

**STUDY OF MICRORNA IN RELATION TO SALT
TOLERANCE IN BANANA
(*MUSA ACUMINATA SSP. MALACCENSIS*)**

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**FACULTY OF SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
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ABSTRACT

Salinity is a major abiotic stress affecting crop productivity worldwide and results in millions of dollars in lost yield and damage to infrastructure. The purpose of this study was to identify microRNAs related to NaCl stress in *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis* (Ridl.). Sterilization techniques were employed to reduce contamination of embryos initiated from seeds. The germination rate of *in vitro* zygotic embryo culture was observed to increase to 92 % after soaking of the seeds in water (for periods of 2 or 3 days) compared to 72 % germination when no water treatment was used. Shoot induction and multiplications were carried out and 5mg/L BAP determined as the best concentration for shoot induction and multiplication. Different concentrations of sodium chloride (60, 80, 100, 120, 140, 160, 180, 200, 220 mM NaCl and 0 mM as a control) were used to determine the lethal concentration of NaCl and 120 mM was determined as the lethal concentration of NaCl for *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*. The results were used to determine the stressed conditions for analysis of microRNAs and 100 mM of NaCl, the minimal inhibitory NaCl concentration for survival of banana plantlets was used for RNA extraction and construction of a salt stress small RNA library. Consequently measurement to assess the effect of salt stress on proline and elements (Na^+ , K^+ , Ca^{++} , Mg^{++}) accumulation in *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis* showed a clear correlation between increases in salt concentration and the concentrations of the different elements. The concentration of proline increased significantly in both root and leaves at 60 and 80 mM of NaCl concentration compared to the control with the highest amount of proline accumulation in both root and leaves recorded at 80 mM of NaCl. Elevation of NaCl concentrations also resulted in increasing Na^+ and decreasing K^+ , Ca^{++} and Mg^{++} concentrations in *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*.

The optimized and modified RNA extraction method developed in this study resulted in the achievement of good quality and pure RNA with A260/280 of 1.95. MicroRNA Discovery™ Kit (System Bio Sciences, USA) was then used for the isolation of microRNAs and a microRNA library was constructed by cloning the PCR products into PCR4-TOPO cloning kit (Invitrogen, USA). The titre of the library was estimated as 2000 recombinant clones and the DNA sequences of inserts from 45 recombinant clones were determined. Data were analyzed via Clustal W, BLAST and psRNA Target comparing with NCBI Genbank, miRBase and EST sequences data bases. Matches to the small library sequences included three different types of gene sequences (Salt stress, drought stress and BAP treated related), with high similarity to salt stress related gene from *Oryza sativa* and *Hordeum vulgare*, drought stress and BAP treated related genes from *Oryza sativa*. Therefore it is suggested that these small RNA library clones may be homologues from *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*. Also mac-miR393 was found as a potential salt stress related miRNA homologue in *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*.

ABSTRAK

Kadar garam adalah tekanan abiotik utama yang mempengaruhi produktiviti tanaman di seluruh dunia dan menyebabkan kehilangan berjuta-juta ringgit dan kerosakan infrastruktur. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengenalpasti microRNAs berkaitan dengan tekanan NaCl pada *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*. Teknik sterilisasi yang digunakan untuk mengurangkan pencemaran embrio bermula dari biji benih. Kadar percambahan in vitro kultur zigotik embrio diperhatikan meningkat menjadi 92% selepas perendaman biji benih dalam air (untuk tempoh hari 2 atau 3) berbanding dengan 72% percambahan bila pemprosesan dengan air tidak digunakan. Induksi tunas dan multiplikasi yang telah dilakukan dan 5 mg/L BAP ditentukan sebagai kepekatan terbaik untuk induksi tunas dan multiplikasi. Pelbagai kepekatan natrium klorida (60, 80, 100, 120, 140, 160, 180, 200, 220 mM NaCl dan 0 mM sebagai kawalan) digunakan untuk menentukan kepekatan yang mematikan dan 120 mM NaCl ditentukan sebagai kepekatan matian bagi *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*. Hasilnya digunakan untuk menentukan keadaan tertekan untuk analisis microRNAs dan 100 mM NaCl (kepekatan hambat NaCl minimum untuk kelangsungan hidup planlet pisang) digunakan untuk ekstraksi RNA dan pembangunan tekanan garam kecil perpustakaan RNA. Akibatnya pengukuran untuk mengadar pengaruh tekanan garam pada akumulasi prolin dan elemen (Na^+ , K^+ , Ca^{++} , Mg^{++}) di *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis* menunjukkan hubungan yang jelas antara peningkatan kepekatan garam dan kepekatan unsur-unsur yang berbeza. Kepekatan prolin meningkat secara signifikan di akar dan daun pada 60 dan 80 mM kepekatan NaCl berbanding dengan kawalan yang tercatat jumlah akumulasi prolin pada akar dan daun tertinggi pada 80 mM NaCl. Peningkatan kepekatan NaCl juga mengakibatkan peningkatan kepekatan Na^+ dan penurunan K^+ , Ca^{++} dan Mg^{++} pada *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*.

Kaedah ekstraksi RNA yang optimum dan ubahsuai telah dibangunkan dalam kajian ini mengakibatkan tercapainya kualiti yang baik dan murni RNA dengan A260/280 of 1.95. MicroRNA Discovery™ Kit (Sistem Bio Sains, USA) kemudiannya digunakan untuk isolasi microRNAs dan perpustakaan MicroRNA dibina dengan pengklonan produk PCR ke dalam kit pengklonan PCR4-TOPO (Invitrogen, USA). Titer perpustakaan dianggarkan sebagai 2000 klon rekombinan dan urutan DNA sisipan dari 45 klon rekombinan ditentukan. Data dianalisis melalui Clustal W, BLAST dan psRNA Target dibandingkan dengan pangkalan data NCBI Genbank, miRBase dan urutan EST. Perpadanan dengan urutan perpustakaan kecil itu termasuk tiga jenis urutan gen (Berkaitan dengan tekanan garam, tekanan kekeringan dan pengendalian BAP), dengan kemiripan yang tinggi untuk gen berkaitan tekanan garam dari *Oryza sativa* dan *Hordeum vulgare*, gen berkaitan tekanan kekeringan dan pengendalian BAP dari *Oryza sativa*. Oleh itu klon perpustakaan RNA kecil ini dicadangkan mungkin adalah homolog dari *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*. Juga mac-miR393 dijumpai sebagai potensi homolog miRNA berkaitan tekanan garam di *Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis*.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
ABSTRAK	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
ABBREVIATIONS	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	ii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
CHAPTER 1	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Banana.....	1
1.2 Importance of Banana	2
1.3 Salinity and Effects on Plant	4
1.3.1 Salinity Management	4
1.4 MicroRNA	6
1.5 Goals and Objective of the Research	7
CHAPTER 2	8
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 Taxonomy of the Genus <i>Musa</i>	8
2.1.1 <i>Ensete</i>	8
2.1.2 <i>Musa</i>	8
2.1.2.1. <i>Eumusa</i>	8
2.1.4 Banana Tissue culture	10
2.2 Salinity Effects on Agricultural Products	14
2.3 RNA	16
2.3.2 Non-coding RNAs.....	17
2.3.3 Small Nucleolar RNAs (snoRNAs)	18
2.3.4 RNA Interference (RNAi).....	19
2.3.5 Small Interfering RNAs (siRNAs).....	20
CHAPTER 3	31
3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS	31
3.1 Sample Collection	31
3.2 Tissue Culture Medium Preparation	31
3.4 Shoot Multiplication	32
3.4.1 Plant Material	32
3.4.2 Shoot Induction	32
3.4.3 Multiplication.....	33
3.5.1 Proline Extraction.....	35
3.5.2 Cation (Na, Mg, K, Ca), Measurement	35
3.6 Data Analysis	36
3.7.1 CTAB Method.....	36
3.7.2 Modified CTAB Method.....	37
3.7.3 DNase Treatment	37
3.7.4 Optical Density (OD) 260/280 Assay	38
3.7.5 TBE Buffer Preparation	38
3.7.6 Agarose Gel Preparation	39
3.8 miRNA cDNA Library Construction	40
3.8.2 Gel Extraction	42
3.8.4 Colony PCR	42
3.9 Plasmid Isolation.....	44
3.10 Sequencing and Analysis	44

CHAPTER 4	46
4.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION I.....	46
4.1 <i>In-vitro</i> Zygotic Embryo Culture	46
4.1.1 <i>In-vitro</i> Embryo Germination Rate	49
4.2 Shoot Induction and Multiplication	50
4.3 Salt Stress Assessment	57
4.3.1 General Effect of Salinity on <i>Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis</i>	57
4.3.2 Determination of Lethal Concentration of NaCl for <i>Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis</i>	60
4.3.3 Proline Assay	62
4.3.4 Elements measurement (Na^+ , K^+ , Ca^{++} , Mg^{++})	64
CHAPTER 5	70
5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION II	70
5.1 RNA Extraction.....	70
5.1.1 Comparison of RNA Quality from CTAB and Modified CTAB Methods.....	70
5.2 DNase Treatment	74
5.3 MicroRNA Library Cloning.....	75
5.3.1 Gel Extraction	77
5.3.2 Colony Screening	77
5.3.3 Plasmid Extraction	80
5.4 Sequence Data Analysis.....	81
5.4.2 Results of Data Analysis against Plant EST	83
5.4.3 Results of Analysis Based on Known microRNA Genes Related to Salt Stress	93
5.4.4 Target prediction for miR393 <i>Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis</i>	103
CHAPTER 6	104
6.0 CONCLUSION	104
REFERENCES.....	106
APPENDIX A	124
APPENDIX B	124
APPENDIX C	125
APPENDIX D	125
APPENDIX E	125
APPENDIX F.....	126
APPENDIX G	127
APPENDIX H.....	128
APPENDIX I.....	129
APPENDIX J	130
APPENDIX K.....	131
APPENDIX L	132
APPENDIX M	132
APPENDIX N	133
APPENDIX O	135

ABBREVIATIONS

Most of the abbreviations used are standard. However, attention is drawn to the following.

%	: percent
~	: approximately
°C	: degree Celsius
2- <i>ip</i>	: 2- isopentenyl adenine
ABA	: abscisic acid
BAP	: 6-benzylaminopurine
bp	: base pair
C/I	: chloroform/isoamylalcohol
Ca	: calcium
cDNA	: complementary DNA
cm	: centimeters
CTAB	: cetyl trimethyl ammonium bromide
DC11	: DICER-LIKE1
DEPC	: diethyl pyrocarbonate
dH ₂ O	: distilled water
DNA	: deoxyribonucleic acid
DNase	: deoxyribonuclease
dNTPs	: deoxyribonucleoside triphosphates
EDTA	: ethylenediaminetetraacetate
EST	: expressed sequence tags
FAO	: Food and Agriculture Organization
g	: gram

GSS	: genomic survey sequence
h	: hour/houers
HCl	: hydrochloric acid
IAA	: indoleacetic acid
K	: potassium
kb	: kilo base pairs = 1,000 bp
KN	: kinetin
L	: liter
m	: meter
Mg	: magnesium
µg	: microgram
mg	: milligram
min	: minute
µl	: microliter
ml	: mililitre
mM	: milimolar
mRNA	: messenger RNA
MS	: Murashige and Skoog media
N ₂	: nitrogen
Na	: sodium
NAA	: 1-naphthaleneacetic acid
NaCl	: sodium chloride
NaOCl	: sodium hypochlorite
NaOH	: sodium hydroxide
ng	: nanogram
nm	: nanometer

nt	: nucleotide
OD	: optical density
PCR	: polymerase chain reaction
PTGS	: Post-Transcriptional Gene Silencing
Psi	: pounds per square inch
RISC	: RNA-induced silencing complex
RNA	: ribonucleic acid
RNase	: ribonuclease
rRNA	: ribosomal RNA
RT-PCR	: reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction
SD	: standard deviation
siRNA	: Small Interfering RNAs
TBE	: Tris-Borate-EDTA
TDZ	: thidiazuron
TGS	: Transcriptional Gene Silencing
TIGS	: Transient-Induced Gene Silencing
tRNA	: transfer RNA
UV	: ultra-violet
V	: voltage
v/v	: volume per volume
Var	: variety
VIGS	: Virus-Induced Gene Silencing
ZN	: zeatin

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Mechanisms of silencing <i>via</i> Double-stranded RNA (Carthew and Sontheimer, 2009).	21
Figure 2.2 Biogenesis and activity of siRNA (Carthew and Sontheimer, 2009).	22
Figure 2.3 Model for miRNA biogenesis and activity in plants (Voinnet, 2009).	26
Figure 4.1 Creamy and mushroom shape embryo with meristematic end (A) and haustorium end (B).	48
Figure 4.2 New shoot induction in 3, 5 and 7 mg/L of BAP.	51
Figure 4.3 New shoots appearance at three different BAP concentration (3, 5 and 7mg/L) after four weeks.	52
Figure 4.4 Shoot induction after four month in 5 mg/L BAP.	53
Figure 4.5 Shoot induction abnormality in 7mg/L BAP.	54
Figure 4.6 Multiplication of <i>Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis</i>	56
Figure 4.7 New leaf production with increasing in salt concentration after one month.	58
Figure 4.8 Expansion of root system at 60 and 80 mM of NaCl.	59
Figure 4.9 Plantlets in MS medium with 120 mM NaCl.	61
Figure 4.10 Proline concentrations in the roots and leaves of <i>Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis</i> with increasing of NaCl concentration.	63
Figure 4.11 Na ⁺ levels in banana plants grown on media containing increasing concentrations of NaCl.	65
Figure 4.12 Ca ⁺⁺ levels in banana plants grown on media containing increasing concentrations of NaCl.	66
Figure 4.13 K ⁺ levels in banana plants grown on media containing increasing concentrations of NaCl.	67
Figure 4.14 Mg ⁺⁺ levels in banana plants grown on media containing increasing concentrations of NaCl.	68
Figure 5.1 Comparison of RNA extraction with modified CTAB method and CTAB (Kiefer <i>et al.</i> , 2000), method.	71
Figure 5.2 RNA extractions from roots of <i>Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis</i> grown in 0 mM and 100 mM NaCl.	73
Figure 5.3 RNAs before and after DNase treatment.	74
Figure 5.5 PCR products before and after purification.	78
Figure 5.6 Colony PCR screening of library.	79
Figure 5.7 Isolated plasmids of white colonies derived from NaCl treated banana	80
Figure 5.8 Nucleotide collection (nr/nt) blast alignments for clone-12	82
Figure 5.9 EST alignment results for clone-1.	86
Figure 5.10 EST alignment results for clone-1.	86
Figure 5.11 Clustal W multiple alignments: Clone-1, AJ853689 and AU312469.	87
Figure 5.12 EST alignment results for clone-16.	88

Figure 5.13 EST alignment results for clone-25(A), clone-33 (B) and clone-39(C).	89
Figure 5.14 EST alignment results for clone-39.	90
Figure 5.15 EST alignment results for clone-32.	91
Figure 5.16 EST alignment results for clone-3.	92
Figure 5.17 Shows two possible miR393 sequences of clone-12	96
Figure 5.18 Alignment results <i>via</i> Clustal W for microRNA 393 family: ath-miR393a, ath-mir393b and zma-miR393b. Clone-12.....	98
Figure 5.19 Alignment results <i>via</i> Clustal W for microRNA 393 family: bna-miR393, gma-miR393, mtr-miR393, mtr-miR393b, osa-miR393, ptc-miR393a, ptc-miR393b, ptc-miR393c, ptc-miR393d, rco-miR393, sbi-miR393, sbi-miR393b, vvi-miR393a, and vvi-miR393b. Clone-12.	99
Figure 5.20 Alignment results <i>via</i> Clustal W for microRNA 393 family: ghr-miR393, osa-miR393b, zma-miR393a and zma-miR393c. Clone-12.	100
Figure 5.21 Predicted stem-loop structures of <i>Musa</i> 393 miRNAs precursor.	102

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Export quantity and value of banana (FAO, 2006).....	3
Table 1.2 : Harvested area, yield and production of banana (FAO, 2007).	3
Table 2.1 : Concentrations of BAP and NAA used by Kalimuthu <i>et al.</i> (2007) for micropropagation.	13
Table 3.1 : Different concentrations of NaCl which were used for salinity experiment.	34
Table 3.2 : Sequences of adaptors and primers used in adaptor ligation, RT and PCR step.	41
Table 3. 3 : Amplification cycling parameters.....	43
Table 4.1 : Comparison of different sterilizing reagents was used for seeds Sterilization.	47
Table 4.2 : Embryo germination percentage of <i>Musa acuminata ssp. malaccensis</i> under different conditions.	49
Table 4.3 : Number of new shoots was produced per single shoot after four weeks.....	55
Table 5.1 : MicroRNA family (miR393, miR397, mi402) sequences from miRBase (http://www.mirbase.org).....	94
Table 5.2 : Similarity of clone-12 sequence of miRNA library clones to miR393 family from miRBase.	97
Table 5.3 : Specifications of two possible candidates of mac-miR393.	101
Table 5.4 : Target prediction for mac-miR 393	103