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Romain Larbat, Jacques Le Bot, Frederic Bourgaud, Christophe Robin,  
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# ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## Organ-specific responses of tomato growth and phenolic metabolism to nitrate limitation

R. Lariat<sup>1\*</sup>, J. Le Bot<sup>2</sup>, F. Bourgaud<sup>1</sup>, C. Robin<sup>1</sup> and S. Adamowicz<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UMR Nancy-Université(INPL)-INRA Agronomie et Environnement Nancy-Colmar 1121, ENSAIA, 2 Av. Forêt de Haye, F-54500 Vandoeuvre, France

<sup>2</sup> INRA, UR 1115 Plantes et Systèmes de Culture Horticoles, F84914 Avignon, France

**Running title:** Organ specific responses to nitrate limitation

\* For correspondence. Phone: +33383595863

Fax: +33383595799

E-mail: [romain.lariat@ensaia.inpl-nancy.fr](mailto:romain.lariat@ensaia.inpl-nancy.fr)

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## ABSTRACT

1 Phenolic compounds are secondary metabolites involved in plant's innate chemical defenses  
2 against pests and diseases. Their concentration is variable between plant tissues and depends  
3 also on genetic and environmental factors, such as the availability of nutrient resources. This  
4 study examines the specific effects of low (LN) compared to high (HN) nitrogen supply on  
5 organ (root, stem and leaf) growth and accumulation of major phenolics (chlorogenic acid –  
6 CGA; rutin; kaempferol rutinoside – KR) in 9 hydroponically-grown tomato cultivars. LN  
7 limited shoot growth but did not affect that of roots. LN increased the concentration of each  
8 individual phenolic in all organs. The strength of the response was organ ~~dependent~~dependent,  
9 roots being more responsive than leaves and stems, respectively. Significant differences were  
10 observed between genotypes. Nitrogen limitation did not change the phenolic content in  
11 shoots whereas it stimulated accumulation in roots. The results show that this trade-off  
12 between growth and defense in LN environment can be discussed within the framework of the  
13 growth differentiation balance hypothesis (*i.e.* GDBH), but they point out the need to integrate  
14 all plant organs in future modeling approaches regarding the impact of nitrogen limitation on  
15 primary and secondary metabolisms.

## INTRODUCTION

16 Plant secondary metabolites represent a large range of molecules mainly involved in (plant ×  
17 environment) interactions. Among them, phenolic compounds constitute a major class widely  
18 distributed in the plant kingdom. Even though all their biological functions are not yet fully  
19 understood, phenolics are reported to participate in several aspects of (plant × environment)  
20 interactions notably in the innate chemical defense strategy against pathogens (Dixon and  
21 Paiva, 1995; Treutter, 2006). Defense-wise, these quantitative metabolites appear to be dosage  
22 dependent *i.e.* their activity relies on their local concentration. From these findings, it may be  
23 inferred that all practices optimizing their accumulation in plants, may also provide new  
24 agronomic leverage for integrated pest management strategies seeking lower pesticide use in  
25 crop protection.

26 Phenolic concentrations in plant tissues are affected by both genotypes (Hanson et al., 2004)  
27 and environmental factors (*i.e.*, light, nutrient availability, temperature, see: Larsson et al.,  
28 1986; Wilkens et al., 1996 a,b; Koricheva et al., 1998; Løvdaal et al., 2010). Changing growth  
29 conditions, in particular nitrogen (N) availability, have been shown to affect phenolic  
30 concentrations in plant tissues. Indeed, N limitation enhances leaf phenolics (Lea et al., 2007;  
31 Bénard et al., 2009; Le Bot et al., 2009) and promotes resistance to specific pathogens  
32 (Hoffland et al., 2000; Leser and Treutter, 2005; Matros et al., 2006). At a broader scale,  
33 increased N-nutrient use efficiency is a key-point in the concept of ecological intensification  
34 (for a review, see Doré et al., 2011). Limiting the use of N may have environmental benefits  
35 through decreasing greenhouse gas emission, reducing agriculture dependency on fossil fuels,  
36 preventing health and environmental disorders without decreasing productivity.~~Limiting the~~  
37 ~~use of N participates in sound environmental issues, as well as decreasing greenhouse gas~~  
38 ~~emission, reducing agriculture dependency on fossil fuels, preventing health and~~

39 ~~environmental disorders without decreasing productivity.~~ In this framework, the enhancement  
40 of plant phenolic concentration *via* reduced N fertilization could benefit the agrosystems  
41 conducted under integrated pests management (IPM) strategies to lower pesticide use in crop  
42 protection. However its feasibility remains to be assessed, because N limitation rapidly alters  
43 crop yield and affects plant primary metabolism (Urbanczyk-Wochniak and Fernie, 2005). A  
44 more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between growth (primary  
45 metabolism) and defense (secondary metabolism), accounting for the impacts of environment  
46 and genetics, is required for the design of sustainable production systems less harmful to the  
47 environment and saving on N inputs (Jarvis, 1992; Brown, 2002).

48 Regarding the impact of environmental conditions, in particular nutrient availability, several  
49 plant defense hypotheses have been proposed to explain the changes of secondary compound  
50 concentrations in plant tissues. The most famous one is the growth-differentiation balance  
51 hypothesis (GDBH, Loomis 1932; Herms and Mattson, 1992). GDBH is based on a trade-off  
52 for allocation of plant resources to primary metabolism (accounting for plant growth) and  
53 secondary metabolite production (beneficial to defense). According to GDBH, any resource  
54 that restricts plant growth more than carbon fixation (photosynthesis) favors consequently the  
55 accumulation of secondary metabolites. Considering N availability, most experimental results  
56 on phenolic compound concentrations corroborate the GDBH, higher concentrations being  
57 measured under low N supplies (Stout et al., 1998; Stewart et al., 2001; Glynn et al., 2007).  
58 However, it must be noted that almost all studies focused on leaves, data on roots and stems  
59 being scarce. Nitrogen availability has different effects on organ development. For example,  
60 low N availability reduces much more the growth of shoots than that of roots (Adamowicz  
61 and Le Bot., 2008). Thus, from the GDBH viewpoint, one could expect plants to express  
62 specific phenolic accumulation profiles in each organ rather than a generic response to N,  
63 accounting for the observed spatial variability of metabolites location in tissues.

64 The genetic variability of tomato fruit phenolic composition has been recently reviewed  
65 (Slimestad and Verheul, 2009) but the study ignored the vegetative organs. To our knowledge,  
66 there is no study reporting on the impact of (genotype  $\times$  nitrogen) interactions on tomato  
67 growth and phenolic accumulation at the organ level, although such information is important  
68 to rank cultivar (cv) performances under low N nutrition. Furthermore, this knowledge is  
69 essential to develop integrated crop management (ICM) strategies for growing tomato, since  
70 the selection of suitable genotypes is one of the simplest methods for reducing the  
71 management procedures and the negative environmental impacts during the growing season.

72 Amongst the difficulties to compare cultivars, plant physiologists are particularly concerned  
73 with the capacity of growing plants at high densities, on reduced space and over short time  
74 periods. Patio tomatoes, in particular cultivar Micro-Tom, have the small size required for a  
75 suitable biological model and they are increasingly used in molecular biology and physiology  
76 studies on tomato plants (Marti et al., 2006). Micro-Tom possesses distinctive mutations (*i.e.*  
77 dwarf, brassinosteroid-related and self-pruning) rendering debatable its status of “model  
78 system” but Campos et al. (2010) recently argued that they do not interfere with normal  
79 behaviours. They took advantage of this cultivar to study plant-pest interactions (Campos et  
80 al., 2009). Nevertheless, due to its extremely compact size, studies dealing with (growth  $\times$   
81 nitrogen) interactions are likely to exhibit low responses. Therefore, there is an important need  
82 for a comparative study with other dwarf cultivars to explore the genetic variability of these  
83 “model systems” in their responses to nitrogen nutrition.

84 The main objective of our work was to test the hypothesis that N availability impacts  
85 differently the relationship between growth and phenolic compounds accumulation at organ  
86 level. The second objective was to characterize the broadness of this response using 9 “patio  
87 tomato” cultivars, 6 being determinate (growth stopping after fruiting) with a large range of  
88 plant size and 3 indeterminate (continuous growth), in order to rank the cultivars and choose

89 an appropriate “model system” for future studies. The tomato plants were raised from seeds  
90 and grown hydroponically in a greenhouse on full nutrient solutions containing two tightly  
91 controlled N concentrations known to limit (LN) or not (HN) the growth of commercial  
92 tomato plants (Adamowicz and Le Bot, 2008). Growth and phenolics were measured in the  
93 three main vegetative organs (leaves, stems and roots) of 28 day-old plants. The analyses  
94 focused on three major phenolics reported or suspected to contribute to tomato plant defense:  
95 a caffeic acid derivative, chlorogenic acid (CGA, Ikonen et al., 2001) and two flavonoids,  
96 rutin (Baidez et al., 2007) and kaempferol rutinoside (KR, Mirnezhad et al., 2009).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 97 *Plant material and growth conditions*

98 Six growth-determinate (det, coded A-F, Table 1) and 3 growth-indeterminate (ind, coded G-  
99 I, Table 1) patio tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum* L.) cultivars (cvs) were sown in a NFT  
100 (nutrient film technique) system set in a growth room with the following constant day-night  
101 conditions: air temperature (T) 20°C, humidity (H) 80%, photoperiod 12h. The six  
102 determinate patio tomato were chosen in order to cover a large range of plant sizes (Tab. 1).

103 Plantlets were transferred to a glasshouse located in Avignon (France, 43°56'58"N;  
104 4°48'32"E) on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2009, 10 days after sowing (DAS), with the following conditions:  
105 heating when  $T \leq 18^{\circ}\text{C}$ , ridge opening when  $T \geq 25^{\circ}\text{C}$ , mist spraying when  $H \leq 55\%$ . The  
106 glasshouse was whitewashed to ease T control. Plantlets were selected for homogeneity  
107 according to the length of their first true leaf. Roots were then rinsed with a nitrate-free  
108 solution prior to plant transfer to a NFT system. Plants were arranged in fully randomized  
109 blocks with two N regimes, limiting N nutrition (LN) and high N nutrition (HN). Because we  
110 expected large differences in plant development and N demand, determinate and

111 indeterminate cultivars were planted in separate blocks (8 and 4 blocks, respectively) with  
112 larger plant spacing for indeterminate cultivars.

113 Two plants per cultivar and nutrition treatment were randomly allocated to blocks in order to  
114 perform a harvest before fruiting and another at fruit maturity. Only the 1<sup>st</sup> harvest was  
115 analyzed and reported in this paper, since the development of some cultivars provoked mutual  
116 shading with artifactual growth effects rendering the 2<sup>nd</sup> harvest not exploitable.

### 117 *Hydroponic setup*

118 Separate solution tanks were used for determinate and indeterminate cultivars. They were  
119 located in an underground laboratory where automatic devices maintained 1) solution  
120 temperatures at 25°C; 2) solution volumes (optical level sensors LLE 102000; Honeywell,  
121 Morristown, USA) at 0.5 m<sup>3</sup> (LN det), 0.3 m<sup>3</sup> (LN ind and HN det) and 0.08 m<sup>3</sup> (HN ind) by  
122 additions of deionized water; 3) pH at 5.0 by automatic additions of H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>; 4) [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>] by  
123 automatic injection (precision syringe drive PSD2, Hamilton company, Reno Nevada) of a  
124 stock solution containing (mol m<sup>-3</sup>) 1000 NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>, 408 K<sup>+</sup>, 204 Ca<sup>2+</sup> and 92 Mg<sup>2+</sup>, thus ensuring  
125 major cation repletion. Nitrate concentration was measured by automatic on-line UV  
126 absorption spectrometry (double-beam UVmc2; SAFAS, Monaco) derived from the method  
127 of Vercambre and Adamowicz (1996). Volume, pH and [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>] analyses and corrections were  
128 performed hourly ~~and [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>]~~ using the Totomatix system described previously (Adamowicz  
129 et al., 2011). [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>] never drifted more than 5% from set values. Periodic phosphate analyses  
130 were performed manually (vanadomolybdate colorimetry) and the set concentration was  
131 restored by addition of potassium phosphate buffer (pH 5.0).

132 The NO<sub>3</sub> uptake rate ( $U$  in mmol N h<sup>-1</sup> per plant) was calculated hourly between times  $t$  and  
133  $t+1$  by the automatic laboratory using the following variables:  $C$ , measured [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>] (mol m<sup>-3</sup>);  
134  $I$ , injected stock NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> (mol per tank);  $V$ , volume (m<sup>3</sup> per tank);  $n$ , number of plants.



135 
$$U = \frac{V_t \cdot C_t - V_{t+1} \cdot C_{t+1} + I_t}{n} \cdot 10^3$$

136  $V$  was calculated as the difference between the set value and the water volume added to  
137 restore the tank level.

### 138 *Nutrition and treatments*

139 The nutrient solutions were made up with deionized water and pure salts. Major ions were at  
140 the following concentrations (mol m<sup>-3</sup>): K<sup>+</sup>, 3; Ca<sup>2+</sup>, 3.5; Mg<sup>2+</sup>, 1.5; H<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub><sup>-</sup>, 1; we used sulfate  
141 to balance nitrate charges so that [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>] + 2 × [SO<sub>4</sub><sup>2-</sup>] = 12 mol m<sup>-3</sup>. Trace elements were given  
142 as Kanieltra (formula 6 Fe, Hydro Azote, France) 0.1 L m<sup>-3</sup> and EDTA-Fe 43 mmol m<sup>-3</sup>.  
143 [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>] were 0.3 mol m<sup>-3</sup> (germination) and 3.0 mol m<sup>-3</sup> (HN) which is non-limiting for tomato  
144 growth in NFT (Adamowicz and Le Bot, 2008). LN [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>] was adjusted periodically in order  
145 to maintain  $U_{LN}/U_{HN} \approx 1/3$ . Thus, initially (10 DAS), LN [NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup>] was set to 0.005 mol m<sup>-3</sup> and  
146 from 16 to 28 DAS it ranged from 0.007 to 0.030 (det) and from 0.005 to 0.040 (ind). At  
147 harvest, the cumulative NO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> uptake of LN plants was 33% (det) and 36% (ind) that of HN  
148 plants. During the whole period,  $U_{LN}$  was never null (Fig. 1) and we did not observe any  
149 symptom of N deficiency.

### 150 *Harvests and sample processing*

151 Plants were harvested 28 DAS on a per block basis from 8.30 AM to 5.00 PM and stored in a  
152 dark cold room (15 °C) during sample processing. Storage at 15 °C never exceeded 1h for a  
153 given plant.

154 Morphological traits measurements included the plastochron index (Coleman & Greyson,  
155 1976) base 2 cm, number of flowers per plant, stem height, and epicotyl diameter.

156 Roots, stems and leaves were separated and leaf area was measured (area meter LI-3000A, Li-  
157 Cor, Lincoln, NE, USA). Roots were rinsed in deionized water and spin-dried (2 min at 2800  
158 g). Plant parts were weighed, frozen in liquid N<sub>2</sub> and stored at -80°C until freeze-drying

159 (Lyovac GT-2, Steris, Germany). Dry samples were weighed (model AE 100S, Mettler  
160 Toledo, Columbus, OH, USA), ground to a fine powder (ball mill MM200, Retsch, Haan,  
161 Germany) and stored under dry air in a desiccator at room temperature.

## 162 *Plant analyses*

163 Extraction of phenolics was adapted from the procedure described in Le Bot et al. (2009). All  
164 steps were carried out at 4 °C either in a cold chamber or on ice. The dry powder (50 mg) was  
165 extracted once with 2 ml of 70% aqueous ethanol. Taxifolin solution (50 µl of a stock at 2 mg  
166 ml<sup>-1</sup> methanol) was added as an internal standard. The mixture was blended for 1 min and  
167 homogenized for 30 min. After centrifugation (8 min, 12000 g), the supernatant was collected  
168 and evaporated to dryness under vacuum. The residue was dissolved in 1 ml of 70% methanol  
169 and centrifuged (10 min, 12000 g). The supernatant was collected and analyzed (50 µl) for  
170 phenolic content and composition by HPLC according to Bénard et al. (2009). Samples were  
171 analyzed on a HPLC system (LC20AD, Shimadzu Corporation, Japan) equipped with a diode  
172 array detector (200-400 nm) and a Lichrospher RP-18 end-capped column (4 × 250 mm, 5  
173 µm, Merck, Darmstadt, Germany) fitted with a Lichrospher RP-18 guard column (5 µm,  
174 Merck). The mobile phase consisted of a binary solvent system of (A) water adjusted to pH  
175 2.6 with orthophosphoric acid and (B) methanol. The gradient (from 3% to 60% of B in 180  
176 min) was eluted at a flow rate of 0.5 ml min<sup>-1</sup> at room temperature. The good separation of the  
177 compounds allowed quantifying rutin, chlorogenic acid, and kaempferol-rutinoside from peak  
178 area calibrated against standards (rutin and CGA from Sigma, Saint Quentin-Fallavier,  
179 France; KR and taxifolin from Extrasynthèse, Lyon, France).

180 C and N concentration in plant tissues were determined according to the Dumas method with  
181 an elemental auto-analyser (Flash EA 1112 series, Thermo Fisher Scientific, Courtaboeuf,  
182 France).

### 183 *Statistical analysis*

184 Determinate and indeterminate cultivars were separately compared by three-way analysis of  
185 variance (cultivar and nutrition as fixed factors, blocks as random). The respective degrees of  
186 freedom for determinate and indeterminate cultivars were: cultivar = 5 and 2, nutrition = 1 and  
187 1, cultivar x nutrition = 5 and 2, blocks = 7 and 3, residuals = 77 and 15. Box-plots, Q-Q plots  
188 and correlation between variance and mean assessed the data distribution and  
189 homoscedasticity. The Log-transformation was necessary for homoscedasticity of some  
190 variables (leaf area, dry biomasses, stem height and number of flowers, compound contents).  
191 When the cultivar x nutrition interaction was not significant, the Tukey's test was used for  
192 mean comparisons. Otherwise, the Student's test assessed the nutrition effect on each cultivar.  
193 Computations were performed using the procedure lm in R software (R Project for Statistical  
194 Computing, <http://www.R-project.org>) and statistical significance was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

## RESULTS

### 195 *Nitrogen effects on organ N content and growth*

196 Organ N concentration significantly decreased under LN ( $p < 10^{-9}$ ) in all tomato cultivars and  
197 organs, on average from 5.05 to 3.06 % DW in leaves, from 3.62 to 1.65 % DW in stems and  
198 from 4.76 to 2.73 % DW in roots (not shown).

199 Regarding growth, LN significantly decreased total DW of all determinate ( $p < 10^{-9}$ ) and  
200 indeterminate ( $p < 10^{-6}$ ) cultivars (Fig. 2 A, Tab. S1). The reduction was around 30-50%,  
201 except for the cultivar C that was less affected (17%). Among the organs, leaves and stems  
202 (Fig. 2 B-C, Tab. S1) showed this same response, but LN did not affect significantly root DW  
203 (Fig. 2 D, Tab. S1) ( $p > 0.08$ ). Furthermore, LN decreased the plastochron index ( $p < 10^{-3}$ ),  
204 total leaf area ( $p < 10^{-15}$  det,  $p < 10^{-8}$  ind), stem height ( $p < 10^{-3}$  det,  $p < 10^{-4}$  ind), epicotyl  
205 diameter ( $p < 10^{-15}$  det,  $p < 10^{-8}$  ind), leaf area ratio ( $p < 10^{-15}$  det,  $p < 10^{-3}$  ind) and specific

206 leaf area ( $p < 10^{-8}$  det,  $p < 0.1$  ind), whereas the number of flower was not affected ( $p > 0.1$ )  
207 (Tab. S2). The root : shoot ratio was higher under LN than HN ( $p < 10^{-15}$  det,  $p < 10^{-11}$  ind).

208 In each N regime, there were large and significant ( $p < 10^{-7}$  det and  $p < 10^{-4}$  ind) DW  
209 differences between cultivars. For all organs, determinate cvs A and B yielded the smallest  
210 DW and indeterminate cvs H and I the highest (Fig. 2).

### 211 *Comparison of organ phenolics composition*

212 All cultivars exhibited similar phenolic profiles for a given organ. However the phenolic  
213 composition was organ dependent (Fig. 3). Based on the phenolic profiles recorded at 330 nm,  
214 leaves (Fig. 3 A) showed a more complex composition and phenolics were more concentrated  
215 than in stems and roots (Fig. 3 B-C respectively). Whereas CGA was detected in all organs,  
216 rutin was absent from roots and KR occurred only in leaves.

217 In leaves, concentrations of CGA (Fig 4 A, Tab. S3) and rutin (Fig. 4 B, Tab. S3) were in  
218 most cases higher than in stems (Fig. 4 C-D, Tab. S3). These differed significantly between  
219 genotypes ( $p < 10^{-4}$ ) except for leaf rutin concentration in indeterminate cvs (G-I,  $p > 0.08$ ).  
220 CGA was the unique major phenolic in roots (Fig. 3; 4 E, Tab. S3) where its concentration  
221 differed only between determinate cvs ( $p < 10^{-10}$ ). Leaf concentration of KR (Fig. 4 F, Tab.  
222 S3) differed significantly between cvs ( $p < 10^{-4}$ ).

223 Ranking cultivars for phenolics depended on organs and on the particular molecule  
224 considered, but indeterminate cvs (G-I) were generally poor in phenolics (Fig. 4 A-F, Tab.  
225 S3). Cultivar A behaved peculiarly since CGA concentration was higher in stems than in  
226 leaves while stem rutin concentration almost equalled that in leaves.

### 227 *Nitrogen effect on phenolic acid concentrations and contents in tomato*

228 LN increased significantly the concentration of all major phenolics ( $p$  from  $10^{-15}$  to 0.02) but  
229 the amplitude of the changes varied according to organs and molecules (Fig. 4, Tab. S3).

230 Compared to HN, LN increased leaf CGA concentration by a factor of 1.5 (cvs A, H) to 2.3  
231 (cv E). This gain was less prominent in stems, *i.e.* from null (cv D) up to twofold (cv E).  
232 Among organs, roots were the most sensitive to N nutrition, as CGA concentration markedly  
233 rose from a factor of 2.3 (cv G) to 5.2 (cv C). As a consequence, the roots, which were the  
234 poorest organs in phenolic concentration under HN, became the richest under LN. There was  
235 a significant (cv × N) interaction for stem and root CGA concentration (both  $p < 10^{-2}$ ) only for  
236 determinate cultivars. Leaf rutin concentration increased in LN by a factor of 1.6 (cv A) to 3.2  
237 (cv E) and in the stems, by a factor of 1.3 (cv A) to 2.8 (cv G). KR was detected in leaves  
238 only, where its concentration rose in LN by a factor of 2.1 (cvs A, D) to 3.3 (cv E). There was  
239 a significant (cv × N) interaction for leaf rutin and KR concentrations ( $p < 10^{-2}$  and  $p < 10^{-4}$   
240 respectively) for determinate cultivars only.

241 From figure 4, it appears that cultivar E under LN exhibited the highest concentrations of  
242 CGA, rutin and KR in leaves, whereas in stems, cultivar A was the most concentrated in CGA  
243 and rutin. For all cultivars but A and E, roots of LN plants had the highest CGA concentration  
244 among organs.

245 The effect of nitrogen availability was also determined on phenolic content (mg per plant, Fig.  
246 5). Leaf CGA content (Fig. 5 A, Tab. S4) was insensitive to N nutrition in all cultivars ( $p >$   
247  $0.7$  det;  $p > 0.5$  ind). The same held true for stems (Fig. 5 B, Tab. S4), except for cv D ( $p < 10^{-5}$ )  
248 and F ( $p < 10^{-2}$ ). In contrast, LN significantly enhanced root CGA in all cultivars (Fig. 5 C,  
249 Tab. S1) by a factor of 2.3 (cv G) to 5.7 (cv C). N nutrition affected differently the whole  
250 plant CGA content of cultivars: LN increased CGA significantly in cvs C, E and I but not in  
251 the other cvs (Fig. 5 D, Tab. S4 and S5).

252 Leaf rutin content (Fig. 6 A, Tab. S4) significantly increased under LN in cvs B, C, E and I  
253 (Tab. S5), all others being insensitive to N. In stems (Fig. 6 B, Tab. S4), LN increased  
254 significantly the rutin content in cv G (Tab. S5). The whole plant rutin content (Fig. 6 C, Tab.

255 S4) was higher under LN than HN in cvs B, C, E, H and I, other cultivars being insensitive to  
256 N.

257 Leaf KR content (Fig. 7, Tab. S4) was significantly higher under LN than HN in the  
258 determinate cvs B, C, E and in the indeterminate cvs H-I (Tab. S5).

### 259 *Organ specific response of CGA and N status*

260 Organ CGA concentration was depressed under HN compared to LN (Fig. 5, Tab. S4). At the  
261 same time, organ N concentration was depressed under LN compared to HN. In figure 8, we  
262 plotted the relative changes in the concentration of CGA (*i.e.*  $0 < \text{HN/LN ratios} \leq 1$ ) versus  
263 the relative changes in that of N for each tissue (*i.e.*  $0 < \text{LN/HN ratios} \leq 1$ ). For all other data  
264 points, Fig. 8 shows 3 ordered clusters corresponding to organ classes that were regressed  
265 through the maximum (1,1) taken as the absolute reference (*i.e.* HN = LN). For each cluster,  
266 the slope of the regression indicates the mean organ sensitivity of changing CGA  
267 concentration to changing N status. The roots exhibited the highest sensitivity and the stems  
268 the lowest.

## DISCUSSION

269 This study was conducted on determinate and indeterminate patio tomato cultivars that share  
270 the characteristic of a small size and growth compared to commercial accessions. Despite a 3-  
271 4 fold range diversity in foliar phenolic concentration between cultivars the average  
272 concentrations (CGA, rutin, KR) were in the same order of magnitude than generally found in  
273 other conventional accessions (Hoffland et al., 2000; Stewart et al., 2000; Niggeweg et al.,  
274 2004; Millar et al., 2007; Le Bot et al., 2009). As a consequence, we may consider this set of  
275 patio tomatoes and their response to N limitation as representative of what may occur for  
276 commercial cultivars. In stems and roots, comparisons are more difficult as little information  
277 is available in the literature. The lower rutin and CGA concentrations found in stems

278 compared to leaves are in agreement with statements on other plants (Cirak et al., 2007;  
279 Koncic et al., 2010). Moreover, the average root CGA concentration, which was shown to be  
280 the major soluble phenolic in roots, matched the total soluble phenolic concentration reported  
281 by Le Floch et al. (2005) in their study on tomato roots.

282 We intended to assess the effect of N nutrition on phenolics at two contrasted growth stages:  
283 vegetative stage whose results are presented here and at fruiting stage. The latter has not been  
284 examined because the development of the plants induced a competition for light between  
285 plants (shading) prior to harvest. Earlier studies, particularly our work published recently  
286 indicate that the patterns of response of vegetative parts to N limitation were independent of  
287 growth stage, whereas the phenolic composition of tomato fruits was not greatly influenced by  
288 N availability (Bénard *et al.*, 2009).

289 All cultivars exhibited the same qualitative response to N limitation characterized by (i) a  
290 lower shoot growth, while root growth was not affected (ii) a higher phenolic concentration at  
291 the plant level. Those effects reinforce previous studies made on a large range of plants  
292 (Scheible et al., 1997; Stewart et al., 2001; Fritz et al., 2006; N’Guyen and Niemeyer, 2008;  
293 Le Bot et al., 2009). Regarding growth and development parameters, the amplitude of the  
294 response to LN was almost the same for all genotypes, as illustrated by the ranking of  
295 cultivars for plant DW that was not affected by N nutrition (except for cv C, Fig. 2 A). In  
296 contrast, phenolic concentrations in all organs, but that of rutin in stem, revealed significant  
297 genotype × nitrogen interactions for determinate cultivars. This indicates that different tomato  
298 genotypes react specifically to N limitation and that a generic response cannot be drawn from  
299 studies based on a few ~~number of~~ cultivars. We cannot conclude yet for indeterminate  
300 cultivars as the limited panel of indeterminate accessions may explain the absence of  
301 interactions. From a plant defense viewpoint, recent literature reported that a two- and four-  
302 fold increases of leaf CGA and rutin concentrations allowed higher plant resistance

303 respectively to bacteria and insects in solanacea (Niggeweg et al., 2004; Misra et al., 2010),  
304 whereas KR was identified as a detrimental compound to thrips invasion in *Senecio* and  
305 *Chrysanthemum* (Leiss et al., 2009 a, b). Under LN, the phenolic (CGA, rutin, KR)  
306 concentrations in shoots were increased by a factor 1.5 to 3 and that of CGA in roots by a  
307 factor of 2.5 to 4.5 suggesting that plant defense against several pathogens could have been  
308 reinforced under LN. This assumption needs to be assessed by specific experiments testing  
309 parasite behavior under contrasted N regimes inducing differential phenolic concentrations.

310 Root CGA and other phenolics are allelochemicals (Kanchan and Jayachandra, 1980; Abdul-  
311 Rahman and Habib, 1989), released in the rhizosphere when nutrient deficiencies occur (Uren  
312 and Reisenauer, 1988). Root phenolic exudation is stimulated in response to P and N  
313 deficiency in bean (Juszczuk et al., 2004), as well as in Fe-deficient pigeon peas (*Cajanus*  
314 *cajan* L., Ae et al., 1990). The functionality of root-released phenolics is through their  
315 contribution to plant adaptation to nutrient deficiency by (i) solubilizing nutrients from  
316 inaccessible sources (Dakora and Phillips, 2002), (ii) favoring mycorrhization (Antunes et al.,  
317 2006) thus improving plant foraging for nutrients. CGA has also been shown to mediate  
318 lateral root growth in lettuce (Narukawa et al., 2009).

319 In our experiment, organ concentrations of CGA and N were inversely correlated and this  
320 relationship was organ-specific. Plants are known to optimize N allocation to leaves, whereas  
321 roots isare the organ by which N is absorbed from the nutrient solution and is translocated to  
322 other plant organs.

323 Whereas concentrations of all the phenolics increased under LN in all the organs, their  
324 contents did not evolve the same way. Indeed they depend on the organ, the molecule and the  
325 cv tested. Leaf and stem phenolic contents were not or only slightly affected by LN (Fig 5 A-  
326 B, Fig 6 A-B, Fig 7), meaning that their observed concentration increase resulted mainly from  
327 the reduced leaf and stem growth. This observation is consistent with the conclusions of a



328 recent model describing carbon allocation to primary and secondary metabolism in young  
329 tomato leaves (Le Bot et al. 2009) suggesting that the secondary metabolite concentration  
330 declines at high N availability owing to a dilution process by primary metabolites and not  
331 necessarily to a lesser rate of secondary metabolism. However, the weak but significant  
332 increase of leaf flavonoid (rutin, KR) contents in several cultivars (B, C, E, H, I, Tab. S6)  
333 under LN suggests that a specific regulation of the phenolic pathway could occur depending  
334 on the cultivar. The higher root CGA concentrations under LN resulted from a higher phenolic  
335 content, since root growth proved insensitive to N nutrition. It remains unclear whether this  
336 increase resulted from a local regulation of the biosynthetic pathway in roots (biosynthesis  
337 increase/degradation decrease) or from changes in transports from shoots or even ~~to~~-from  
338 both. Regarding CGA content at the whole plant level, we identified two kinds of cultivars:  
339 those (C, E and I) that accumulated more CGA under LN (Fig. 5 D) implying that N  
340 limitation induced an up regulation of its biosynthesis and those- A(a majority of cultivars)  
341 that did not accumulate more CGA under LN at the whole plant level but at the root level,  
342 which may be interpreted as a relocation of CGA from shoots to roots. Both mechanisms have  
343 experimental support in the literature. Indeed, on one hand, Joet et al. (2010) highlighted a  
344 high correlation between CGA accumulation in coffee seeds (*Coffea arabica*) and gene  
345 expression upstream and downstream CGA biosynthesis, meaning that transcriptional control  
346 alone could explain a large part of CGA accumulation. On the other hand, Narukawa et al.  
347 (2009) showed that roots from decapitated lettuce contained less CGA compared with intact  
348 plants and Mondolot et al. (2006) that coffee phloem cells contained CGA, thus rendering  
349 consistent the hypothesis of CGA transport from shoots to roots. A more comprehensive  
350 study, involving transcriptional studies, flux analyses and isotopic labeling, is needed to  
351 understand the underlying mechanism of root CGA accumulation under LN.

352 In conclusion, concentrations of phenolics increased in all organs under low nitrogen and a  
353 significant genotype × nitrogen effect was observed. For all cultivars, the stimulation of CGA  
354 concentration by the nitrogen limitation was more important in roots than in leaves and stems.  
355 Nitrogen limitation did not change CGA content in shoots, whereas it stimulated  
356 accumulation in roots. The organ dependent response to N limitation points out the need to  
357 integrate all plant organs when considering plant responses to nutrient limitation and the  
358 trade-off of resource share between growth and secondary metabolism.

## ABBREVIATIONS

359 [X], concentration of X  
360 CGA, chlorogenic acid  
361 KR, kaempferol rutinoside  
362 det., determinate  
363 ind., indeterminate  
364 N, nitrogen  
365 HN, high nitrogen  
366 LN, low nitrogen  
367 GDBH, growth differentiation balance hypothesis  
368 IPM, integrated pest management  
369 ICM, integrated crop management  
370 NFT, nutrient film technique  
371 DW, dry weight  
372 cv/cvs, cultivar/cultivars

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## Table

Table 1: Patio tomato cultivars with codes used in text and figures. The coding followed increasing whole plant dry biomass accumulation according to breeder technical resources.

	Code	Cultivar	Average plant size (from breeder resources)	Breeder
Determinate	A	Micro-Tom	15-20 cm	University of Florida, Bradenton
	B	Red Robin	20-30 cm	Burpee/seminis
	C	Tiny Tim	25-35 cm	University of New Hampshire, Durham
	D	Florida Basket	30-45 cm	University of Florida, Bradenton
	E	Pixie II (F1)	45 cm	Burpee/seminis
	F	Totem (F1)	60 cm	Floranova/Vegetalis
Indeterminate	G	Husky Cherry Gold (F1)	90-120 cm	Petoseed
	H	Husky Cherry Red (F1)	90-120 cm	Petoseed
	I	Better Bush	90-120 cm	Park seed



## Figure legends

Fig. 1: Cumulative nitrate uptake of determinate (thin lines) and indeterminate (thick lines) tomato cultivars under HN (solid lines) and LN (dashed lines) nutrition. Nitrate uptake was calculated hourly, each solution tank feeding 96 (determinate) or 24 (indeterminate) plants until harvest, half these numbers after harvest. Irregularities in the traces result from day/night cycles and natural climate instability.

Fig. 2: Dry biomass (g per plant) of HN tomato cultivars plotted against LN: (A) whole plant DW, (B) leaf DW, (C) stem DW, (D) leaf-root DW. Coded symbols are the means of 8 (A-F, determinate cvs) and 4 (G-I, indeterminate cvs) replicates with SE bars. The diagonals (straight lines) indicate where LN = HN. It follows that data above the diagonal are depressed by LN, whereas below the line, they are enhanced by LN.

Fig. 3: Typical HPLC chromatogram of soluble phenolic extracts from leaves (A), stems (B) and roots (C) of tomato plants under HN. The profiles were recorded at 330 nm and are expressed in arbitrary unit (AU). The labelled molecules correspond to chlorogenic acid (CGA) (1), taxifolin (2), rutin (3) and kaempferol rutinoside (KR) (4). Taxifolin is an internal control added during the extraction.

Fig. 4: Phenolic concentration ( $\text{mg g}^{-1}$  DW) of HN tomato cultivars plotted against LN: chlorogenic acid (CGA) in leaves (A), stems (C) and roots (E); rutin in leaves (B) and stems (D); kaempferol rutinoside (KR) in leaves (F). Symbols and lines as in Fig. 2.

Fig. 5: Chlorogenic acid (CGA) content (mg per plant) of HN tomato cultivars plotted against LN: (A) leaves, (B) stems, (C) roots and (D) whole plants. Symbols and lines as in Fig. 2.

Fig. 6: Rutin content (mg per plant) of HN tomato cultivars plotted against LN: (A) leaves, (B) stems and (C) whole plants. Symbols and lines as in Fig. 2.

Fig. 7: Leaf kaempferol rutinoside (KR) content (mg per plant) of HN tomato cultivars plotted against LN. Symbols and lines as in Fig. 2.

Fig. 8: Relative changes in [CGA] ( $0 < \text{HN/LN ratios} \leq 1$ ) plotted versus the relative changes in tissue [N] ( $0 < \text{LN/HN ratios} \leq 1$ ) in leaves (black), stems (red) and roots (blue). Coded symbols as in Fig. 2. Lines are regressions forced through the maximum (1,1) taken as the reference where HN=LN: leaves (black)  $y = 1.051 x - 0.051$  ( $R^2 = 0.97$ ); stems (red)  $y = 0.677 x + 0.323$  ( $R^2 = 0.95$ ); roots (blue)  $y = 1.643 x - 0.643$  ( $R^2 = 0.99$ ).

Figure 3

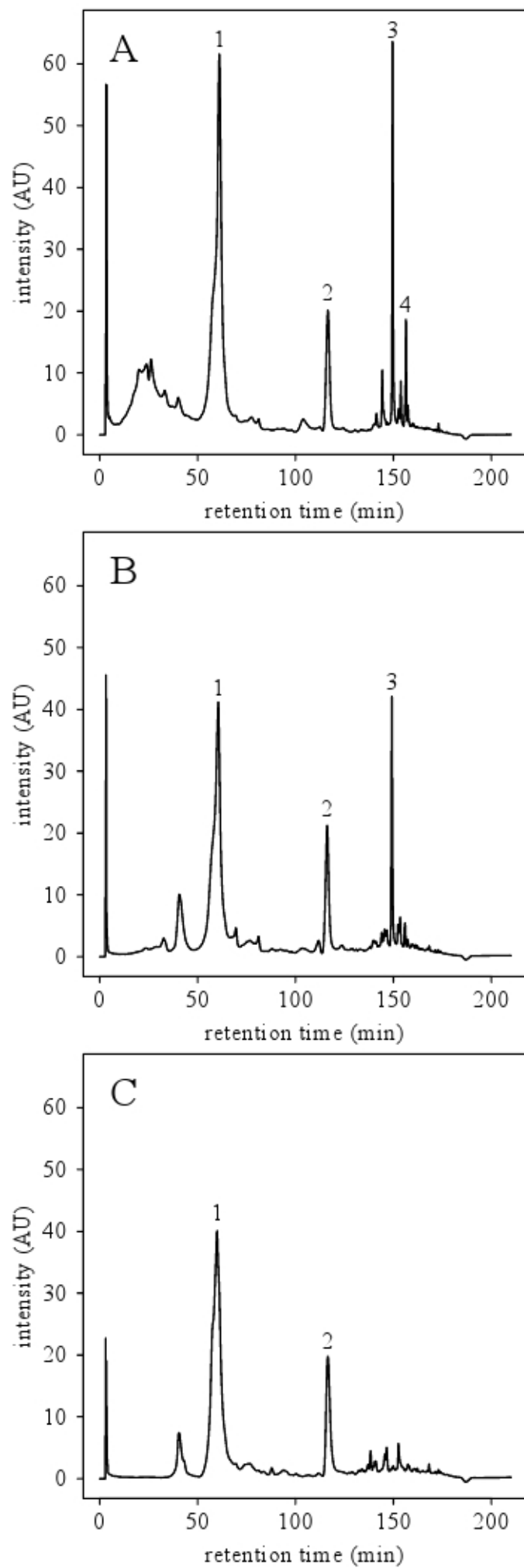


Figure 4

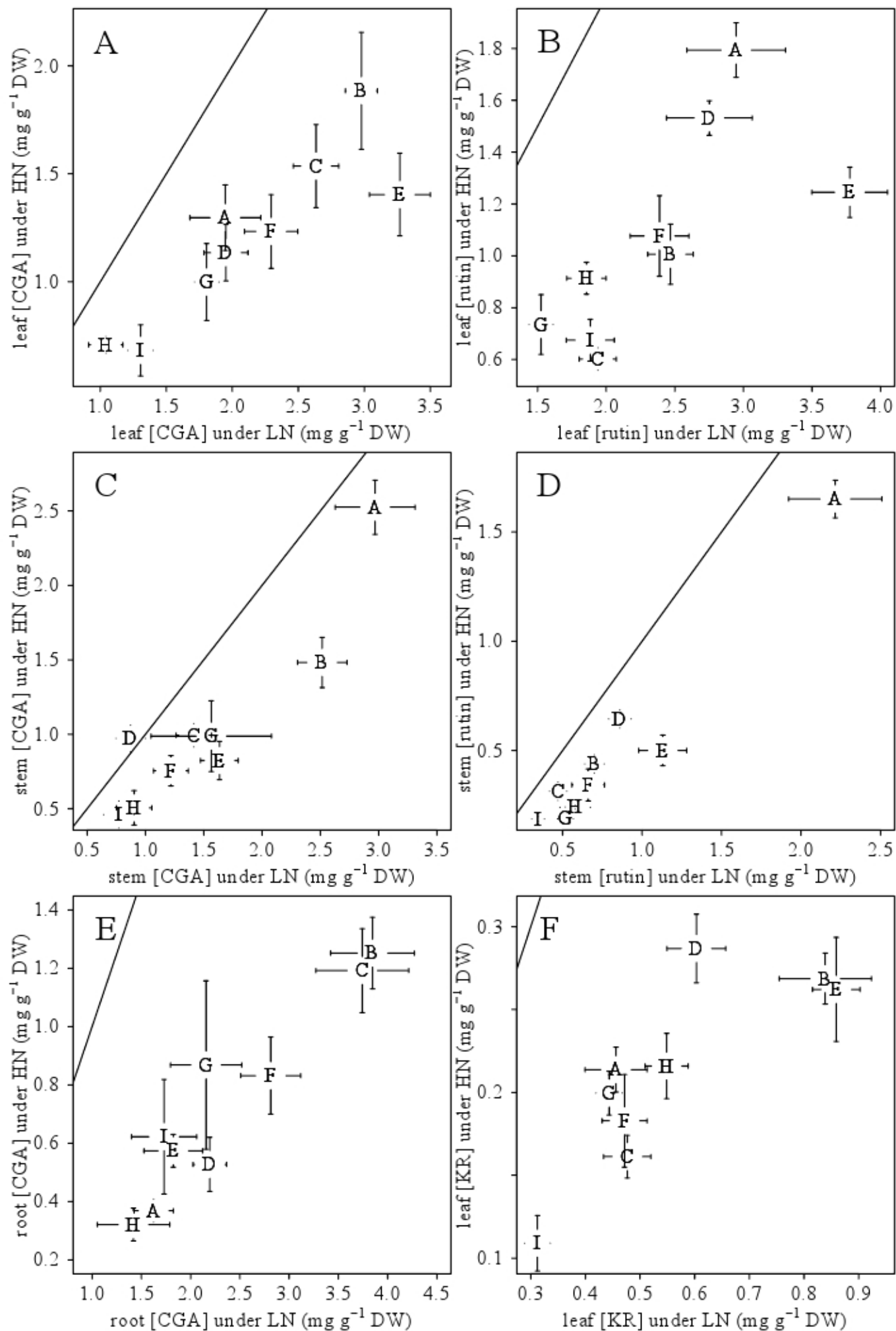


Figure 5

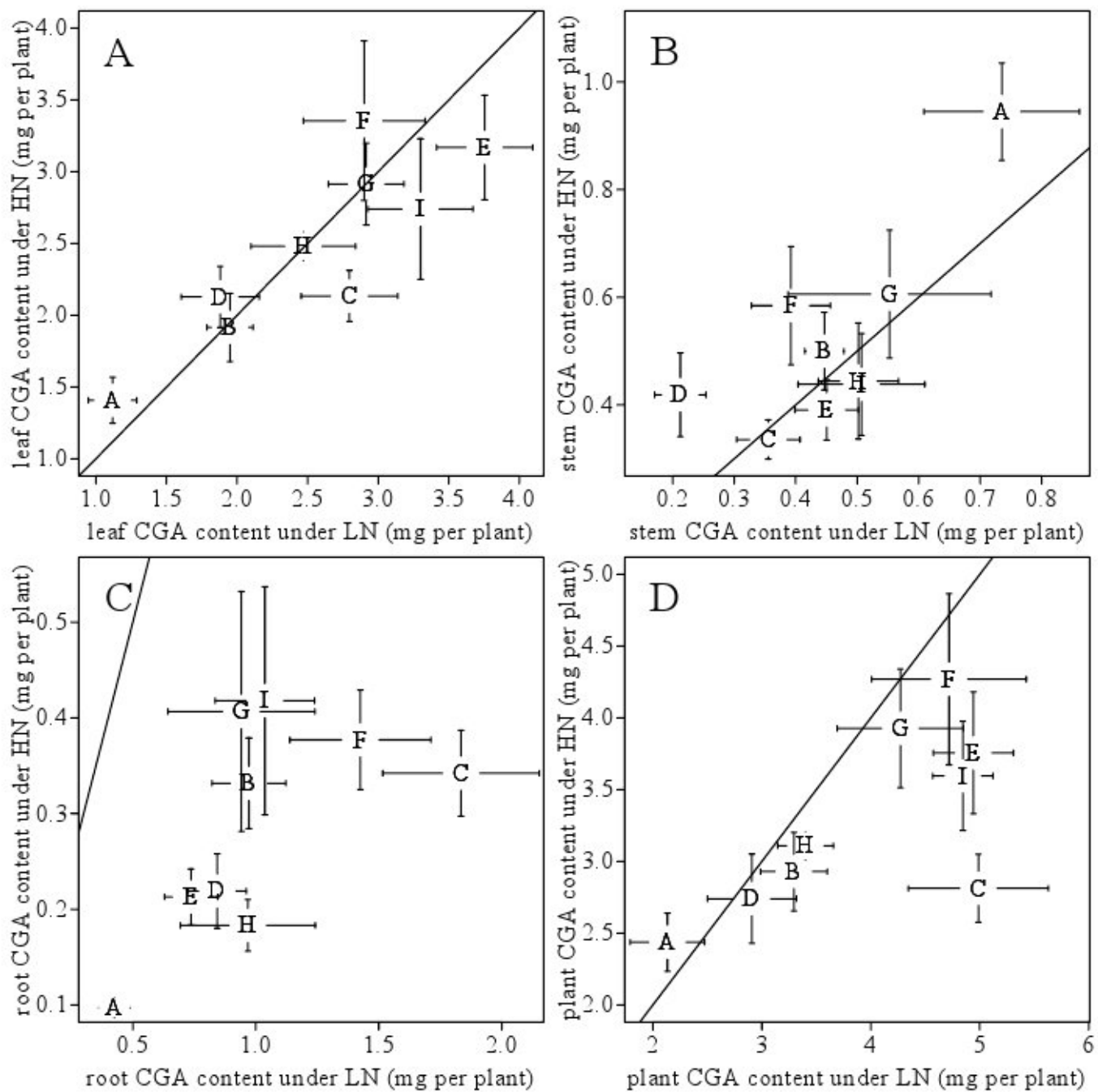


Figure 6

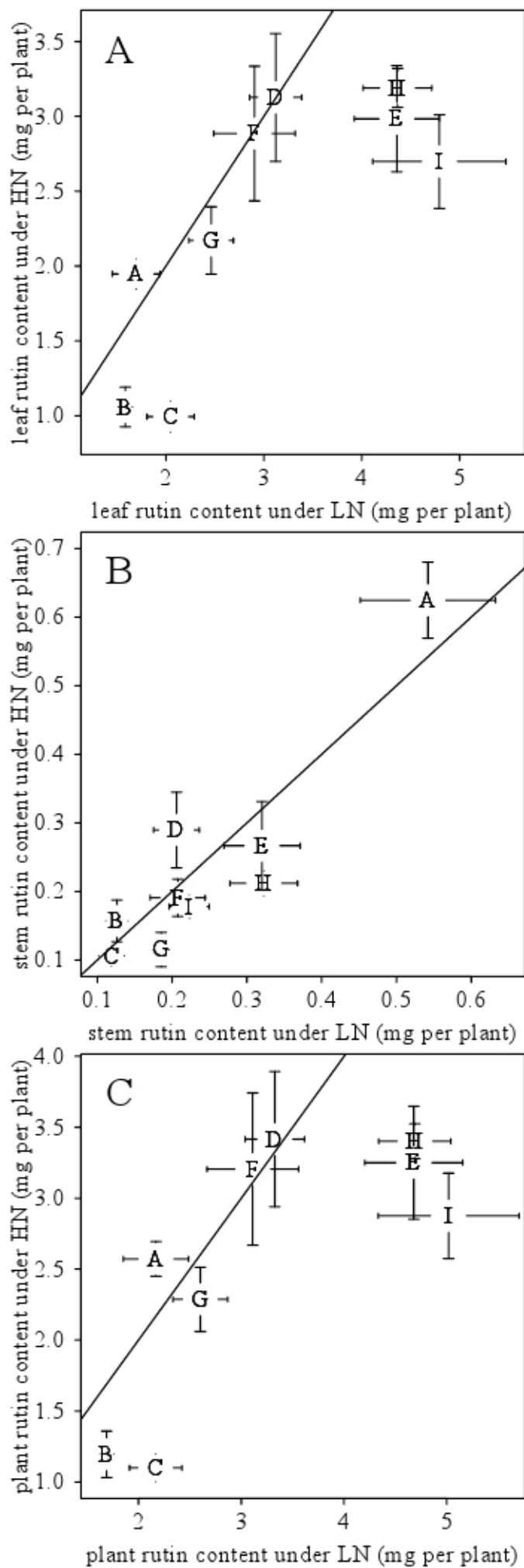


Figure 7

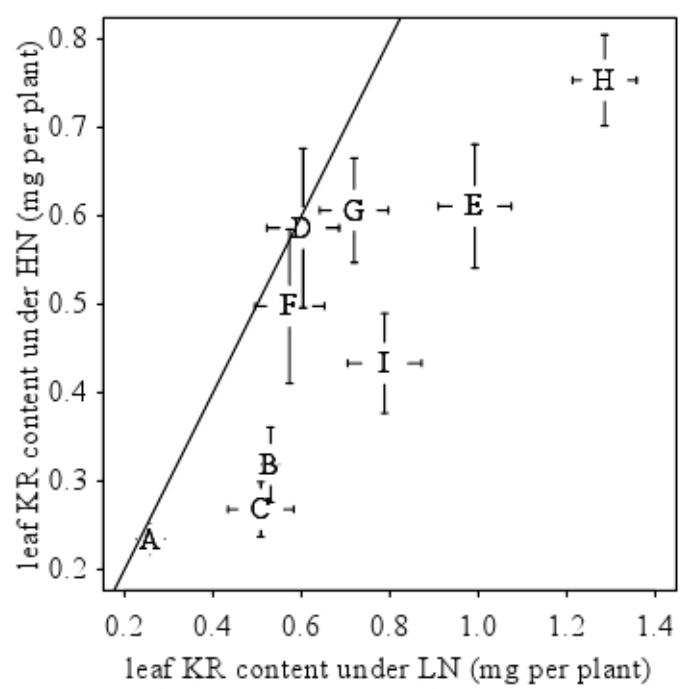


Figure 8

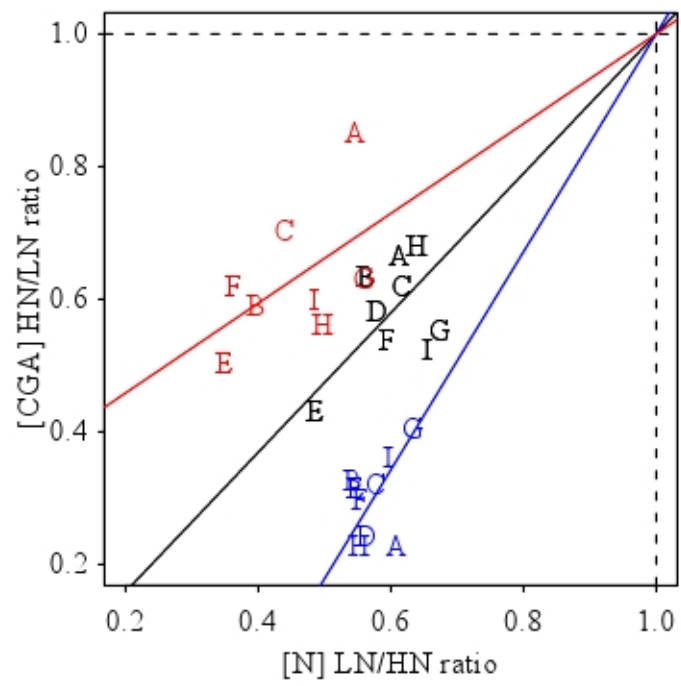




Figure 1

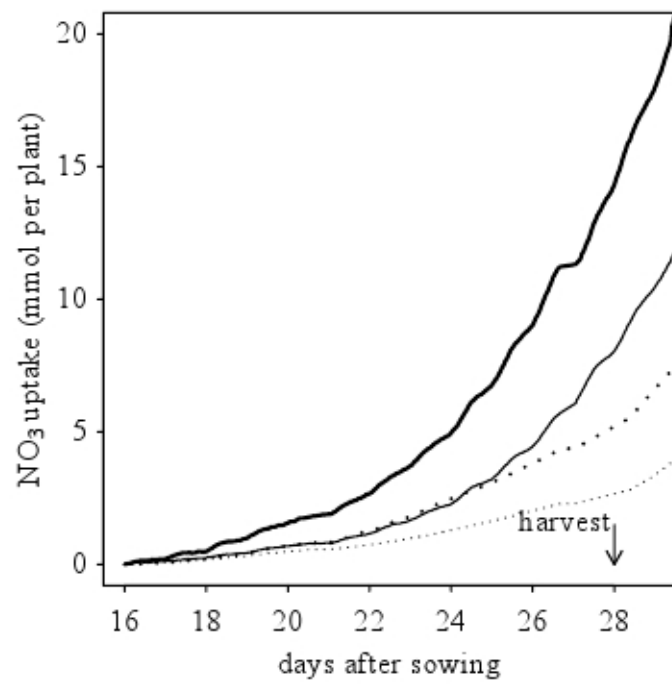


Figure 2

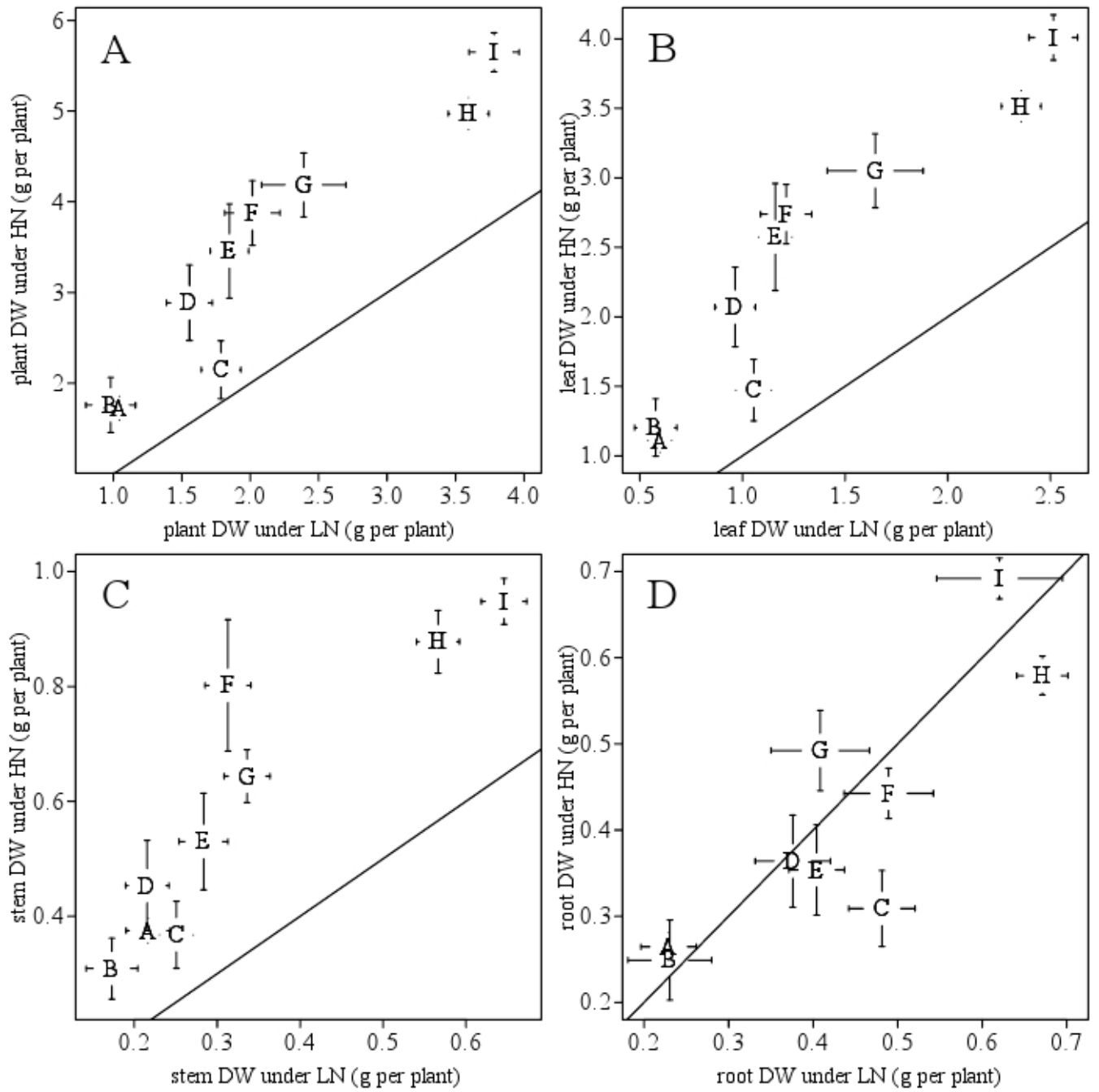


Table S1: Average organs and plant DW for the nine tomato cultivars as a function of the N nutrition. Means and standard errors are calculated from the analysis of 8 and 4 replicates for determinate and indeterminate cultivars respectively.

Cv	Nutrition	Organ/Plant DW (g)			
		Leaf	Stem	Root	Plant
A	HN	1.10 ± 0.08	0.37 ± 0.02	0.26 ± 0.02	1.72 ± 0.13
	LN	0.60 ± 0.06	0.22 ± 0.03	0.23 ± 0.03	1.04 ± 0.11
B	HN	1.20 ± 0.21	0.31 ± 0.05	0.25 ± 0.05	1.76 ± 0.30
	LN	0.58 ± 0.10	0.17 ± 0.03	0.23 ± 0.05	0.98 ± 0.18
C	HN	1.47 ± 0.22	0.37 ± 0.06	0.31 ± 0.04	2.15 ± 0.32
	LN	1.05 ± 0.09	0.25 ± 0.02	0.48 ± 0.04	1.79 ± 0.14
D	HN	2.07 ± 0.29	0.45 ± 0.08	0.36 ± 0.05	2.89 ± 0.41
	LN	0.96 ± 0.10	0.22 ± 0.03	0.38 ± 0.04	1.56 ± 0.17
E	HN	2.57 ± 0.38	0.53 ± 0.08	0.35 ± 0.05	3.46 ± 0.52
	LN	1.16 ± 0.08	0.28 ± 0.03	0.40 ± 0.03	1.85 ± 0.14
F	HN	2.74 ± 0.21	0.80 ± 0.11	0.44 ± 0.03	3.88 ± 0.36
	LN	1.21 ± 0.12	0.31 ± 0.03	0.49 ± 0.05	2.01 ± 0.20
G	HN	3.05 ± 0.27	0.64 ± 0.05	0.49 ± 0.05	4.19 ± 0.35
	LN	1.65 ± 0.23	0.34 ± 0.03	0.41 ± 0.06	2.39 ± 0.31
H	HN	3.51 ± 0.11	0.88 ± 0.05	0.58 ± 0.02	4.97 ± 0.17
	LN	2.36 ± 0.10	0.57 ± 0.03	0.67 ± 0.03	3.59 ± 0.15
I	HN	4.01 ± 0.16	0.95 ± 0.04	0.69 ± 0.02	5.65 ± 0.21
	LN	2.51 ± 0.12	0.65 ± 0.03	0.62 ± 0.07	3.78 ± 0.18

Table S2: Average values of some morphological traits for the nine tomato cultivars as a function of the N nutrition. Means and standard errors are calculated from the analysis of 8 and 4 replicates for determinate and indeterminate cultivars respectively. The morphological traits analysed were the plastochron index (Plast. Ind.), flower number (Flower Numb.), epicotyl diameter (Epicot. Diam.), stem height, total leaf area, leaf area ratio (LAR), specific leaf area (SLA) and root shoot ratio (RSR).

Cv	Nutrition	Plast.Ind.	Flower Numb.	Epicot. Diam.	Stem height	Total Leaf Area	LAR	SLA	RSR
A	HN	8.3 ± 0.2	40 ± 5	6.1 ± 0.2	11.2 ± 0.3	222 ± 12	129 ± 4	202 ± 7	0.18 ± 0.01
	LN	7.9 ± 0.4	30 ± 4	4.8 ± 0.2	10.4 ± 0.4	114 ± 11	113 ± 6	192 ± 6	0.29 ± 0.01
B	HN	8.0 ± 0.3	11 ± 2	8.3 ± 0.4	11.5 ± 0.5	564 ± 83	195 ± 2	270 ± 4	0.14 ± 0.01
	LN	7.8 ± 0.3	10 ± 1	6.0 ± 0.4	10.0 ± 0.5	235 ± 23	153 ± 5	245 ± 9	0.31 ± 0.01
C	HN	9.4 ± 0.4	8 ± 1	9.6 ± 0.6	14.0 ± 0.8	610 ± 93	176 ± 4	236 ± 6	0.12 ± 0.01
	LN	8.4 ± 0.2	10 ± 1	7.3 ± 0.2	12.9 ± 0.4	253 ± 22	136 ± 3	217 ± 5	0.28 ± 0.01
D	HN	8.9 ± 0.2	17 ± 4	7.6 ± 0.5	12.0 ± 0.8	399 ± 62	184 ± 3	269 ± 4	0.17 ± 0.01
	LN	8.3 ± 0.2	19 ± 4	6.0 ± 0.1	11.7 ± 0.4	256 ± 20	144 ± 4	244 ± 7	0.37 ± 0.01
E	HN	8.2 ± 0.6	9 ± 1	7.4 ± 0.6	8.7 ± 0.4	303 ± 53	171 ± 3	255 ± 7	0.15 ± 0.01
	LN	7.4 ± 0.4	7 ± 1	5.3 ± 0.5	8.4 ± 0.5	135 ± 25	140 ± 3	235 ± 6	0.33 ± 0.01
F	HN	9.7 ± 0.4	9 ± 2	10.8 ± 0.3	15.2 ± 0.9	673 ± 52	168 ± 3	244 ± 6	0.13 ± 0.01
	LN	8.5 ± 0.4	8 ± 1	7.5 ± 0.3	12.6 ± 0.4	275 ± 24	139 ± 4	232 ± 8	0.32 ± 0.01
G	HN	10.7 ± 0.3	6 ± 0	9.9 ± 0.2	16.2 ± 0.6	732 ± 28	147 ± 2	208 ± 2	0.13 ± 0.01
	LN	9.6 ± 0.4	6 ± 1	8.4 ± 0.1	14.1 ± 0.5	469 ± 30	131 ± 7	199 ± 10	0.23 ± 0.01
H	HN	9.2 ± 0.2	3 ± 0	11.1 ± 0.2	15.4 ± 0.4	793 ± 15	141 ± 6	199 ± 9	0.13 ± 0.01
	LN	8.5 ± 0.2	3 ± 0	9.9 ± 0.2	13.4 ± 0.2	499 ± 15	133 ± 3	199 ± 4	0.22 ± 0.01
I	HN	9. ± 0.2	6 ± 1	9.3 ± 0.1	12.6 ± 0.7	634 ± 69	151 ± 4	207 ± 5	0.13 ± 0.01
	LN	8.4 ± 0.3	6 ± 1	7.4 ± 0.2	10.8 ± 0.6	303 ± 19	129 ± 8	189 ± 14	0.23 ± 0.01

Table S3: Average phenolics (CGA, rutin, KR) concentration in organs of the nine tomato cultivars as a function of the N nutrition. Means and standard errors are calculated from the analysis of 8 and 4 replicates for determinate and indeterminate cultivars respectively. Concentrations are given in mg.g<sup>-1</sup>DW.

Cv	Nutrition	[CGA]			[Rutin]		[KR]
		Leaf	Stem	Root	Leaf	Stem	Leaf
A	HN	1.29 ± 0.15	2.52 ± 0.18	0.37 ± 0.04	1.79 ± 0.10	1.65 ± 0.09	0.21 ± 0.01
	LN	1.95 ± 0.27	2.97 ± 0.34	1.62 ± 0.20	2.95 ± 0.36	2.22 ± 0.29	0.46 ± 0.06
B	HN	1.88 ± 0.27	1.48 ± 0.17	1.25 ± 0.12	1.01 ± 0.12	0.44 ± 0.04	0.27 ± 0.01
	LN	2.98 ± 0.12	2.51 ± 0.21	3.85 ± 0.42	2.47 ± 0.17	0.70 ± 0.06	0.84 ± 0.08
C	HN	1.54 ± 0.19	0.99 ± 0.08	1.19 ± 0.14	0.60 ± 0.04	0.31 ± 0.04	0.16 ± 0.01
	LN	2.63 ± 0.17	1.42 ± 0.15	3.74 ± 0.47	1.94 ± 0.13	0.47 ± 0.05	0.48 ± 0.04
D	HN	1.13 ± 0.13	0.97 ± 0.09	0.53 ± 0.09	1.53 ± 0.07	0.64 ± 0.04	0.29 ± 0.02
	LN	1.95 ± 0.17	0.87 ± 0.13	2.19 ± 0.17	2.75 ± 0.31	0.86 ± 0.07	0.60 ± 0.05
E	HN	1.40 ± 0.19	0.82 ± 0.13	0.57 ± 0.06	1.24 ± 0.10	0.50 ± 0.07	0.26 ± 0.03
	LN	3.27 ± 0.23	1.63 ± 0.16	1.82 ± 0.30	3.78 ± 0.28	1.13 ± 0.15	0.86 ± 0.04
F	HN	1.23 ± 0.17	0.75 ± 0.10	0.83 ± 0.13	1.08 ± 0.15	0.34 ± 0.07	0.18 ± 0.03
	LN	2.29 ± 0.20	1.22 ± 0.15	2.81 ± 0.30	2.38 ± 0.21	0.66 ± 0.10	0.47 ± 0.04
G	HN	0.99 ± 0.18	0.99 ± 0.24	0.87 ± 0.29	0.73 ± 0.11	0.19 ± 0.05	0.20 ± 0.01
	LN	1.81 ± 0.09	1.56 ± 0.52	2.16 ± 0.36	1.52 ± 0.09	0.52 ± 0.05	0.44 ± 0.02
H	HN	0.71 ± 0.04	0.51 ± 0.11	0.32 ± 0.06	0.91 ± 0.06	0.24 ± 0.01	0.22 ± 0.02
	LN	1.04 ± 0.13	0.90 ± 0.15	1.42 ± 0.37	1.86 ± 0.14	0.58 ± 0.10	0.55 ± 0.04
I	HN	0.68 ± 0.12	0.46 ± 0.09	0.62 ± 0.20	0.67 ± 0.08	0.19 ± 0.01	0.11 ± 0.02
	LN	1.30 ± 0.09	0.77 ± 0.13	1.73 ± 0.33	1.88 ± 0.17	0.34 ± 0.04	0.31 ± 0.02

Table S4: Average phenolics (CGA, rutin, KR) contents in organs of the nine tomato cultivars as a function of the N nutrition. Means and standard errors are calculated from the analysis of 8 and 4 replicates for determinate and indeterminate cultivars respectively. Phenolic content are given in mg.

Cv	Nutrition	CGA content				Rutin content			KR content
		Leaf	Stem	Root	Plant	Leaf	Stem	Plant	Leaf/Plant
A	HN	1.41 ± 0.16	0.94 ± 0.09	0.10 ± 0.01	2.44 ± 0.20	1.95 ± 0.10	0.62 ± 0.06	2.57 ± 0.12	0.23 ± 0.02
	LN	1.12 ± 0.17	0.73 ± 0.13	0.42 ± 0.06	2.13 ± 0.34	1.70 ± 0.24	0.54 ± 0.09	2.17 ± 0.32	0.26 ± 0.03
B	HN	1.91 ± 0.24	0.50 ± 0.07	0.33 ± 0.05	2.93 ± 0.27	1.06 ± 0.13	0.16 ± 0.03	1.19 ± 0.16	0.32 ± 0.04
	LN	1.95 ± 0.16	0.45 ± 0.03	0.97 ± 0.15	3.29 ± 0.31	1.59 ± 0.07	0.13 ± 0.01	1.69 ± 0.07	0.53 ± 0.02
C	HN	2.13 ± 0.18	0.34 ± 0.04	0.34 ± 0.04	2.81 ± 0.24	0.99 ± 0.10	0.11 ± 0.01	1.10 ± 0.10	0.27 ± 0.03
	LN	2.80 ± 0.34	0.35 ± 0.05	1.83 ± 0.32	4.99 ± 0.64	2.05 ± 0.24	0.12 ± 0.01	2.17 ± 0.25	0.51 ± 0.07
D	HN	2.13 ± 0.21	0.42 ± 0.08	0.22 ± 0.04	2.74 ± 0.31	3.13 ± 0.43	0.29 ± 0.05	3.42 ± 0.48	0.59 ± 0.09
	LN	1.88 ± 0.28	0.21 ± 0.04	0.84 ± 0.12	2.90 ± 0.41	3.12 ± 0.27	0.21 ± 0.03	3.33 ± 0.29	0.60 ± 0.08
E	HN	3.17 ± 0.36	0.39 ± 0.06	0.21 ± 0.03	3.76 ± 0.42	2.98 ± 0.35	0.27 ± 0.06	3.25 ± 0.40	0.61 ± 0.07
	LN	3.75 ± 0.34	0.45 ± 0.05	0.74 ± 0.11	4.94 ± 0.37	4.36 ± 0.43	0.32 ± 0.05	4.68 ± 0.48	0.99 ± 0.08
F	HN	3.35 ± 0.55	0.58 ± 0.11	0.38 ± 0.05	4.27 ± 0.60	2.89 ± 0.45	0.19 ± 0.03	3.20 ± 0.54	0.49 ± 0.09
	LN	2.90 ± 0.43	0.39 ± 0.06	1.42 ± 0.29	4.72 ± 0.71	2.90 ± 0.42	0.21 ± 0.04	3.11 ± 0.44	0.57 ± 0.08
G	HN	2.91 ± 0.28	0.61 ± 0.12	0.41 ± 0.12	3.93 ± 0.41	2.17 ± 0.22	0.11 ± 0.02	2.29 ± 0.23	0.61 ± 0.06
	LN	2.91 ± 0.27	0.55 ± 0.16	0.94 ± 0.30	4.27 ± 0.58	2.46 ± 0.23	0.18 ± 0.01	2.60 ± 0.27	0.72 ± 0.08
H	HN	2.48 ± 0.10	0.44 ± 0.11	0.18 ± 0.03	3.11 ± 0.10	3.19 ± 0.13	0.21 ± 0.02	3.40 ± 0.12	0.75 ± 0.05
	LN	2.47 ± 0.37	0.50 ± 0.06	0.97 ± 0.27	3.40 ± 0.26	4.36 ± 0.35	0.32 ± 0.04	4.69 ± 0.35	1.29 ± 0.07
I	HN	2.74 ± 0.49	0.44 ± 0.09	0.42 ± 0.12	3.60 ± 0.38	2.70 ± 0.31	0.18 ± 0.02	2.88 ± 0.30	0.43 ± 0.06
	LN	3.30 ± 0.37	0.51 ± 0.10	1.04 ± 0.20	4.84 ± 0.28	4.79 ± 0.68	0.22 ± 0.03	5.02 ± 0.68	0.79 ± 0.08

Table S5: Significance of LN effect on phenolic content in vegetative organs and plant of the nine tomato cultivars analysed. ns means non significant.

Cv	CGA				Rutin			KR
	Leaf	Stem	Root	Plant	Leaf	Stem	Plant	Leaf
A	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-12}$	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
B	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-9}$	ns	$p < 10^{-3}$	ns	$p < 10^{-3}$	$p < 10^{-4}$
C	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-15}$	$p < 10^{-5}$	$p < 10^{-7}$	ns	$p < 10^{-6}$	$p < 10^{-5}$
D	ns	$p < 10^{-5}$	$p < 10^{-12}$	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
E	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-9}$	$p < 10^{-2}$	$p < 10^{-3}$	ns	$p < 10^{-2}$	$p < 10^{-3}$
F	ns	$p < 10^{-2}$	$p < 10^{-10}$	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
G	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-2}$	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-2}$	ns	ns
H	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-4}$	ns	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-2}$	$p < 10^{-3}$
I	ns	ns	$p < 10^{-2}$	$p < 10^{-2}$	$p < 10^{-4}$	ns	$p < 10^{-4}$	$p < 10^{-4}$