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1 **Assessing the phenotypic and genotypic diversity of *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* in France**

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18 of the technical institutes (ACPEL, APEF, CEFEL, INVENIO, Terres Inovia, SILEBAN,
19 UNILET) who collaborated in the project and who collected the isolates used in the present
20 study.

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25

26 **Abstract**

27 White mould caused by the ascomycete *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* affects the production of many
28 economically important crops. The incidence of this disease has recently increased in France,
29 especially in melon crops, which were not affected much in the past. One possible explanation
30 for this situation is the emergence of strains with particular characteristics, including increased
31 aggressiveness to melon. To test this hypothesis, 200 isolates of *S. sclerotiorum* were collected
32 from six host crops (bean, brassica oilseed rape, carrot, lettuce, melon, witloof chicory) in
33 different regions. They were genotyped with 16 microsatellites markers. A subsample of 96
34 isolates were assessed for their aggressiveness on melon leaves. Overall, the isolates from
35 melon did not show higher aggressiveness on melon leaves than those which originated from
36 other host plants. Moreover, the melon isolates did not present distinctive genetic characteristics
37 in comparison with those from other crops and shared several of the 128 identified multilocus
38 haplotypes with isolates collected from carrot, witloof chicory and oilseed rape. Furthermore
39 the Bayesian analysis of the genetic structure indicated that the host plant is not a structuring
40 factor of the three genetic clusters identified, and it suggested instead the occurrence of an
41 isolation-by-distance process. Possible consequences of these results for the management of
42 white mould and alternative hypotheses to explain the recent changes in disease incidence are
43 presented.

44

45 **Key words**

46 White mould, microsatellites, aggressiveness, vegetable, melon

47

48 **Introduction**

49 *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* (Lib) de Bary causes annual crop losses up to several millions of
50 dollars worldwide (Petrofeza and Nasser 2012). This plant pathogenic ascomycete can attack

51 more than 400 plant species (Purdy 1979; Boland and Hall 1994), including some with
52 economic importance such as oilseed and protein crops and vegetables. In many crops, disease
53 management relies largely on fungicide applications that are guided by risk-prediction models
54 (Clarkson et al. 2014; Lehner et al. 2017), but biological control and preventive cultural
55 methods also play an important role (Barriere et al 2014; Derbyshire and Denton-Giles 2016;
56 Elsheshtawi et al 2017; Kamal et al. 2016; Nicot et al. 2016). Such cultural methods include
57 crop rotation or the spatial arrangement of plots with host crops and non-host crops. However,
58 designing strategies of rotation or landscape use is complicated by the wide host range of the
59 pathogen and the long survival of sclerotia in the soil (Derbyshire and Denton-Giles 2016).
60 Sclerotia can be abundant in the soil and lead either to direct plant infection through
61 myceliogenic germination or to production of ascospores through carpogenic germination
62 (Steadman 1983). Ascospores can be dispersed by wind and thus disseminate the pathogen
63 within and among fields (Kora et al. 2003).

64 In recent years, French fruit and vegetable growers have been confronted to an increase in white
65 mould incidence, particularly in melon crops which were largely spared in the past. The reasons
66 for this change are not known. As a possible explanation, we hypothesised that isolates with
67 increased aggressiveness on melon may have become prevalent in the production area. Little is
68 known on possible differences in aggressiveness to various host crops among populations of *S.*
69 *sclerotiorum*, but significant levels of diversity were reported among 120 isolates from
70 Australia examined for their aggressiveness to sunflower (Ekins et al. 2007). In *Botrytis*
71 *cinerea*, a taxonomically related species also known for its wide host range (Elad et al. 2016),
72 some level of adaptation to the host plant has been suggested, with a clear genetic differentiation
73 according to the host plant of origin among 3546 isolates collected in France from three plant
74 species (Walker et al. 2015a). While no information is available on French populations of *S.*
75 *sclerotiorum*, some cases of genetic differentiation, and even possibly divergence into separate

76 populations, have been reported in several studies (Aldrich-Wolfe et al. 2015; Clarkson et al.
77 2013; Malvárez et al. 2007).

78 The objectives of the present study were to test the hypothesis that French isolates of *S.*
79 *sclerotiorum* found on melon may be phenotypically and genetically different from those
80 isolated from other crops. For this, we examined a large collection of *S. sclerotiorum* isolates
81 sampled from different host crops, some of which are traditionally cultivated in close vicinity
82 or in rotation with melon.

83

84 **Materials and methods**

85 Isolate collection

86 Two hundred isolates were collected as sclerotia present on diseased plants in crops of carrot
87 (*Daucus carota* L.), melon (*Cucumis melo* L.), bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.), oilseed rape
88 (*Brassica napus* L.), witloof chicory (*Cichorium intybus* var. *foliosum* L.) and lettuce (*Lactuca*
89 *sativa* L.) from different regions of France (Fig. 1). The sclerotia were surface-disinfested with
90 bleach (5%) and rinsed in sterile water. They were then plated on Potato Dextrose Agar (PDA)
91 and incubated for two days at 21°C. A mycelial plug carrying a single piece of hyphal tip was
92 excised from the growing margin of each colony and transferred to fresh PDA medium, as
93 described for the characterization of individual isolates in population genetic studies (Lehner et
94 al. 2016). After four days of incubation, the mycelium was collected from the surface of the
95 agar medium and stored at -20°C before DNA extraction.

96

97 Characterization of the aggressiveness of isolates on melon

98 The aggressiveness of a subsample of 96 isolates of *S. sclerotiorum* was assessed on detached
99 leaves of melon in controlled conditions. These isolates were chosen among the 200 isolates
100 collected on diseased plants, based on their host of isolation (21 isolates from green bean, 11

101 from oilseed rape, 25 from carrot, 28 from melon and 11 from witloof chicory) and their
102 suitability to represent different haplotypes characterized as described below. The melon
103 cultivar Chubaka (Nunhems Bayer CropScience, France) was chosen because of its
104 susceptibility to *S. sclerotiorum*. Seeds were sowed in compost (Klasmann TS3, Germany).
105 Plants were produced in a heated greenhouse and watered daily with a nutrient solution
106 (Soluveg Essentiel, Angibaud Derome & Spécialités, France). The potted plants were used at
107 the 3–4 leaf stage after 4 weeks of culture. Two leaves per plant were detached and placed in
108 clear polystyrene boxes (250 mm × 178 mm) on moistened filter paper. Mycelial plugs (5 mm
109 in diameter) of each *S. sclerotiorum* isolate were excised from the growing margin of two day-
110 old PDA cultures and deposited onto the melon leaves. Each *S. sclerotiorum* isolate was
111 inoculated on 10 leaves (5 plastic boxes). The plastic boxes were then incubated in a growth
112 chamber at 21°C and a photoperiod of 14 hours for 48 hours. The leaves were then
113 photographed and lesion areas were assessed with image analysis software (Image J, US
114 National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, USA). To compare the aggressiveness of *S.*
115 *sclerotiorum* isolates, these figures were used to compute an aggressiveness index, expressed
116 as a percentage relative to the size of lesions for a reference isolate (SS44, isolated from melon).

117

118 Isolate genotyping

119 Genomic DNA was extracted in 96-well plates from aliquots of 100 mg (fresh weight) of frozen
120 fungal material, following the Dneasy Plant extraction Kit protocol (Qiagen). Sixteen
121 microsatellite markers designed for *S. sclerotiorum* by Sirjusingh and Kohn (2001) were
122 amplified with forward primers conjugated with the following fluorescent dyes: FAM for loci
123 5-3, 7-2, 7-3, 8-3, 12-2, 13-2, 17-3, 36-4, 42-4, 55-4, 92-4, 106-4 and HEX for loci 5-2, 9-2,
124 110-4 and 114-4 (MWG). Reverse primers did not carry any fluorescent dye. All markers were
125 amplified at a hybridization temperature of 55°C, except 8-3, 42-4, 55-4 and 92-4 which were

126 amplified at 60°C. To determine the size of the microsatellites, the PCR products were diluted
127 and multiplexed prior to scanning with the help of an ABI 3730 sequencer (Applied
128 Biosystems). The multiplexing consisted of mixing in a same well the PCR products of several
129 markers. The markers were separated in three mixes: one for markers 7-2, 12-2, 13-2, 36-4,
130 106-4 and 114-4, a second one for markers 7-3, 8-3, 9-2, 17-3 and 42-4 and a third one for 5-2,
131 5-3, 55-4 92-4, and 110-4. In each well, 600LIZ was used as a standard size marker.
132 GeneMapper software version 4.1 (Applied Biosystems) was then used for the microsatellite
133 size analysis. Complete microsatellite size profiles (referred to as "haplotypes" hereafter) were
134 obtained for all isolates.

135

136 Genetic diversity of *S. sclerotiorum* isolates

137 Unbiased gene diversity (Hnb) and unbiased allelic richness were computed separately for the
138 isolates collected on every plant species with the Genetix software (Belkhir 1996-2004). The
139 number of different multilocus haplotypes (MLH) was computed with GenClone 1.0 software
140 (Arnaud-Haond and Belkhir 2007). We used the index of haplotypic diversity (based on the
141 number of individuals and the number of distinct MLH), which estimates the proportion of
142 haplotypes present in a population and takes a value of 1 when a population is composed
143 exclusively of unique haplotypes (Arnaud-Haond et al. 2007).

144 To assess the possible exchange of inoculum between crops often cultivated in rotation or in
145 close vicinity, a separate analysis was carried out on a subsample of 124 isolates (40 from melon
146 and 84 from carrot) collected between October 2014 and January 2016 in two adjacent districts
147 (Gironde and Charente-Maritime) in southwestern France (Fig. 1). The software FSTAT
148 version 2.9.3 (Goudet 1995) was used to compute allelic richness per locus corrected for a
149 minimum sample size of 40 isolates.

150

151 Genetic structure

152 To investigate the genetic structure of *S. sclerotiorum* isolates we used the discriminant analysis
153 of principal components (DAPC) implemented in the R package adegenet (Jombart 2008;
154 Jombart et al. 2010). DAPC requires prior genetic groups that can be either determined by users
155 or defined without any a priori on sample assignments using a k-means clustering approach. To
156 avoid possible bias, only one representative was kept for isolates which presented an identical
157 haplotype and were collected from a same plot, resulting in a group of 141 isolates included in
158 the analysis. First, we tested for a potential host specialization of *S. sclerotiorum* by assigning
159 the isolates to six distinct clusters corresponding to the host species from which they have been
160 sampled. As *S. sclerotiorum* may be structured by other factors than the host plant, such as
161 geography, we also performed a DAPC without any assumption on the genetic structure. In this
162 case, we first identified the optimal number of clusters in our data set, using the k-mean
163 clustering approach implemented in adegenet. The best clustering solution was determined,
164 using Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC). We used the optimisation procedure implemented
165 in adegenet to select the optimal number of principal components to be retained in the DAPC
166 analyses (Jombart et al., 2010). The distribution of isolates among clusters and their probability
167 of assignment were analysed. An isolate was considered as accurately assigned to a cluster
168 when its membership probability was greater than 0.8. The level of genetic differentiation
169 between the identified clusters was assessed by computing Weir & Cockerham's F_{ST} values
170 using the software Arlequin version 3.5 (Excoffier et al. 2005). To further investigate the
171 genetic structure resulting from the assumption-free DAPC analysis, a multivariate analysis was
172 conducted using the dudi.hillsmith function from the R package "ade4". The analysis was
173 performed by considering for each isolate: the cluster number as a factor and the year of
174 sampling as well as the geographic coordinates as continuous variables to consider both
175 temporal and spatial genetic structure. Finally, a test for isolation-by-distance was conducted

176 using the R package “genepop” (Rousset 2008). The analysis was performed using the a-like
177 statistics as pairwise genetic distance, the logarithm of the geographic distance, a minimal
178 distance of 10 meters between isolates to exclude pairs sampled within the same field and 10000
179 permutations for the Mantel test between genetic and geographic distance matrix. As the
180 sampling size varied among the plots with quite an over representation of south-western France,
181 due to two highly sampled localities, we also performed the clustering, multivariate and
182 isolation-by-distance analyses on 10 subsampled datasets. These 10 datasets included only one
183 isolate from each plot. Isolates from the most represented plots were different among the 10
184 sub-samplings.

185

186 Statistical analyses

187 Statistical analyses were performed with Statistica (version 12, Statsoft). Non-parametric tests
188 were used to determine significant differences between gene diversity and allelic richness, of
189 carrot and melon isolates (Mann and Whitney). As normality test indicates that aggressiveness
190 indices of *S. sclerotiorum* isolates are not normally distributed (Lilliefors normality test, $P <$
191 0.0001), we carried out a non-parametric analysis of variance (Kruskal-Wallis test) to evaluate
192 an isolate effect. In order to test the significance of the association between the level of
193 aggressiveness of isolates and their plant of origin, a non-parametric analysis of variance
194 (Kruskal-Wallis test) was realized. Data are reported in the text as mean values \pm standard error
195 of the mean. Statistical inferences were made at the 5 % level of significance, unless indicated
196 otherwise.

197

198

199 **Results**

200 Aggressiveness on melon

201 All tested isolates of *S. sclerotiorum* were able to cause symptoms on detached leaves of melon,
202 regardless of their host of origin. However, they displayed a wide range of aggressiveness (Fig
203 2), with significant differences among isolates ($P_{\text{Kruskal-Wallis}} < 0.05$). When grouped according
204 to their host of origin, the relative aggressiveness of isolates from melon was not higher than
205 that of others (Fig 3) and no significant differences were found between groups ($P_{\text{Kruskal-Wallis}} =$
206 0.19).

207

208 Overall genetic diversity of *S. sclerotiorum* isolates

209 Among the 16 markers used to characterize the 200 isolates, one (locus 36-4) was
210 monomorphic, showing a single 411 pb allele, while all others were polymorphic with a number
211 of alleles ranging from 3 (for locus 12-2) to 24 (for locus 106-4) (Table 1). A total of 128
212 different multilocus haplotypes (MLH) were identified (Table 2), among which 35 were
213 represented by at least 2 isolates. The most frequent MLH was represented by 8 isolates (all
214 from carrot) but 10 of the MLH in multicopies were represented by isolates collected from
215 different host plants, including melon (Fig. 4). Isolates from melon shared haplotypes with
216 isolates from carrots (4 haplotypes), oilseed rape (3 haplotypes) and witloof chicory (2
217 haplotypes) but not with isolates from bean or lettuce. The geographic distance between the
218 collection sites of two isolates sharing the same haplotype could be up to 700 km, as for example
219 melon isolates collected in the South West and witloof chicory isolates collected in the North
220 of France (MLH 2 and 34 in Fig. 4).

221 The values of gene diversity were in the same range (0.52 to 0.55) for the isolates collected
222 from the 6 different host crops (Table 2). In contrast, haplotypic diversity values showed greater
223 variation. The carrot isolates had the lowest haplotypic diversity (0.57) and oilseed rape isolates
224 had the highest (1.0) as they all had a different haplotype.

225

226 Regional focus on melon and carrot isolates

227 The group of melon isolates and that of carrot isolates from the two adjacent southwestern
228 districts of France were not markedly differentiated on the basis of genetic diversity (Table 3).
229 There was no significant difference of allelic richness and gene diversity between carrot isolates
230 and melon isolates ($P_{\text{Mann\&Whitney}} = 0.67$ and $P = 0.86$ respectively). The two groups of isolates
231 shared three haplotypes. One haplotype (MLH 2 in Fig. 4) was shared by 2 melon isolates
232 collected in spring 2014 and 3 carrot isolates collected in autumn 2014, one (MLH 4) was shared
233 by melon isolates collected in spring 2014 and carrot isolates collected in autumn 2014 and
234 2015 and the third haplotype (MLH 32) was shared by a melon isolate collected in spring 2014
235 and a carrot isolate collected in spring 2015. The group of melon isolates and that of carrot
236 isolates were significantly ($P < 0.05$) but very slightly genetically differentiated, with F_{ST} values
237 respectively of 0.029 and 0.019 for the complete data and for the clone-corrected data.

238

239 Genetic structure

240 When the DAPC was performed on six a priori groups corresponding to host plants, only 22
241 isolates, out of the 141 included in the analysis, were assigned to one of the six clusters with a
242 posterior probability greater than 0.8. Among those 22 isolates, 19 were assigned to the cluster
243 corresponding to the host species from which they have been sampled. To run the DAPC
244 without assumption about the factors shaping the genetic structure of *S. sclerotiorum*, we first
245 determined the optimal number of groups in our data using a k-means clustering analysis with
246 a maximum number of clusters fixed to 10. The BIC associated to each clustering solution
247 showed a rapid decrease and a sharp elbow at $K=3$, which gives very low support to higher
248 clustering solutions. For $K=3$, all isolates were assigned to one of the three clusters with a
249 posterior probability equal to 1 (Fig. 5). These three clusters were significantly differentiated
250 ($P < 0.001$) with F_{ST} values reaching 0.25-0.28. Results of the multivariate analysis suggested

251 that *S. sclerotiorum* isolates were somewhat geographically structured with a rough gradient-
252 like pattern from Northwest, where more isolates from cluster 1 were found, to Southeast where
253 isolates from cluster 3 were more frequent (Online resource 1). Isolates from cluster 2 were
254 more evenly distributed across space. This pattern suggests that the three genetic clusters
255 retrieved by the DAPC analysis reflect an isolation-by-distance process as supported by the
256 result of the Mantel test conducted on genetic and geographic distances (Mantel test p-value =
257 0.0145; slope estimate = 0.030 - CI_{95%}[0.019-0.046]; Online resource 2).

258 When analysing the 10 subsampled datasets, we still found that the optimal clustering solution
259 was K=3 in all cases. Although the decrease in the sampling size decreased the power of the
260 multivariate analysis, results from the 10 subsampled datasets still suggested a trend for a
261 longitudinal gradient with isolates from cluster 1 being mostly located West while cluster 3
262 appeared most represented in the west and cluster 2 more evenly distributed across space
263 (Online resource 1). As for the complete dataset, Mantel tests between genetic and geographic
264 distances were significant for nine of the subsampled datasets (p-values ranged from 0.001 to
265 0.01). Although not significant, the Mantel test for the 10th subsampled dataset also showed a
266 clear trend for an isolation by distance pattern (p-value = 0.097).

267

268 **Discussion**

269 The present study was initiated to test the hypothesis that *S. sclerotiorum* isolates collected from
270 melon may be differentiated from isolates collected from other host crops. To our knowledge,
271 this was the first investigation of the genetic characteristics of this pathogen in France and the
272 first to provide data on isolates collected from melon and from witloof chicory.

273 Overall, our results did not provide any support for the original hypothesis. The isolates from
274 melon did not show higher aggressiveness on melon leaves than those which originated from
275 other host plants, and they did not present distinctive genetic characteristics. The genetic

276 structure of the isolates was clearly not influenced by their host plant of origin, as more than
277 84% of them failed to be assigned to host-based a priori clusters in the discriminant analysis of
278 principal components.

279 In general, the genetic properties of French isolates of *S. sclerotiorum* were comparable to those
280 previously reported in studies where microsatellite markers were used (Table 4). In the present
281 study, only one microsatellite locus (36-4) among the 15 used for isolate genotyping showed a
282 single allele for all isolates and 17.5% of multilocus haplotypes were shared by at least two
283 isolates. Among those shared haplotypes, nearly one third concerned isolates collected on
284 different host crops, including melon. This is consistent with previous reports that MLH of *S.*
285 *sclerotiorum* were shared between isolates from various crops in Iran (Hemmati et al. 2009),
286 the UK (Clarkson et al. 2013; 2017) and the USA (Aldrich-Wolfe et al. 2015). In these studies,
287 the distance between sampling sites could reach several hundred kilometres. This was also the
288 case in the present study, with haplotypes shared by isolates collected up to 700 km apart.

289 The specific comparison of melon and carrot isolates from adjacent districts of southwestern
290 France has cast further doubts on the original hypothesis of the present study. It showed that
291 the two crops, often cultivated in rotation or in close vicinity in that region, could be infected
292 by isolates with identical MLH at periods separated by several months, suggesting the exchange
293 of inoculum in time and space at a scale of 100 km. When considering isolates at a national
294 scale, however, both the discriminant analysis of principal components and the Mantel test
295 revealed some level of geographic structure, likely to result from an isolation-by-distance
296 process.

297 All these findings have implications for the management of white mould. Rotation strategies
298 for the management of white mould could be complicated by possible long distance transport
299 of inoculum. Although specific information is lacking for airborne inoculum *S. sclerotiorum*,
300 viable fungal spores have been recovered at large distances from their sources (Brown and

301 Hovmøller 2002). Our results suggest that the elaboration of rotation schemes should be
302 adapted according to the geographic scale of inoculum transport. As ascospores of *S.*
303 *sclerotiorum* are anemophilic and may be largely responsible for inoculum dissemination
304 (Abawi and Grogan 1979), further work should focus on the trajectories of air masses between
305 production areas and their possible role in inoculum transport. Our results may also be relevant
306 for chemical control of white mould. Fungicide resistance of *S. sclerotiorum* is increasingly
307 reported in oilseed rape production in various countries, including France (Derbyshire and
308 Denton-Giles 2016; Kaczmar et al. 2000; Lehner et al. 2015; Walker et al. 2015b; Zhu et al.
309 2016) and its management is likely to be complicated by inoculum dissemination both in oilseed
310 rape and in a variety of other host crops. All the more so as the active substances are often
311 registered for white mould control in several crops (including melon) in addition to oilseed rape.
312 Clearly, melon could not be used as a low-risk alternative crop in rotation strategies to manage
313 white mould and the recent increase in disease incidence in French melon production may not
314 be explained by the emergence of a distinct “melon” isolate. Other hypotheses need to be
315 considered, including a possible role of the substantial increase in the frequency of fungicide-
316 resistant isolates documented in France in recent years (Walker et al. 2015b), which results in
317 a reduction of control efficacy in the field. An increase in the acreage of susceptible crops (eg
318 oilseed rape) in the South- and Center-West of France, together with decreased rotation time
319 between susceptible crops, may also have played a role. Melon crops themselves may be
320 substantial contributors of inoculum, as moulded fruits are not picked at harvest. If left to rot
321 in the field, these fruits are likely to produce large numbers of sclerotia which could then
322 contribute to the soil inoculum load for the following crops over several years and possibly for
323 crops in neighbouring plots. In this context, it could be particularly valuable to implement
324 measures that reduce the amount of inoculum released on the soil by diseased plants, through

325 the removal of rotten melons after harvest or through the application of biocontrol agents
326 capable of destroying freshly produced sclerotia.

327

328 **Compliance with ethical standards**

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331 pour la Production Intégrée des Cultures légumières" (GIS PIClég).

332 The authors declare that this research was performed according to the ethical standards.

333 The authors declare to have no conflict of interest.

334 The research did not involve human participants and/or animals.

335 All the authors agreed to submit this manuscript in this current version.

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514 **Table 1** Polymorphism of the 16 microsatellites markers designed by Sirjusingh and Kohn
 515 (2001) used in the present study to characterize the genetic diversity of the 200 *Sclerotinia*
 516 *sclerotiorum* isolates

Microsatellite locus	Number of alleles	Size range (bp)
5-2	4	310-318
5-3	12	293-335
7-2	4	159-171
7-3	4	206-214
9-2	10	354-384
12-2	3	212-218
13-2	13	274-354
17-3	7	339-360
106-4	24	402-598
110-4	6	366-386
114-4	19	335-411
8-3	8	230-264
36-4	1	411
42-4	4	406-420
55-4	9	146-222
92-4	4	372-382

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518 **Table 2** Genetic diversity and linkage disequilibrium of *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* isolates
 519 collected from six different crops in France

	Sample size	Hnb ^a	Allelic richness ^b	No. of distinct MLH ^c	R ^d
Total	200	0.58 (0.24)	8.25	128	0.64
carrot	88	0.54 (0.23)	4.2	51	0.57
melon	55	0.55 (0.26)	4.6	40	0.72
bean	20	0.52 (0.20)	3.8	18	0.89
witloof chicory	15	0.53 (0.24)	3.2	11	0.71
lettuce	12	0.54 (0.26)	4.2	11	0.91
oilseed rape	10	0.55 (0.27)	3.7	10	1

520 a : unbiased gene diversity (standard deviation between brackets)

521 b : unbiased allelic richness corrected for a minimum sample size of 10 isolates.

522 c: multilocus haplotype

523 d: haplotypic diversity

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Table 3 Allelic richness (AR; based on a minimum sample size of 40) and unbiased gene diversity (Hnb) per microsatellite locus in 84 carrot and 40 melon isolates of *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* collected from two adjacent districts in southwestern France

Host crop	7-2 ^a		12-2		13-2		106-4		114-4	
	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb
carrot	2.8	0.50	3.0	0.59	6.6	0.70	16.8	0.85	10.5	0.85
melon	3.0	0.60	3.0	0.55	11	0.81	20.0	0.94	10.0	0.84

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Host crop	7-3		8-3		17-3		42-4		9-2	
	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb
carrot	3.0	0.59	5.8	0.55	4.0	0.59	2.0	0.23	5.8	0.34
melon	4.0	0.57	6.0	0.76	6.0	0.45	2.0	0.03	7.0	0.43

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Host crop	55-4		5-3		92-4		5-2		110-4	
	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb	AR	Hnb
carrot	8.7	0.82	8.6	0.67	3.0	0.63	2.8	0.24	4.9	0.60
melon	5.0	0.76	10.0	0.64	3.0	0.59	2.0	0.25	5.0	0.67

540 ^a Microsatellite locus 36-4 is not shown in this table as it was monomorphic in this study

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Table 4 Characteristics of the loci, sample size and origin of isolates in published studies on *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* using microsatellites markers

Nb polymorphic loci	Nb monomorphic loci	Nb isolates	Host plants	Country	R^a	Reference
5	0	156	basil, bean, cabbage, lettuce, potato	USA	0.07	Winton et al. 2006
5	0	65	bean, oilseed rape, cucumber, lettuce, tomato, wild sinapsis	Iran	0.67	Barari et al. 2010
6	1	276	broad bean, canola, tobacco	Iran	0.28	Hemmati et al. 2009
6	0	60	eggplant	Turkey	nd	Tok et al. 2016
7	1	105	canola	Australia	0.53	Sexton et al. 2006
7	1	36	oilseed rape	Turkey	0.63	Met-Turk et al. 2007
8	0	30/29	canola	China/USA	0.96-0.64	Attanayake et al. 2013
8	0	384	oilseed rape, carrot, celery, lettuce, meadow buttercup, pea	UK	0.59	Clarkson et al. 2013
8	0	54	Chinese cabbage, clover, Jerusalem artichoke, lettuce, potato, pumpkin	Norway	0.92	Warmington 2014
8	0	200	beans (snap, dry, baby lima), soybean	USA	0.13	Dunn et al. (2017)
8	0	800	carrot, camelina, oilseed rape, celery, Chinese cabbage, lettuce, lupin, meadow buttercup, pea,	UK, Norway, Australia	from 0.57 to 0.94	Clarkson et al. (2017)

			potato, pumpkin, turnip rape			
10	0	79	dry bean	Brazil	0.64- 0.71	Gomes et al. (2011)
10	0	118	common bean	Brazil	0.58	Lehner et al. 2015
11	14	167	potato	USA	0.86	Atallah et al. 2004
12	1	145	canola, carrot, dry bean, houndstongue, potato, tobacco, safflower, soybean, sunflower	USA	0.53	Aldrich-Wolfe et al. 2015
15	1	200	bean, oilseed rape, carrot, lettuce, melon, witloof chicory	France	0.64	Present study

546 ^a : haplotypic diversity as indicated in the cited publications or calculated (according to Arnaud-
547 Haond *et al.* 2007) in the present study from published data.

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Fig.1 Geographic localization of the 200 isolates collected on 6 different crops in France (numbers of isolates are indicated in the circles). The isolates taken into account in the regional focus are indicated by circles surrounded by black line

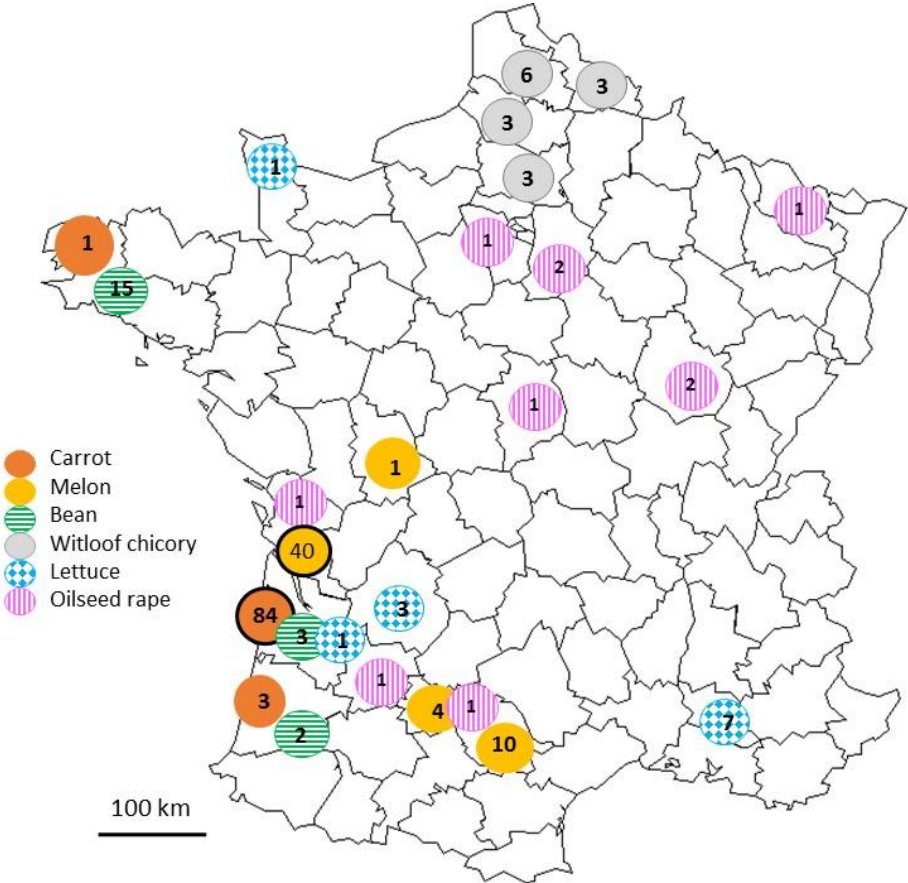


Fig. 2 Distribution of the aggressiveness (in % relative to the reference isolate SS44) of the 96 isolates of *S. sclerotiorum* on melon leaves. Each histogram represents the mean of ten values. Verticals bars indicate the standard error of the mean.

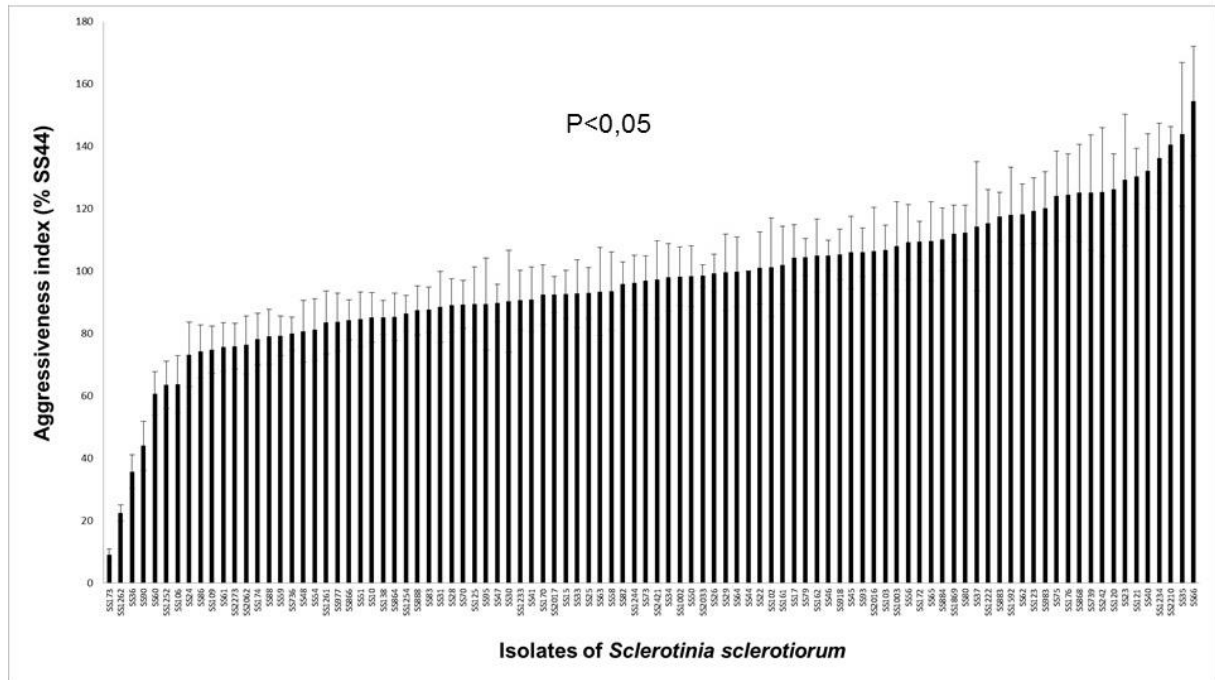


Fig. 3 Box plot representing the extent of aggressiveness (% relative to the reference isolate SS44) on melon of the isolates of *S. sclerotiorum* collected on 5 crops. The numbers above each boxplot corresponds to the number of isolates collected on each of the 5 plant species. For each boxplot, median (\square), 25-75% values (\square) and maximum and minimum values (I) are represented

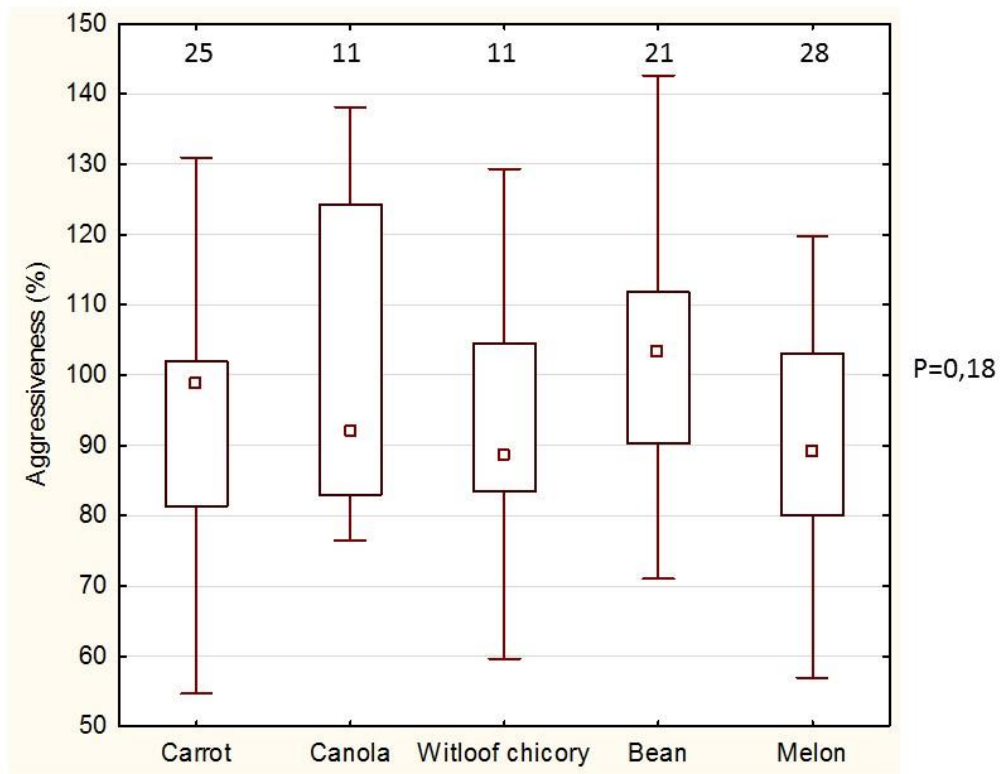


Fig. 4 Multilocus haplotypes represented by more than one isolate

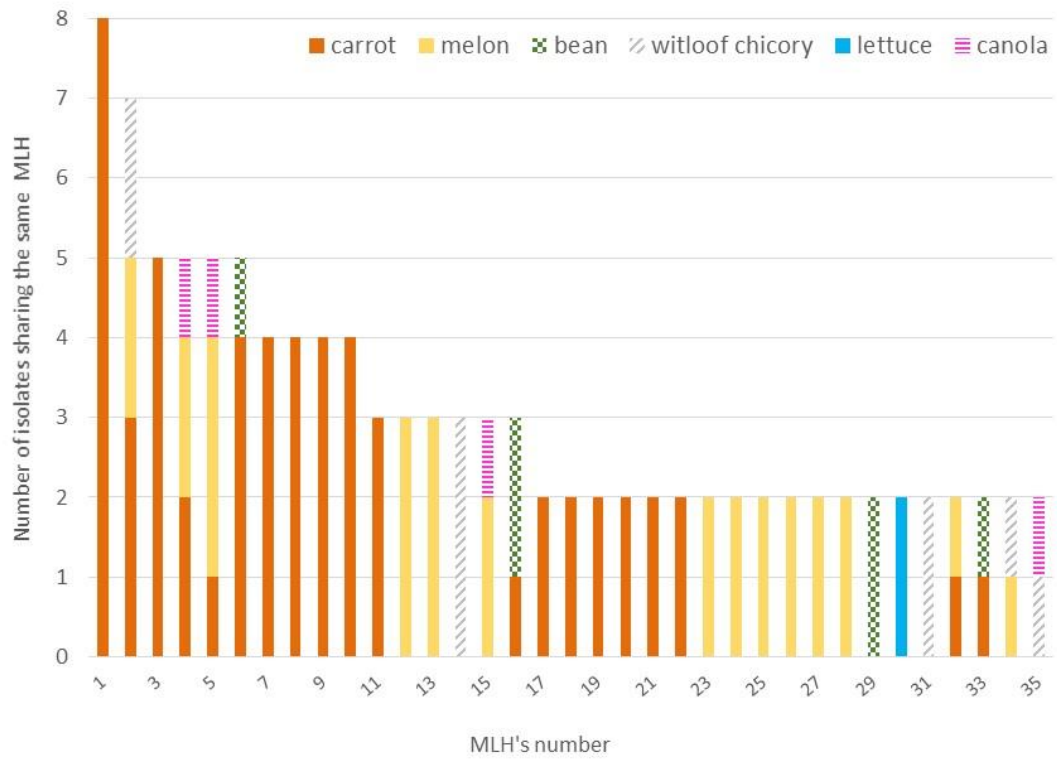
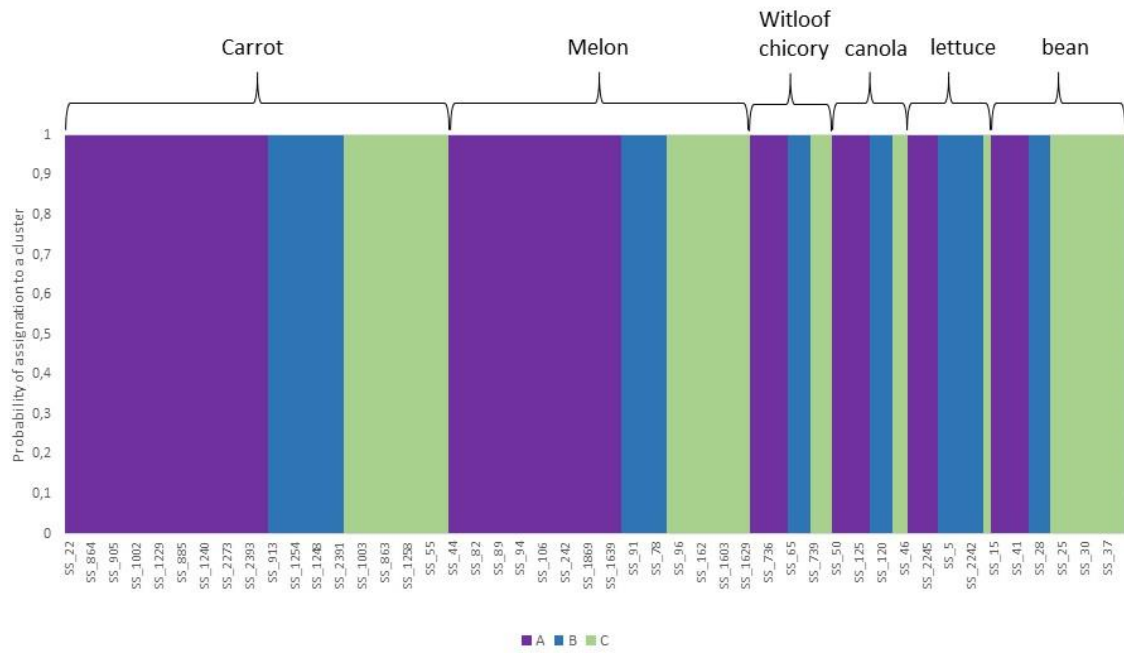


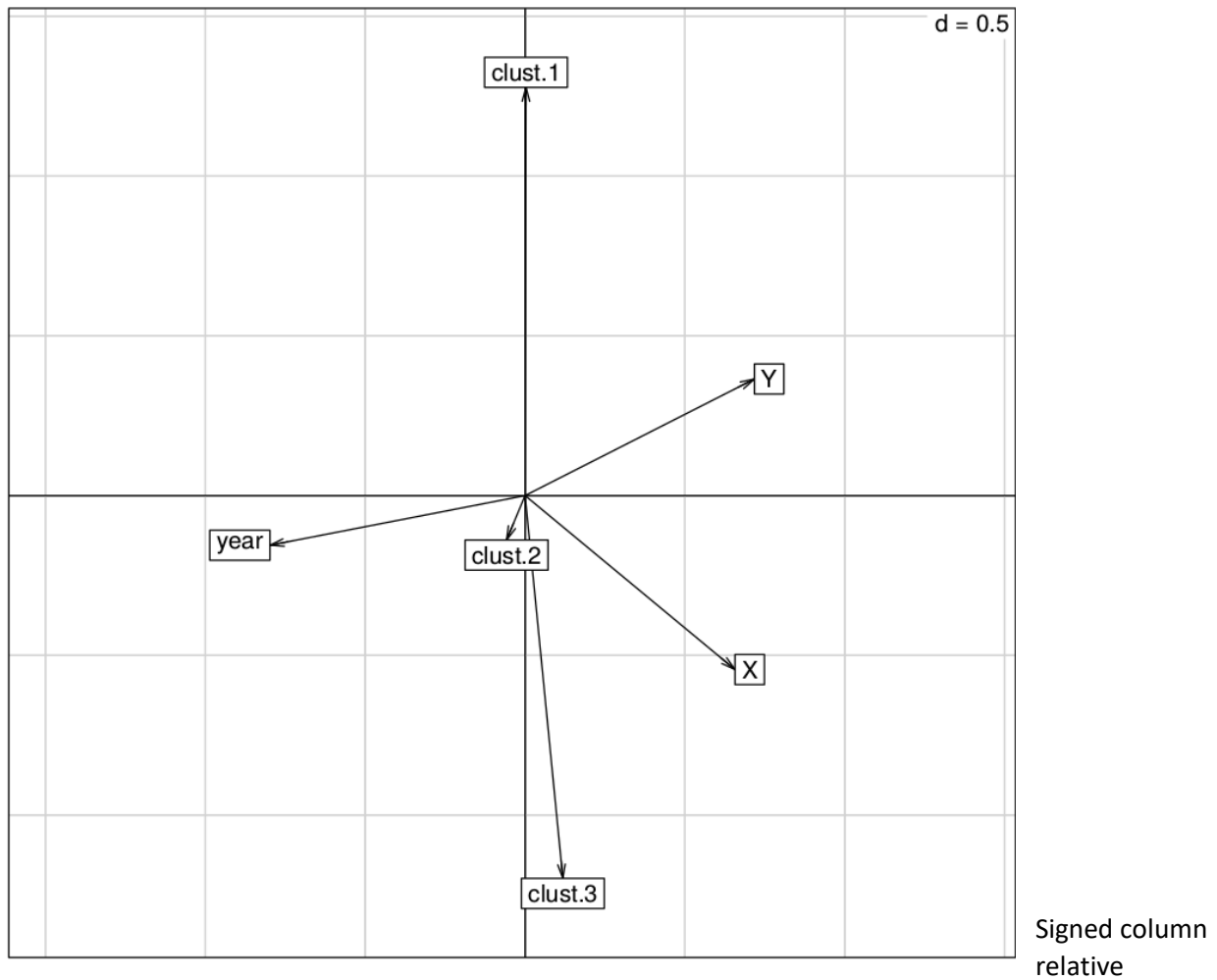
Fig. 5 Assignment of *S. sclerotiorum* isolates collected from 6 host plants to 3 genetic clusters (clonally corrected data set).



ESM. 1 Results of the multivariate analysis performed by considering for each isolate the cluster number as a factor and the year of sampling as well as the geographic coordinates as continuous variables.

Result of the Hill and Smith multivariate analysis

Projection of the variables on the first and second axis



contributions of variable on the first and second axis

	Axis1	Axis2
clust.1	3.082e-04	61.401
clust.2	-3.248e-01	-1.878
clust.3	4.278e-01	-43.928
year	-6.370e+01	-2.416
X	4.312e+01	-29.645
Y	5.146e+01	13.309

ESM. 2 Results of the test for isolation-by-distance

