



Non-targeted metabolom profiling of green flower buds in oil seed rape: Screening for resistance against the pollen beetle

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The pollen beetle (*Meligethes aeneus* F.; Coleoptera: Nitidulidae) is one of the major insect pests of oilseed rape (*Brassica napus* L.; Brassicaceae), with the potential of causing significant reductions in seed yield. Since pollen beetles become increasingly resistant to pyrethroids, alternative control strategies within the framework of integrated pest management are needed to reduce the use of insecticides and the undesirable selection of beetles for insecticide resistance. One strategy is to use the natural variation in brassicaceous plants species to identify potential chemical resistance parameters that enable plant breeders to enhance the resistance of oilseed rape against adult pollen beetles.

In this project we have i) screened *B. napus* cultivars and related brassicaceous plant species for their effect on the feeding behaviour of adult *M. aeneus* and ii) analysed the metabolom profiles of green flower buds by liquid chromatography electrospray ionisation time-of-flight mass spectrometry.

The feeding response of the pollen beetle was dependent on sex and plant species. Males discriminated stronger between plant cultivars and species than females. The beetles preferred plants closely related to *B. napus* over distantly related ones like *Sinapis alba*, *Eruca sativa* or *Barbarea vulgaris*. To identify candidate compounds as potential chemical resistance parameters, we correlated metabolom profiles and beetle feeding behaviour. Positive and negative correlations of plant compounds with the beetles feeding behaviour have been detected. Non-targeted metabolom profiling can be a first step to unravel plant resistance traits via a chemical ecology approach.