7 % are hybrids.

OI		Obs.	%
OI<0	a A	76	10,33
T1	b B		
	a A		
T2	b B	1	0,14
OI=0	a A	62	8,42
T3	b B		
	a A		
T4	b B	2	0,27
OI=1	a A	17	2,31
T5	b B		
	a A	27	3,67
T6	b B		
	a A	55	7,47
T7	b B		
	a A	11	1,49
T8	b B		
0<OI<1	a A	53	7,20
T9	b B		
	a A	14	1,90
T10	b B		
	a A	385	52,31
T11	b B		
	a A	16	2,17
T12	b B		
	a A	17	2,31
T13	b B		
Total		736	100

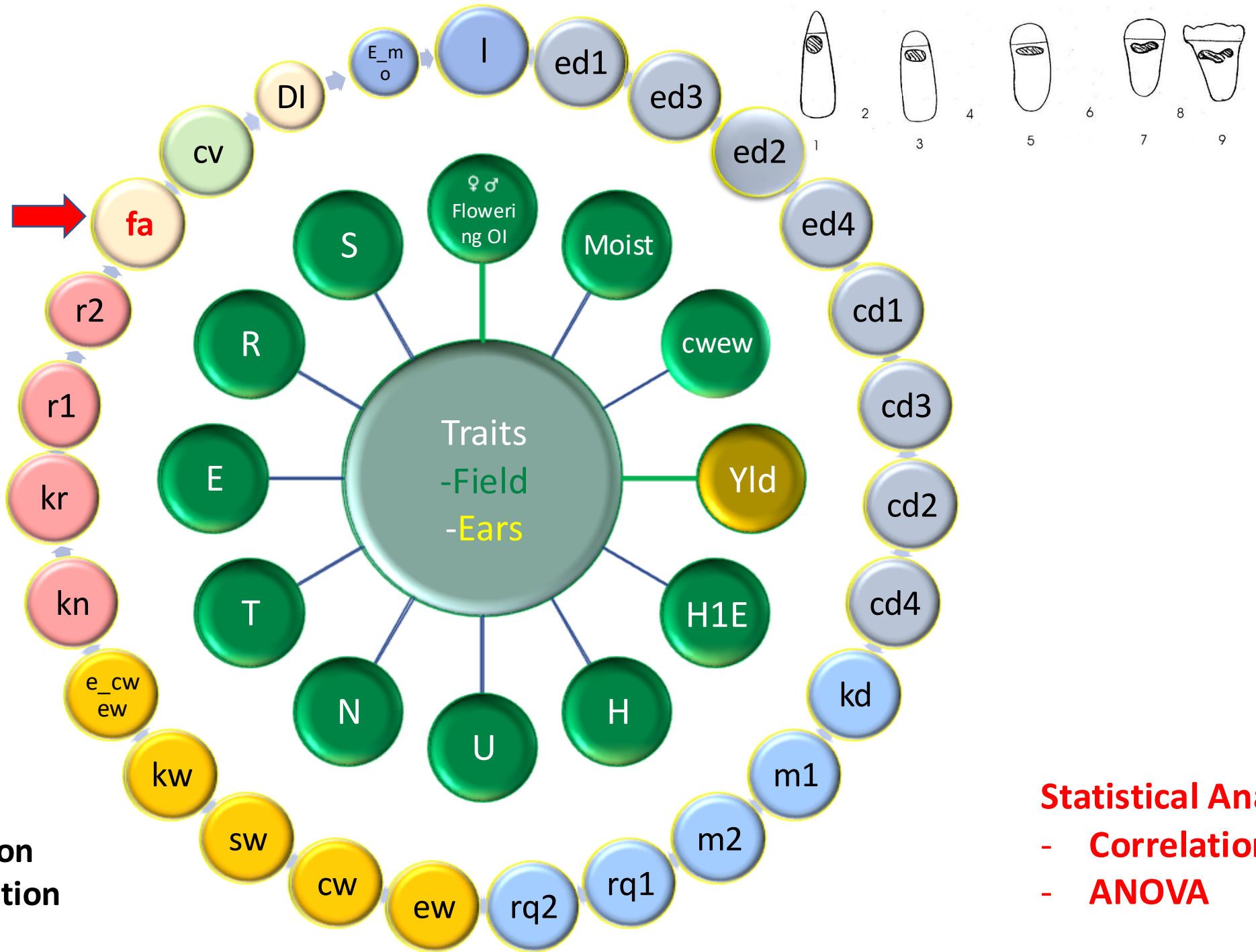


- An unexpected amount of complete allogamy (OI = 19.16 %) constitutes a selection potential for increasing allogamy at the expenses of possible autogamy.
- Figures 4 and 5 present some **differentiated peaks**, showing that this **population is not well recombined** and suggest it to be composed by at least three sub-populations which almost do not overlap. This represents a potential for both recombination and further genetic diversity implementation.

Trials – What environments to use

G + E + S + GxExS





Traits used for population characterization

Statistical Analyses

- Correlations
- ANOVA



Example 2

Trial in Organic and Conventional

Rank Cal	Organic - Caldeirão	Rank V	Conventional - Vagem	Rank differences	
1	VA COSO 19 - (Regadio Lousada)	4313,74	19 VA COSO 19 - (Regadio Lousada)	6450,77	18
2	2501 - (11-2019 Caldeirão 2019)	4252,3	21 2501 - (11-2019 Caldeirão 2019)	6344,97	19
3	Bulk-Azores 2 - (110-2019 Cald)	4248,98	11 Bulk-Azores 2 - (110-2019 Cald)	7308,47	8
4	2516 - (23-2019 Caldeirão 2019)	4235,95	30 2516 - (23-2019 Caldeirão 2019)	5675,8	26
5	2527 - (Caldeirão 2018)	4195,12	35 2527 - (Caldeirão 2018)	5575,57	30
6	2499 - (9-2019 Caldeirão 2019)	4127,95	5 2499 - (9-2019 Caldeirão 2019)	7961,27	-1

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

What are the resources that you have?

Selecting for drought tolerance/resistance based on yield is a complicated task due to the complex nature of the trait and its low heritability. The task becomes particularly complex for participatory breeding approaches in which selection tools are to be applied directly by farmers.

Order Article Reprints



Open Access

Article

Maize Open-Pollinated Populations Physiological Improvement: Validating Tools for Drought Response Participatory Selection

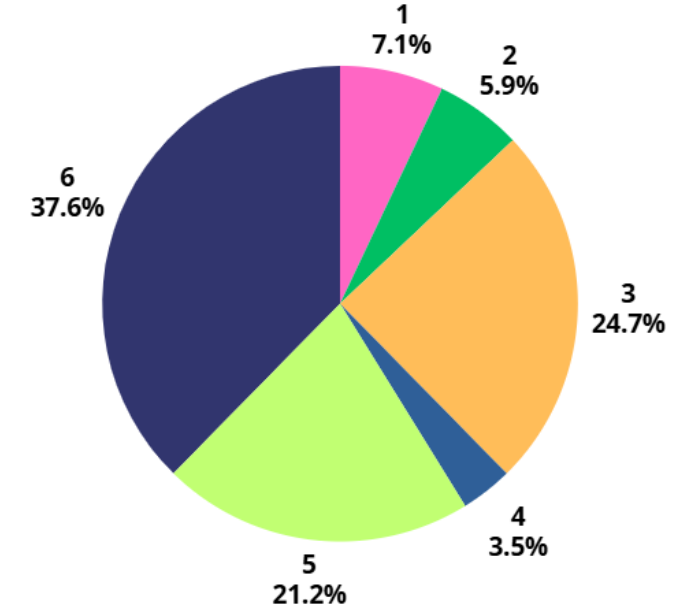
by Susana T. Leitão ¹ , Emanuel Ferreira ² , M. Catarina Bicho ^{1,3} , Mara L. Alves ¹ , Duarte Pintado ² , Daniela Santos ² , Pedro Mendes-Moreira ² , Susana S. Araújo ¹ , J. Miguel Costa ⁴ and Maria Carlota Vaz Patto ^{1,*}

Evaluation



<https://www.facebook.com/ESAC.IPC/videos/420973937771190>

Mister Tomate



Resultados da Escola da Agrária







Do we have the same results?


<https://www.facebook.com/ESAC.IPC/videos/420973937771190>


Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

PPB – from the farmer to the statistical tools - MARS, RF, CART

Is ear value an effective indicator for maize yield evaluation?

Pedro M.R. Mendes-Moreira ^{a h i}  , João Mendes-Moreira ^{b c} ,
António Fernandes ^d , Eugénio Andrade ^e, Arnel R. Hallauer ^f , Silas E. Pêgo ^{g i},
M.C. Vaz Patto ^{h i} 

Show more 

 Add to Mendeley  Share  Cite

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fcr.2014.02.015> ↗

[Get rights and content](#) ↗

Highlights

- A set of maize traits that could help farmers on selection for yield was identified.
- A new ear value formula that better estimates the yield potential was obtained.
- A new instance ranking measure to be used for evaluating ear ranks is proposed.
- A new method to be used in participatory research and pre-breeding is proposed.

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

(EV formula) was defined as:

$$EV = \frac{0.6 \times KW + 0.2 \times L + 0.15 \times R + 0.05 \times KN}{4} \quad (1)$$

KW stands for kernel weight (grams) at 15% moisture, *L* for ear length (centimeters), *R* for kernel row number and *KN* for total number of kernels.

Not forgetting to feed local initiatives that can help on PPB recognition

“Best Ear of Sousa Valley competition” can provide adequate measurements, indicate best traits for selection and prediction



$$EVA = mlr.varseEV = -7.030877 + 0.031605 \times KW + 0.387825 \times L + 0.337015 \times R12 - 0.008875 \times KN \quad (13 \text{ and } 14)$$

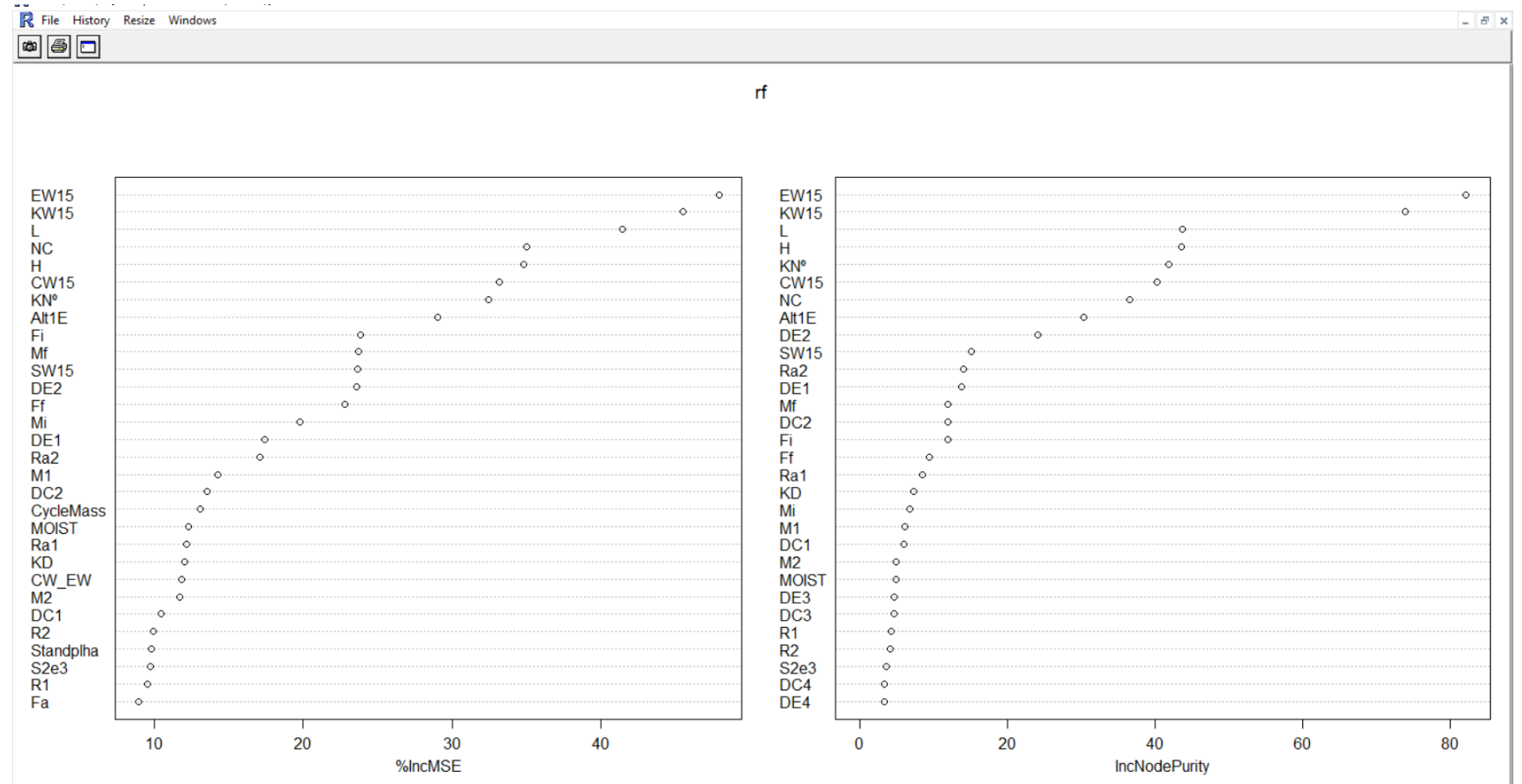
Table 1

Maize populations' characterization: kernel type, number of instances per population, origin and references.

Population	Kernel type	Data ^a	Origin	Area/plot, ears/plot	References
Nutica	Yellow dent	18	Synthetic Pt (80% USA germplasm)	9.6 m ² ; 20 ears/plot	Moreira (2006)
Fandango	Yellow dent	157	Synthetic Pt (80% USA germplasm)	9.6 m ² ; 20 ears/plot	Mendes-Moreira et al. (2009)
Pigarro	White flint	305	Populations, Pt	9.6 m ² ; 20 ears/plot	Mendes-Moreira et al. (2008)

^a The number of instances per population corresponds to the product of selection cycles (for 'Pigarro' and 'Fandango'), years, locations with three reps, with exclusion of instances that not have the complete set of traits.

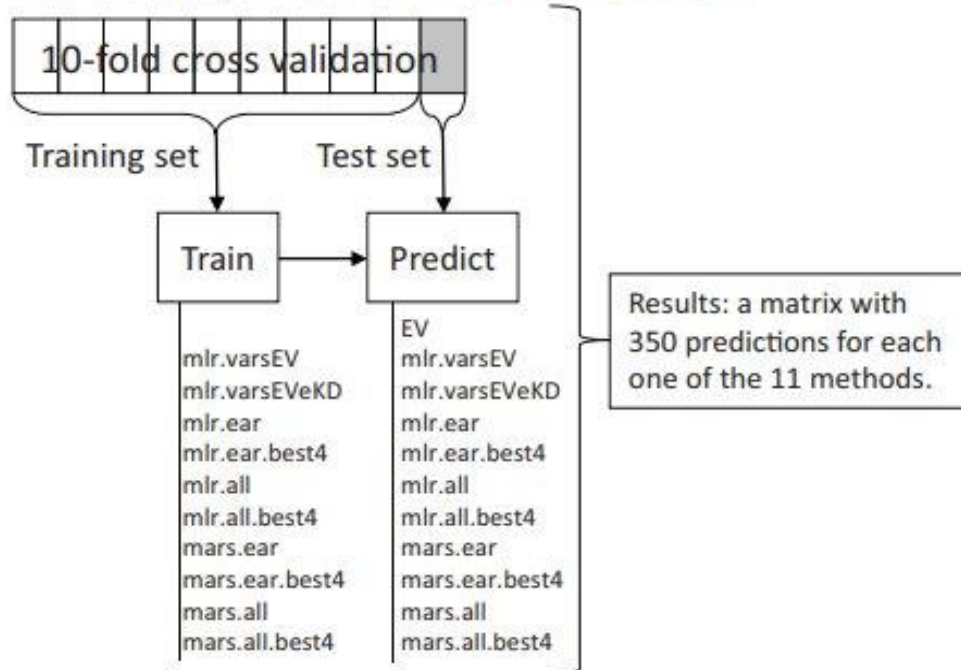
PPB – from the farmer to the statistical tools



Searching for tools to help on the selection

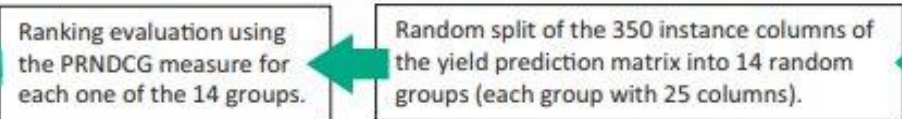
Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

First step: YIELD PREDICTION



$$EV = \frac{0.6 \times KW + 0.2 \times L + 0.15 \times R + 0.05 \times KN}{4} \quad (1)$$

Second step: EARS RANKING



Third step: STATISTICAL VALIDATION

Averaging the ranks obtained in the 14 groups per each of the 11 predictors.

$$EVA = \text{mlr.varsEV} = -7.030877 + 0.031605 \times KW + 0.387825 \times L + 0.337015 \times R_{12} - 0.008875 \times KN \quad (13 \text{ and } 14)$$

Fourth step: FINAL FORMULA

Generating a new formula with all the 350 instances using the best interpretable regression method according to the PRNDCG measure..

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

Agronomic traits of interest in organic. Why?

- *LIMITATION: there are many descriptors, but better to work with those which best encompass the diversity present on a crop and its relatives (comprehensive & discriminating ability)*
- *Characterization with the many descriptors of a crop variety is not enough, search for the traits that respond to agronomic questions, search for better correlations with complex traits such as yield*
- *Essential to better fit the varieties to organic environment (NUE, Weed competitiveness, pest and disease resistance) and focus on traits prioritized by farmers, processors, and consumers ([Rempelos et al., 2023](#)).*
- *Check the level of diversity you have*
- *Comparison to other and same accessions in other locations and actors (E + S and*

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

PRACTICAL EXERCISES:

1. Guided visit to Overlap Index Maize
+ [example with excel compiled data](#)
1. Guided visit to Maize results
+ [example of PUC-ESAC results with own data](#)

SAME, but short, with seedlinked page?

Seedlinked Trials Results

Maize trial_Ensaio Milho: <https://app.seedlinked.com/trial/analytics/guest/MjA0Nw==>

Tomato degustation trial_Ensaio Tomate degustação: <https://app.seedlinked.com/trial/analytics/guest/MjYxMg==>

Unit 2.4: Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

DEBATE

- Revise the quiz in common*
- Own previous experiences*
- Other questions and doubts*

WRAP UP



- What we have learned today?*
- Proposed homework: study case, consider a crop that you are working and identify the five top traits that you would use in a breeding programme*

Send to :

pmm@esac.pt and petra.jelincic@ips-konzalting.hr

By next Monday 10th february

Additional available materials

Baligar, V. C., Fageria, N. K., & He, Z. L. (2001). Nutrient use efficiency in plants. *Communications in soil science and plant analysis*, 32(7-8), 921-950.

Blundell, R., Schmidt, J. E., Igwe, A., Cheung, A. L., Vannette, R. L., Gaudin, A. C., & Casteel, C. L. (2020). Organic management promotes natural pest control through altered plant resistance to insects. *Nature plants*, 6(5), 483-491.

Ghaouti, L., Schierholt, A., & Link, W. (2016). Effect of competition between *Vicia faba* and *Camelina sativa* as a model weed in breeding for organic conditions. *Weed Research*, 56(2), 159-167.

Hohmann, P., & Messmer, M. M. (2017). Breeding for mycorrhizal symbiosis: focus on disease resistance. *Euphytica*, 213(5), 113.

Horneburg, B., Seiffert, S., Schmidt, J., Messmer, M. M., & Wilbois, K. P. (2017). Weed tolerance in soybean: a direct selection system. *Plant breeding*, 136(3), 372-378.

Mason, H. E., Navabi, A., Frick, B. L., O'Donovan, J. T., & Spaner, D. M. (2007). The weed-competitive ability of Canada western red spring wheat cultivars grown under organic management. *Crop science*, 47(3), 1167-1176.

[Mendes-Moreira, P., Satovic, Z., Mendes-Moreira, J., Santos, J. P., Nina Santos, J. P., Pego, S., & Vaz Patto, M. C. \(2017\). Maize participatory breeding in Portugal: Comparison of farmer's and breeder's on-farm selection. *Plant breeding*, 136\(6\), 861-871.](#)

Moreira, P. M. M., Pêgo, S. E., Vaz Patto, C., & Hallauer, A. R. (2008). Comparison of selection methods on 'Pigarro', a Portuguese improved maize population with fasciation expression. *Euphytica*, 163, 481-499.

Moreira, P. M., & Pêgo, S. (2003, August). Pre-breeding evaluation of maize germplasm. The case of a Portuguese open-pollinated variety. In AR Hallauer Intl. Symposium on Plant Breeding. Mexico City, Mexico (pp. 17-22).

Additional available materials

Rempelos, L., Barański, M., Sufar, E. K., Gilroy, J., Shotton, P., Leifert, H., ... & Leifert, C. (2023). Effect of climatic conditions, and agronomic practices used in organic and conventional crop production on yield and nutritional composition parameters in potato, cabbage, lettuce and onion; results from the long-term NFSC-trials. *Agronomy*, 13(5), 1225.

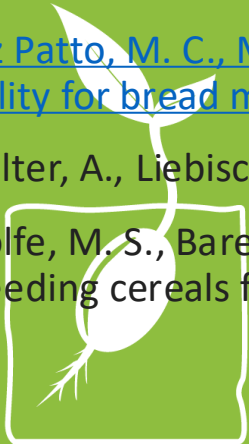
Ryan, M. R., Smith, R. G., Mortensen, D. A., Teasdale, J. R., Curran, W. S., Seidel, R., & Shumway, D. L. (2009). Weed–crop competition relationships differ between organic and conventional cropping systems. *Weed Research*, 49(6), 572-580.

Van Bueren, E. L., Jones, S. S., Tamm, L., Murphy, K. M., Myers, J. R., Leifert, C., & Messmer, M. M. (2011). The need to breed crop varieties suitable for organic farming, using wheat, tomato and broccoli as examples: A review. *NJAS-Wageningen Journal of Life Sciences*, 58(3-4), 193-205.

[Vaz Patto, M. C., Moreira, P. M., Carvalho, V., & Pego, S. \(2007\). Collecting maize \(*Zea mays* L. convar. *mays*\) with potential technological ability for bread making in Portugal. *Genetic Resources and Crop Evolution*, 54, 1555-1563.](#)

Walter, A., Liebisch, F., & Hund, A. (2015). Plant phenotyping: from bean weighing to image analysis. *Plant methods*, 11, 1-11.

Wolfe, M. S., Baresel, J. P., Desclaux, D., Goldringer, I., Hoad, S., Kovacs, G., ... & Lammerts van Bueren, E. T. (2008). Developments in breeding cereals for organic agriculture. *Euphytica*, 163, 323-346.



Further readings












ORIGINAL RESEARCH article

Front. Plant Sci., 22 December 2017

Sec. Plant Breeding

Volume 8 - 2017 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpls.2017.02203>

Setting Up Decision-Making Tools toward a Quality-Oriented Participatory Maize Breeding Program

 Mara L. Alves¹  Cláudia Brites²  Manuel Paulo²  Bruna Carbas³
 Maria Belo¹  Pedro M. R. Mendes-Moreira²  Carla Brites³
 Maria do Rosário Bronze^{1,4,5}  Jerko Gunjača^{6,7}  Zlatko Šatović^{6,7}
 Maria C. Vaz Patto^{1*}

¹ Instituto de Tecnologia Química e Biológica António Xavier, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Oeiras, Portugal

² Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra, Escola Superior Agrária, Coimbra, Portugal

³ Unidade de Tecnologia e Inovação, Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária, Oeiras, Portugal

⁴ Faculdade de Farmácia, Universidade de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal

⁵ Unidade de Tecnologia e Inovação, Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária, Oeiras, Portugal

⁶ Institute of Agriculture, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia

⁷ Institute of Excellence for Biodiversity and Molecular Plant Breeding (CoE CroP-BioDiv), Zagreb, Croatia



LiveSeeding



Funded by the European Union, the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or REA, nor SERI or UKRI.





LiveSeeding

Thanks for your attention!

VI EUCARPIA CONFERENCE

on breeding to meet environmental &
societal challenges

26^{to}28

MAY 2025
PORTUGAL

Instituto Politécnico
de Coimbra - ESAC



Query Unit 2.4 - Methods for phenotyping and selection of agronomic traits of interest in organic farming

Tomato Evaluation - Choose your perfect tomato according to the shape and colour
<https://www.facebook.com/ESAC.IPC/videos/420973937771190>

R: This question allowed to indicate that according to the group we can have different responses

In a breeding Program, you should measure all your accession with all the traits indicated by Bioversity

No – You should choose what are the most important traits to deal with

Are there any differences between Agronomic traits used for conventional and for organic?

Yes, for example, we are interested in measure competition or allelopathy between crop and weeds, which is not important in conventional where herbicides are applied

Nitrogen Use Efficiency (NUE) can be considered a simple trait.

No, because NUE comprises two main components: nitrogen uptake and utilization efficiency, each involving numerous physiological processes and biochemical pathways

Quiz U2.4 + homework

Consider the file "Degustação de Tomate - LIVESEEDING- ESAC 2024". What was the accession with higher acidity. Tomato degustation trial_Ensaio Tomate degustação:

<https://app.seedlinked.com/trial/analytics/guest/MjYxMg==>

R:631

How many overlapping index cases exist for maize ?https://esacpt-my.sharepoint.com/:x:/g/personal/pmm_esac_pt/EbmeGlzGoKtGntb12adEWiMBKcRyL8KJk7-M1K_irL_a-g?e=4sdzCS

R:13

Proposed homework:

Study case, consider a crop that you are working and identify the five top traits that you would use in a breeding programme for organic.

R: open question depending on the chosen crop