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## Occurrence of the incompatible pollen tubes in the style of plum cultivar ‘Pozna Plava’

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### SUMMARY

Self-incompatibility in fruits prevents self-fertilization by recognition and rejection of its own or genetically identical pollen. Occurrence of gametophyte incompatibility is accompanied by irregular pollen tube growth with an abundant accumulation of callose in it.

In a three-year period, pollen tube incompatibility in the style of the plum cultivar ‘Pozna Plava’ in three pollination variants was analysed using fluorescent microscopic aniline blue staining method. Pollination variants were open, cross- (‘Čačanska Najbolja’, ‘Presenta’, ‘Hanita’) and self-pollination.

In all the analysed variants, the

presence of pollen tubes with typical signs of incompatibility was found. In most cases, incompatible pollen tubes stopped their growth in the upper third of the style. In a cross-pollination with the cultivars 'Hanita' and 'a anaska Najbolja' incompatible pollen tubes in the second third of the style were seen as well. The highest percentage of incompatible pollen tubes 4,84% was found in a self-pollination variant.

Somewhat lower percentage of incompatible pollen tubes was found in a cross-pollination variant with the cultivar 'a anaska Najbolja' (3,06%), which can be explained by being a parent of the cultivar 'Pozna Plava'. The lowest percentage (less than 1,3%) of incompatible pollen tubes was found in a cross-pollination variant with the cultivars 'Presenta' and 'Hanita'.

**Key words:** plum, style, fluorescent microscope, incompatible pollen tubes

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**Key words:** plum, style, fluorescent microscope, incompatible pollen tubes

**INTRODUCTION**

In the genus *Prunus*, the style belongs to the wet type with secretory cell exudates on the stigma which enabling pollen germination and pollen tube penetration into the tissue of the stigma (Nasrallah et al., 1991).

Conductive channel is in the centre of the style composed of elongated cells which excreting the pectinase extracellular matrix (Crawford and Yanofski, 2008). After pollen adhesion on the stigma, further events including hydration, germination, growth through the conductive tissue of the style, guidance to micropyle and in the end, interaction with female gametophyte are guided and regulated by the female sporophyte (Higashiyama and Hamamura, 2008; Palanivelu and Tsukamoto, 2011).

By examining the growth of pollen tubes in cherries, Radi evi (2013) points

*Prunus*,  
 (Nasrallah et al., 1991).  
 (Crawford and Yanofski, 2008).  
 (Higashiyama and Hamamura, 2008; Palanivelu and Tsukamoto, 2011).  
 , Radi evi

(2013) - to a faster growth of pollen tubes in the style than in the ovary, indicating the dependence of pollen tubes numbers and the growth rate of used pollinators of the sporophytes of the mother plant.

(Herrero, 1992). - Reduction in the numbers of pollen tubes along the style is associated with the reduction of the conductive channel, and therefore the availability of nutrients (Herrero, 1992).

(Frankling-Tong and Franklin, 2003). - Self-incompatibility is one of the most important mechanisms of plants to prevent self-pollination and enhance cross-pollination (Frankling-Tong and Franklin, 2003). In plants, there are two types of self-incompatibility, sporophytic and gametophytic. The sporophytic type is found in a small number of plants from the families *Brassicaceae*, *Asteraceae* and *Convolvulaceae*, while the gametophytic type is more prevalent (Igic and Kohn, 2001).

*Brassicaceae*, *Asteraceae* *Convolvulaceae*, - Unlike other species of the genus *Prunus*, in which there is a gametophytic system of incompatibility, both types of self-incompatibility are seen in domestic plum (Botu et al., 2002). Sporophytic incompatibility is conditioned by locus mutation, responsible for pollen formation and cytoplasmic sterility (Kota and L cis, 2013). The gametophytic system is based on the allelic polymorphism of the S-RNase of the coding gene or S-gene, and based on its manifestation, cultivars are classified into three groups: self-compatible, partially self-compatible and self-incompatible (Botu et al., 2002).

*Prunus*, (Botu et al., 2002). -

Lacis, 2013). (Kota and L cis, 2013). -

S-RNase S- -

: (Botu et al., 2002). -

(Kho i Baër, 1971). -

- have been used: determination of style

: (S-RNase)  
 (Halász et al., 2010).  
 " " : ,  
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 (2008 ., 2010 . 2011 .)  
 " " .  
 2002 .  
 ,  
 (*Prunus cerasifera* L.),  
 6,0x5,0 m.  
 " " ,  
 1980 .  
 " " ,  
 " " ,  
 2008 .  
 - Klaus Ganter  
 ( Klaus Ganter  
 Markenbaumschule, Wyhl, )  
 " a ak Späthe".  
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 " " ) .  
 ,  
 .  
 - 72, 144,  
 240 .  
 FPA (70% , 90:5:5)  
 4° .

- ribonuclease (S-RNase) and DNA  
 - amplification and identification by PCR  
 analysis (Halász et al., 2010).

The research in this paper was  
 aimed at determining the presence of  
 incompatible pollen tubes in the style of  
 'Pozna Plava' in three variants of  
 pollination: open, cross- and self-  
 pollination.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

Investigations were carried out  
 during the three-year period (2008, 2010  
 and 2011) within the plum plantation at  
 the Ljubic facility of the Fruit Research  
 Institute a ak. The orchard was  
 established in 2002, with cultivars grafted  
 on a myrobalan (*Prunus cerasifera* L.)  
 rootstock, with a spacing of 6.0x5.0 m.  
 The plum cultivar 'Pozna Plava' was used  
 as a test material, created in 1980 at the  
 Fruit Research Institute from the self-  
 pollination of the cultivar ' a anska  
 Najbolja', recognized as a cultivar in 2008.  
 In cooperation with Mr. Klaus Ganter  
 (plantations of Klaus Ganter  
 Markenbaumschule, Wyhl, Germany) this  
 plum cultivar has been protected in the  
 European Union under the name ' a ak  
 Späthe'.

Under field conditions, during the  
 full flowering sub-phase, experiment was  
 set with three pollination variant: open,  
 cross- (pollen of the ' a anska Najbolja',  
 'Presenta' and 'Hanita' cultivars) and self-  
 pollination. The application of pollen on  
 the pistil stigma was made at the time  
 when the secretion on the stigma was  
 observed. Upon the pollination, pollinated  
 pistils were subjected to the triple  
 successive fixation – 72, 144, 240 hours.

To fix the samples, pistils were  
 immediately soaked in FPA solution (70%  
 ethanol, propionic acid and formaldehyde,  
 90:5:5 percentages by volume) and stored  
 at 4°C. A fluorescence-microscopic  
 method with aniline-blue as a  
 fluorochrome (Preil, 1970; Kho and Baër,

Kho and Baër, 1971) .

(Preil, 1970;

1971) was used to examine the growth of pollen tubes in the style.

(Olympus BX61)

Multiple Image Analysis in AnalySIS.

The occurrence of incompatible pollen tubes in the style was done on the fluorescent microscope (Olympus BX61) under ultraviolet light, using Multiple Image Analysis in AnalySIS software.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

( 1).

( 1 , 1b).

( 1 )

2010 .

" " (60%)  
" " (17%) .

( 1d, 1 ).

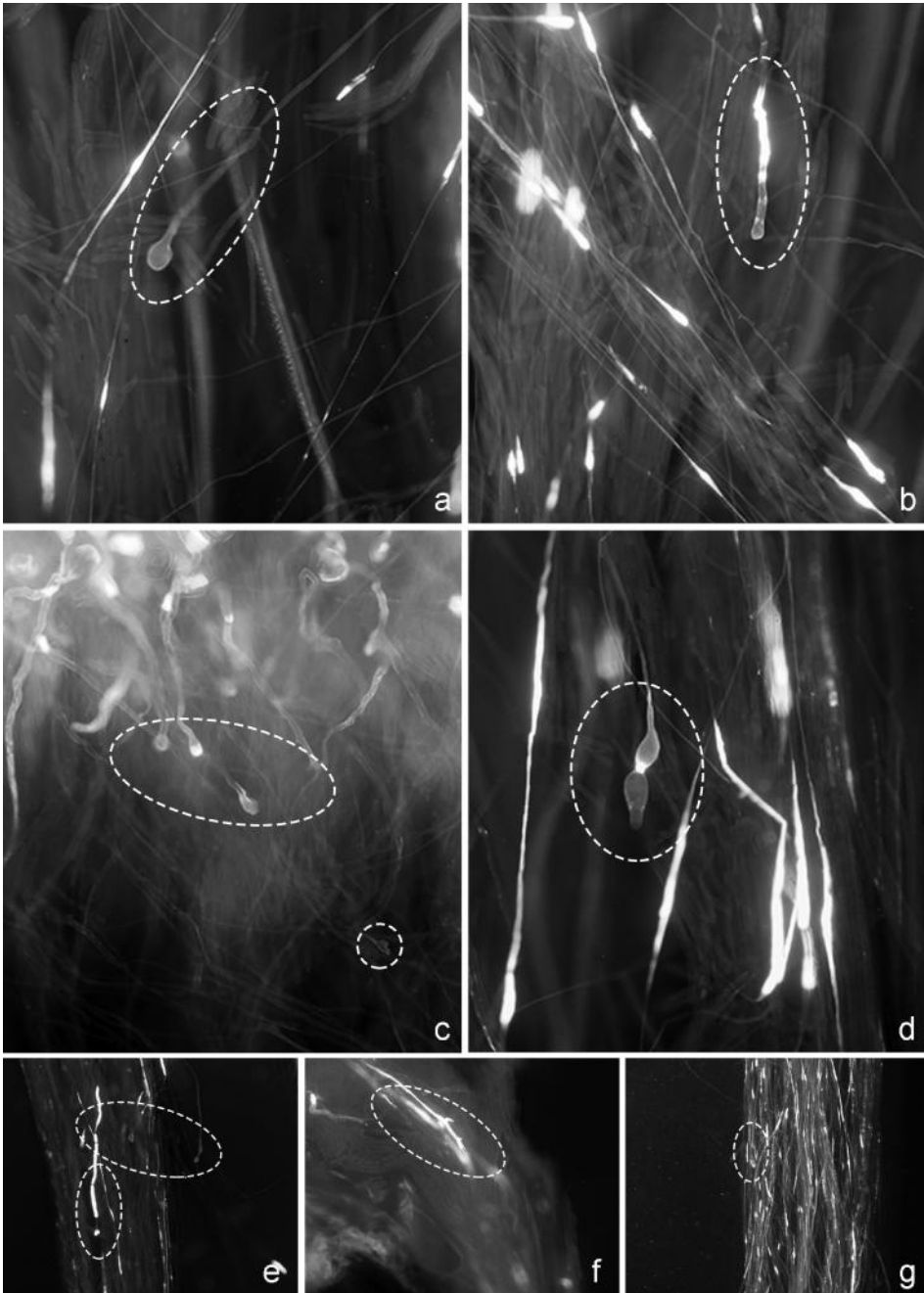
( 1f, 1g).

The occurrence of gametophytic incompatibility was accompanied by irregular growth of pollen tubes, with an abundant accumulation of callosis in it. In all pollination variants, the presence of pollen tubes with typical signs of incompatibility was found (Figure 1).

In the majority of cases, incompatible pollen tubes stopped their growth in the upper third of the style (Figure 1a, 1b). The largest number of incompatible pollen tubes was characterized by an extended tip, which was more or less fluorescence. Pollen tubes that were thickened all over their length were also observed and more fluoresced than other pollen tubes. In a small number, incompatible pollen tubes were observed in the region just below the stigma (Figure 1c) or in the second third of the style.

Only in 2010, the presence of incompatible pollen tubes was observed in the second third of the style, in the cross-pollination variant with the cultivar 'Hanita' (60% of the total number of incompatible pollen tubes was in the second third of the style) and with the cultivar ' a anska Najbolja' (17% of the total number of incompatible pollen tubes were in the second third of the style).

Tip of the incompatible pollen tube was most often round, but incompatible pollen tubes with an irregularly shaped tip were also observed (Figure 1d, 1e). Apart from the typical signs of incompatibility, pollen tubes that have had stronger or weaker branches were seen in smaller number as well (Figure 1f, 1g).



1. ; ) ; - ) ; - ) ; f-g)

**Fig. 1. Incompatible pollen tubes: a–b) typical extended tip of pollen tube; c) their presence in the stigma; d–e) irregular tip of pollen tube; f–g) branching of incompatible pollen tube**

For all three years, the highest number of incompatible pollen tubes, on average, was found in the self-pollination variant (4.84%), while the smallest number was found in the cross-pollination variants with the cultivars 'Presenta' and 'Hanita' (1.10% and 1.25%) (Table 1).

Observed by the year of study, the largest number of incompatible pollen tubes in the self- and cross-pollination variants was found in 2010, while in the open pollination variant, in 2008.

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1. " " (%)

**Table 1. Presence of incompatible pollen tubes (%) in the style of the plum cultivar Pozna Plava, in variants of pollination, by years**

Pollination variant	Style region	Year 2008	Year 2010	Year 2011	Total
'Pozna Plava'	1/3	2,65	6,75	5,11	4,84
' a anska Najbolja'	1/3	1,92	5,64	3,46	3,06
	2/3	/	1,15	/	
'Hanita'	1/3	1,82	1,29	0,10	1,25
	2/3	/	1,77	/	
'Presenta'	1/3	–	1,70	0,49	1,10
Open pollination	1/3	4,56	3,42	4,33	4,10

In a self-pollination variant by the years of study, the number of incompatible pollen tubes ranged from 2,65% to 5,11%. In cross-pollination variants, the number of incompatible pollen tubes was in the range 1,92–6,79% with the cultivar ' a anska Najbolja'; 0,10–3,06% with 'Hanita' and 0,49–1,79% with the cultivar 'Presenta'. In an open-pollination variant, the number ranged from 3,42 to 4,56%.

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Genetic control of self-incompatibility is regulated by a multiallelic S-locus, where the compatibility of crossing is determined by the haploid pollen genome and the diploid genome of the pistil. Stopping of the pollen tube growth occurs if the S-allele

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S-  
 S-  
 -  
 -  
 : S-RNase ( ) S-  
 F-box gene, *SLF* (S-  
 box) (kod *Prunus mume*) *SFB* S-  
 -specific F-box gene) ( *Prunus dulcis*, *Punus avium* *Prunus cerasus*), S-

(Hauck et al., 2006).

(Dicenta et al., 2002).

S-RNase *SFB*  
 S-  
*Rosaceae* PCR  
 (Kitasiba et al., 2007).

1.10%

4.84%

2010

possessing a pollen grain is mutual with one of the two S-alleles of the pistil. Two completely different S-locus genes are involved in identifying and rejecting their own pollen: S-RNase (glycoprotein with ribonucleate) as an S-component of the pistil and F-box gene, *SLF* (S-lokus F-box) (kod *Prunus mume*) and *SFB* S-haplotype-specific F-box gene) (in *Prunus dulcis*, *Punus avium* and *Prunus cerasus*), as an S-component of the pollen, whose function in the incompatible reaction haven't been established yet (Hauck et al., 2006).

The fact that the gametophytic incompatibility system prevents self-fertilization, leading to reduced fruit set, pollination with compatible pollen is extremely important. In fruits, the occurrence of self-incompatibility excludes one varietal planting and requires the presence of two or three compatible pollinators (Dicenta et al., 2002). Examination of self-fertility, as well as the benefits of certain pollinators, have been most often defined by fruit set or by examination of pollen tubes growth in the style after pollination.

Identification of S-RNase and *SFB* gene enabled the characterization of S-haplotype in the representatives of *Rosaceae* family using PCR analysis. This method is independent of flowering time and season, because vegetative tissue is used as the analysis material (Kitasiba et al., 2007).

Using fluorescence microscopic method of aniline blue staining, the number of incompatible pollen tubes ranged from 1.10% in the variant of cross pollination with the cultivar 'Presenta', up to 4.84% in self-pollination.

In most cases incompatible pollen tubes stopped their growth in the upper third of the style. In 2010, in the cross pollination variant with the cultivars 'Hanita' and



" " "

" (3.06%)

1,3%)

" " " "

(Ünal et al., 2013).

*Prunus*:  
(Milatovi and Nikoli, 2007),  
(Milošević, 2013; Djorđević et al., 2014),

37, Milatovi and  
Nikoli (2007)

" ' a anska Najbolja', incompatible pollen tubes were observed in the second third of the style. Approximately the same number of incompatible pollen tubes was established in the variant of self- and open pollination in all three years of study, which is probably conditioned, among others, by the presence of their own pollen on the stigma in the open pollination variant.

A somewhat smaller number of incompatible pollen tubes in the variant of cross pollination with the cultivar ' a anska Najbolja' (3.06) can be explained by it being a parent of the 'Pozna Plava' cultivar. The lowest number (less than 1.3%) of incompatible pollen tubes was determined in the cross pollination variant with the cultivars 'Presenta' and 'Hanita'.

Gametophytic incompatibility system involves irregular behavior of pollen tubes and a large callose deposition in them (Ünal et al., 2013). In this incompatibility system, reaction of pollen rejection is most common in the upper third of the style and is accompanied by a strong callose deposition in the pollen tubes walls and its sedimentation at the very top leading to the formation of a characteristic extension of the pollen tube tip.

The results obtained agree with the results of the study with larger number of species of the genus *Prunus*: apricot (Milatovi and Nikoli, 2007), plum (Milošević, 2013; or evi et al., 2014) in which the occurrence of incompatible pollen tubes is mainly related to the region of the upper third of the style.

By testing self-fertility in 37 cultivars of apricot, Milatovi and Nikoli (2007) state the presence of incompatible pollen tubes that stop growth in lower parts of the ovary. The same results of incompatible pollen tubes occurrence in lower parts of the ovary were observed in eight apricot

(Milatovi et al., 2010).

” ( “ (2008) ), Kuzmanovi (2008), finds the presence of incompatible pollen tubes in the upper third of the style from 12.1 to 17%.

Milosevic (2013) found the presence of incompatible pollen tubes in 3.70-23,81%.

S-

(Selesses and Bonnet, 1994).

*Prunoideae* (Tao and Iezzoni, 2010).

(Kota and Laciš, 2013).

cultivars analysed in the variants of self- and cross pollination (Milatovi et al., 2010).

Analyzing the pollen tube growth in the style of the plum cultivar ‘ a anska Lepotica’ in three variants of pollination (open pollination, cross- and self-pollination), Kuzmanovi (2008), finds the presence of incompatible pollen tubes in the upper third of the style from 12.1 to 17%. By examining the pollen tube growth in the style of three plum cultivars, Milosevic (2013) found the presence of incompatible pollen tubes in 3.70-23.81% of pistils.

Because of genome’s three-components, it is difficult to find the same allelic formula or structure for two domestic plums, since each genome has its own S-gene with multiple alleles. For this reason, each plum cultivar with pollen fertility can be a pollenizer to another plum cultivar but in varying degrees (Selesses and Bonnet, 1994). Due to the polyploidy and complex structure of the genome, domestic plum is the last studied species from the subfamily *Prunoideae* (Tao and Iezzoni, 2010). For this reason, compatible groups in plums have not been defined yet and there are no reliable information on the genetic diversity of self-incompatible alleles (Kota and Laciš, 2013).

## CONCLUSIONS

5%,

Since these are incompatible pollen tubes whose counts in relation to the total number of pollen tubes in the upper third of the style was less than 5%, their influence is insignificant, even on the number of pollen tubes that penetrate into the ovary, therefore they can only be of significance here in terms of description of (the incidence of) different morphological forms of incompatible pollen tubes.

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2 “ ” , 7, 1331 ,  
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## Vegetative and reproductive characteristic of plum trees of 'Tegera' cultivar after the application of conventional and biofertilizers

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### SUMMARY

2016-2017 . - The vegetative and reproductive characteristics of plum trees of 'Tegera' cultivar were followed after the application of conventional and biofertilizers in the period of 2016-2017 in the Research Institute of Mountain Stockbreeding and Agriculture - Troyan.

“ ” - The most pronounced growth of tree trunk was found after the application of conventional fertilizer – 49.18 cm (2016 g) and 50.25 cm (2017).

– 49,18 m (2016 .) 50,25 m (2017 .). -

- 26,59 m<sup>3</sup>, - The biggest volume of tree crowns was found in the first experimental year in the application of biofertilizer - 26.59 m<sup>3</sup>, and during the next year in the application

– 23,81 m<sup>3</sup>.  
 14,25 m<sup>3</sup> 8,99 m<sup>3</sup>.  
 (kg/ ).  
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 (Kumar et al., 2018).  
 (Mondeshka et al., 2002; Vitanova et al., 2006).  
 (Lichev et al., 2004).  
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 . (Baden and Byren, 2012).  
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 (Dzhuvinov et al., 2014).  
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 (Todorova and Boteva, 2015).  
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 “ ”.

- of chicken manure - 23.81 m<sup>3</sup>. For comparison, the control results were 14.25 m<sup>3</sup> and 8.99 m<sup>3</sup>.

- The variants with conventional fertilizer and chicken manure were characterized by higher average fruit yields - kg/tree over the two-year experimental period.

- **Key words:** plum, cultivar, fertilization, indicators, yield

## INTRODUCTION

- Plum is an important and widespread fruit tree in temperate climates (Kumar et al., 2018). It takes the first place of economic significance for the mountainous regions of Bulgaria (Mondeshka et al., 2002; Vitanova et al., 2006). Its tree has good growth power, which is influenced by the cultivar, rootstock and the habitat conditions (Lichev et al., 2004). Plum cultivars are varied in terms of their fruit characteristics such as size, shape, color, texture, aroma, etc. (Baden and Byren, 2012).

- In order to obtain a high, annual and quality fruit harvest, the pruning should be conducted specifically to each cultivar, depending on the type and age of the fruit-bearing wood (Dzhuvinov et al., 2014).

- Crops have particularly high nutrient needs in their growth phases. Nourishing fertilization at such a time results in higher yields, using suitable ones, in the optimal form and concentration (Todorova and Boteva, 2015).

- The aim of the study is to follow the influence of biological, conventional and organic fertilization on the vegetative and reproductive characteristics of 'Tegera' cultivar trees.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

RIMSA-Troyan, the plum plantation of the German cultivar 'Tegera' was created in the spring of 2001. The trees are planted in trenches with organic stockpile fertilizing with manure (130 kg/1 m<sup>2</sup>) at planting distances of 4/2.5 m.

The row spacing is grassed with tall fescue and the intra row spacing is kept in black fallow. The cultivar is grown according to its agro-technical requirements.

The experiment with the following fertilization variants was set in the spring of 2016:

• **I variant** – Bio-fertilization – including fertilizers: Agriful (soil) – 5 l/da, Tecamin Flower (leaf) – 0.3%, Tecnocel Amino Ca (leaf) – 0.4%;

• **II variant** – Conventional – Yara Mila Complex (soil) – 0.500 kg/tree, YaraVita Frutrel (leaf) – 0.500 ml/da, Yara Vita Universal Bio (leaf) – 0.500 ml/da;

• **III variant** – Granulated Chicken Manure - 0.500 kg/tree;

• **IV variant** – Control.

Fertilization periods:

• Agriful – applied five times from the beginning of the vegetation for a period of 15-20 days;

• Tecamin Flower – 2 applications. Applied before blossoming and during the formation of a fruit-set;

• Tecnocel Amino Ca – 2 applications. Applied after blossoming and a month before harvesting;

• Yara Mila Complex – 1 application in 2016;

• ammonium nitrate – 1 application in 2017 - 0.220 kg/tree;

• YaraVita Frutrel – four applications. The first application was at the phase of winter buds, at the phase of white button, at the fruit-set formation and a month after the harvest.

• Yara Vita Universal Bio -  
 •  
 2016 .  
 (Nedev et al., 1979)  
 :  
 • (cm)  
 • (m);  
 • (m);  
 • (m);  
 • (m);  
 • (m3);  
 • (cm);  
 • (cm)  
 • (g)  
 • (kg)

• Yara Vita Universal Bio – 3 applications. Applied before and after bloom and after harvest;  
 • Granulated chicken manure – one application in 2016.  
 Each fertilizer variant includes four trees.  
 According to the methodology for study of plant resources (Nedev et al., 1979) the vegetative and reproductive indicators of the fruit trees are taken into account:  
 • Trunk diameter (cm)  
 • Crown height (m);  
 • Crown width in the row (m);  
 • Crown width in the row spacing (m);  
 • Crown volume (m3);  
 • Annual shoot length growth (cm);  
 • Total annual shoot length growth (cm)  
 • Fruit weight (g)  
 • Yield per tree (kg)

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

“ ”  
 1.  
 ,  
 ,  
 , -  
 49,18 m (2016 .) 50,25 m (2017 ).  
 -  
 - 5,42 m.  
 4,11 m.  
 2017 . -

The following vegetative indicators for 'Tegera' are shown in Table 1. The trunk grew in both years in the vegetation period, after the fertilization.  
 The most pronounced was the variant of conventional fertilization – 49.18 cm (2016 g) and 50.25 cm (2017).  
 During the first experimental year, the plum tree crowns have the highest average height in the variant of organic fertilization – 5.42 m. For comparison, the trees of the control variant have an average of 4.11 m. In 2017, the variant of chicken manure showed the highest results in terms of height, width in the row and in the row-spacing.



Table 1. Vegetative indicators of 'Tegera' cultivar for the period 2016-2017

Indicators /Variant	Trunk diameter cm	Crown height m	Crown width in the row m	Crown width in the row spacing m	Crown volume m <sup>3</sup>	Annual shoot length growth cm	Total annual shoot length growth cm
2016							
I Bio-fertilization	45,95	5,42	3,78	4,88	26,59	9,24	36,97
II Conventional	49,18	5,05	3,73	3,95	19,49	7,50	30,01
III Chicken manure	44,55	4,57	3,75	3,86	17,31	10,03	40,12
IV Control	42,60	4,11	3,87	3,41	14,25	7,90	31,61
St error	1,38	0,28	0,03	0,31	2,62	0,59	2,35
St Dev	2,77	0,57	0,06	0,62	5,25	1,17	4,69
CV %	6,08	11,91	1,63	15,33	27,03	13,55	13,53
LSD <sub>0,05</sub>	ns	0,74	ns	0,62	7,78	1,84	-
2017							
I Bio-fertilization	47,00	5,27	3,32	4,01	18,52	10,28	41,12
II Conventional	50,25	5,16	3,56	3,96	19,09	9,21	36,86
III Chicken manure	45,95	5,40	3,89	4,32	23,81	8,55	34,19
IV Control	42,48	3,83	2,86	3,13	8,99	10,48	41,93
St error	1,60	0,36	0,22	0,25	3,10	0,45	1,82
St Dev	3,20	0,73	0,43	0,51	6,21	0,91	3,64
CV %	6,88	14,85	12,72	13,20	35,29	9,46	9,46
LSD <sub>0,05</sub>	ns	ns	0,94	ns	9,59	ns	-

-

-

2017 .  
- 23,81 m<sup>3</sup>.

14,25 m<sup>3</sup> 8,99 m<sup>3</sup>.

2016 .

- 10,03 cm,

(CV-13,55%).

The results of the crown volume significantly fluctuate during the reporting period due to a higher coefficient of variation compared to other indicators.

In the first year, the trees with the bio-fertilization variant have the largest volume – 26.59 m<sup>3</sup>, and in 2017 those with the chicken manure – 23.81 m<sup>3</sup>. In both years, the fruit trees from the control variant have the lowest results, respectively 14.25 m<sup>3</sup> and 8.99 m<sup>3</sup>.

The annual shoot length growth is relatively small. In the first year (2016), the largest average length was measured in the chicken manure variant – 10.03 cm, followed in descending order of bio-fertilization, control and conventional fertilization (CV-13.55%). The average total annual shoot length growth follows

2017 .,  
 - 41,93 cm,  
 34,19 cm.

the same sequence. For 2017, the highest average and total annual shoot length growth was recorded for the trees of the control variant – 41.93 cm, and the smallest in the chicken manure variant - 34.19 cm. The probable cause for the inferior values of the conventional fertilization and chicken fertilizer variant is their higher fruit yield.

The reported reproductive performance for the experimented period is presented in Table 2.

**2. “ ” 2016-2017 .**  
**Table 2. Reproductive manifestations of 'Tegera' cultivar for the period 2016-2017**

/ Indicators / Variant		Fruit weight g	Yield per tree kg
2016			
I	/Bio-fertilization	30.00	1.05
II	/Conventional fertilization	32.40	2,01
III	/Chicken manure	31.20	2,81
IV	/Control	29,20	1,47
St error		0,70	0,38
St Dev		1,40	0,76
CV %		4,56	41,39
LSD <sub>0,05</sub>		ns	ns
2017			
I	/ Bio-fertilization	31,16	14,30
II	/ Conventional fertilization	28,12	33,92
III	/ Chicken manure	29,96	21,55
IV	/ Control	24,48	17,42
St error		1,46	4,30
St Dev		2,91	8,61
CV %		10,25	39,50
LSD <sub>0,05</sub>		1,82	13,67

2016 .  
 -  
 - 32,40 g,  
 ,  
 ,  
 ,

For 2016, the highest average weight of one fruit was found in conventional fertilization – 32.40 g, followed by the chicken manure, bio-fertilizer and control. In the following year, the highest statistically proven mean value for fruit size was recorded in the variant of bio-fertilizers of the first variant, with a result of 31.16 g, compared to the

	31,16 g,		
	24,48 g.		
2016 .	-		
(	) - 2,81 kg/	(	)
1,05 kg/	.		
2017 .	-		
33,92 kg/	-		
	- 14,30 kg/		
39,50%	41,39%	2016 .	
		2017 .	

24.48 g control.

The average fruit yield in 2016 is the highest in the third variant (chicken manure) – 2.81 kg/tree and the lowest in the first variant (bio fertilization) – 1.05 kg/tree. In general, the small amount of fruit in all variants during the year is the result of low temperatures during blossoming, resulting in frost and drying of ovary and stigma. Reported yield from variants in the next 2017 is significantly higher. The highest amount of plum fruits are obtained from conventional fertilization – 33.92 kg/tree, and at least from organic fertilizers – 14.30 kg/tree. The high variation coefficient of 41.39% in 2016 and 39.50% in 2017 was determined by the significantly variable yield over both experimental years among the different fertilization variants. Differences are mathematically proven.

## CONCLUSIONS

The conventional fertilization has a positive impact on the higher values of trunk diameter in 'Tegera' plum cultivar.

The greatest crown volume was found in bio-fertilization variant in 2016, and in 2017 in the variant with chicken manure.

The highest average annual shoot length and total growth was in the first year in the chicken manure variant, as in the next year the highest values were found in the control variant.

Despite the low yield, resulting from the decrease in air temperature at the time of blossoming, leading to freezing and drying of ovary and stigmas in 2016, and the significantly higher quantity of fruit produced in 2017, the conventional fertilization options and the chicken fertilizer have the highest yield over both years.

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## Irrigation management in perennial crops by sensing the plant water status

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### SUMMARY

- The irrigation management is  
- based on various methods for estimation  
- of atmospheric, soil and plant  
- characteristics. The possibility to measure  
- one or another plant characteristic is  
- considered to be advantageous, because  
- it provides immediate information about  
- the crop-plants water status.

(pressure bomb)

- Thus, for instance, the *pressure chamber*  
- measures the leaf/stem water potential,  
- which is directly related to the growth or,  
- eventually, to the level of water stress in  
- plants. The *ZIM-probe* is a non-  
- destructive sensor measuring the  
- changes in leaf turgor caused by their  
- watering or by water stress.

(  
- *Dendrometers* measure changes of the  
- order of microns in the size of vegetative  
- organs (fruit, branches, stem), as far as  
- the respective changes in the tissue water  
- storage make them to swell/shrink.

ZIM

The *heat balance/pulse methods* are used to measure the transpiration flow in the stems, which is indicative of the water used by plants.

The *infrared thermometry* measures, without direct physical contact, the difference between the ambient and the canopy temperature which is indicative of the plant water status.

The *porometers and the infrared gas analyzers* measure stomatal conductivity, which is related to the water stress levels.

Most of the listed methods enable high frequency and automation of the measurements suitable for an irrigation management information system, bringing in real time information and instructions to a farmer's mobile device (telephone).

The number of sensors per unit area is subject of additional optimization against the necessary representativeness of the measurements.

**Key words:** pressure chamber, ZIM probe, dendrometer, heat balance and pulse, infrared thermometry, porometer, infrared gas analyzer

## INTRODUCTION

Fruit crops grow normally and exhibit their maximum productive potential if their water requirements are met throughout the vegetation season. Water for the fruit plants is provided mainly by the storage accumulated in the soil prior to vegetation, rainfalls during the growing season and irrigation.

The regime of irrigation is technologically consistent when both the timing of applications and the application rates conform with the crop specificity and the climate and soil characteristics.

The irrigation scheduling and management is based on various

(Boyer, 1995; NEH 15-1, 1991).  
/ (Smith and Allen, 1996; Jones, 2007; Fernández, 2017).

- methods for assessment of atmospheric, soil and plant parameters (Boyer, 1995; NEH 15-1, 1991). The opportunity to determine/measure one or the other plant parameter is considered advantageous, because it provides firsthand information about the water status of the crop (Smith and Allen, 1996; Jones, 2007; Fernández, 2017).

**Visual estimation of the water status**

- Most visual symptoms are firstly detected on leaves and are expressed by retarded growth, changed shape and altered position in relation to the sun. Usually, the visual symptoms become visible when the plants have already reached high levels of water stress, which cause irreversible reduction of the yield and the fruit quality. These undesired effects can be avoided using indicator plants that are naturally more susceptible to soil water deficits and provide a visual signal for a needed irrigation before the plant water stress reaches critical values.

- Some of the crop plants can be turned into test plants as well, either by restriction of their root systems using mechanical barriers or by planting them in a soil that is mixed with sand to reduce its available water storage (NEH 15-1, 1991).

15-1, 1991).

(NEH

**Measuring the water potential**

The water potential is directly related to the plant growth and, eventually, to the level of the water stress developed in plants. The water potential in leaves and stems is measured using a pressure chamber. The primary features of the pressure chamber are the chamber, pressure gauge, control valve, and a small nitrogen-gas tank to serve as a pressure source. To start the measurement, a leaf is cut from the plant and placed into the chamber leaving sufficient petiole length to extend through a sealed stopper. Presumably, once the

1965). (Scholander et al.,

petiole or spur is severed, water withdraws within the xylem vessels, because of the pressure difference between the higher external (atmospheric) pressure and the water potential inside the conducting tissue. Through unwinding the valve, the nitrogen gas is let to enter the chamber pressurizing the leaf and forcing the water in the xylem back to the cut petiole surface. It is presumed that the positive chamber pressure in this moment matches the negative potential of the xylem water before cutting the leaf.

The stem water potential is measured using a leaf located close to the stem or to a limb. One-two hours before the measurement, the leaf has to be wrapped in an opaque water/vapor impermeable material (foil lined paper bag) in order to induce stomatal closure and prevent transpiration. It is presumed that under these conditions the leaf water potential is identical with the stem water potential. It should be noted, however, that the pressure chamber readings change drastically during the day: The water potential values are highest just before sunrise and lowest at approximately solar noon. These are the most suitable periods of the day for measurements related to irrigation-management, because the readings remain relatively stable. Some crops may have rather erratic midday readings due to their ability to maintain relatively constant water stress, either closing the stomata or through osmoregulation. In such cases, the predawn readings are considered more reliable. The stem water potential is regarded as the more adequate indicator of the water stress in plants. The measurement procedure cannot be automated. The method is applicable mainly for research purposes (Boyer, 1995; UC-ANR, 2014; Fernández, 2017).

(Boyer, 1995; UC-ANR, 2014; Fernández, 2017).



### Measuring the stomatal conductance

Plants use stomatal opening and closure to regulate the leaf gas exchange and, particularly, the water loss in vapor state (transpiration), which is governed by the stomatal conductance. Because the transpiration rate is in inverse proportion to the water stress, stomatal conductance is used as an indicator for the water status of plants. The stomatal conductance is measured using porometers and infrared gas analyzers. Both instruments have a chamber in which an intact leaf or part of it is isolated without detaching it from the plant. The method is based on the mass balance of the water contained in the air flowing through the chamber. When the leaf cuticle is permeable, the apparatus measures the leaf conductance. The measurement procedure cannot be automated. The method is applicable mainly for research purposes (Pearcy et al., 2000; Fernández, 2017).

### Infrared thermometry

This method relates plant water status to the difference between the canopy ( $T_{\text{leaf}}$ ) and the ambient-air ( $T_{\text{air}}$ ) temperatures, which are measured without direct physical contact. It is presumed that the temperature of well watered plants is relatively lower, due to the intensive transpiration, while the development of drought-induced water stress increases plant temperature. The need of irrigation is determined by water stress indices (WSI) developed on the basis of the temperature difference.

These are empirical relationships of the type  $WSI = f(T_{\text{leaf}} - T_{\text{air}})$ , which may also account for other environmental factors. Besides irrigation management, the infrared thermometry can serve as an indirect indicator for both the water storage in the root zone and the stomatal conductance. Readings are taken between 11:00 and 14:00 hours in a clear

11:00 14:00

(Jackson, 1982; Martin, 2001).

day using either infrared handheld thermometers or thermal cameras mounted at the crop level, but also on booms, drones, planes and satellites.

The images captured by the thermal infrared remote sensing provide information about the spatial variation in plant water status. The infrared thermometry can be automated but yields unreliable data in windy or cloudy weather, which limits its application (Jackson, 1982; Martin, 2001).

### **Dendrometry**

Dendrometers measure small changes, of the order of microns, in the size of various plant organs (stems, branches, leaves, roots, or fruit) caused by variations in their water status. Under water stress, the water shortage is compensated by the water stored in plant tissues, which makes them shrink. The shrinking is, however, reversible at subsequent plant rehydration. The differences between the daily and the nocturnal transpiration rates cause fluctuations with daily recurrence in the size of the surveyed organ. The maximum daily shrinkage and the stem growth rate are the most widely used indicators in irrigation scheduling. However, both indicators are highly dependent on parameters of the crop as age, cultivar, vigor, crop load, phenological phase etc. The need of regular expert interpretation limits the potentialities of the irrigation process automation. The dendrometers themselves are robust and precise, suitable for automatic reading, recording and data transmission under field conditions. These devices enable detection of the water deficit, respectively the need for irrigation, well before the appearance of the water stress symptoms and even before the appearance of measurable changes in the values of the water potential. The main problem encountered is that, sometimes, the same response is

(Bormann and Kozlowski, 1962; Clark et al., 2000; Fernández, 2017).

(Sakuratani, 1981; Smith and Allen, 1996; Green et al., 2003; Fernández, 2017).

obtained with an excess of water in the soil (Bormann and Kozlowski, 1962; Clark et al., 2000; Fernández, 2017).

### Methods of heat balance/puls

Heat is used as a tracer for estimation of the transpiration rate or, in other words, the upward sap flux in the plant xylem (Sakuratani, 1981; Smith and Allen, 1996; Green et al., 2003; Fernández, 2017).

With the stem heat-balance method, the xylem-water temperature is increased applying heat to the entire circumference of a stem section, typically a few centimeters long. A constant heat flux is provided by a semi-flexible heating band which is wrapped around the stem and enclosed in thermo-insulation and water-proof materials.

The sap flow is determined as a function of the heat uptake by the moving sap stream, which is a loss term in the stem heat balance. In long-term studies, the sensor positions must be periodically changed because of the stem growth.

In large stem sizes both the heater band and the energy requirements becomes too large, and the calculation of the heat-balance terms becomes difficult.

That is why, in the practice these methods are rarely used for stem diameters larger than 10-12 cm.

10-12 cm.

With the heat-pulse method, the sap flux is calculated by the velocity of a short (1-2 s) pulse of heat carried by the sap stream in the plant xylem. The pulse of heat is released from a heater probe (needle of stainless steel housing a resistance wire) installed radially into the stem. A sensor probe is installed above the heating one, at a distance of 10-20 mm. It is a needle of stainless steel housing one or several thermistors set at a distance of 8-15 mm.

(1-2 s)

10-20 mm

?	8-15 mm. 1.5-2.0 mm,	<p>The heating probes are usually 1.8-2.0 mm in diameter; their length and the number of the thermistors depend on the thickness of the sapwood. The velocity, respectively the sap flux is determined by the time required for the sap stream to move the peak of the heat pulse from the heater to the respective thermistor.</p>
		<p>The transpiration rate is calculated from the integral of the sap flux profile over the sapwood cross-sectional area. Finally, the transpiration rate is compensated for the dissipation of heat by conduction through the matrix of wood fibers, water and gas within the stem.</p>
	5-10 mm	<p>In order to account for these effects, a second sensor probe is installed 5-10 mm below the heating one. In practice, four sets of heat-pulse probes per tree are typically used to measure sap flow, one installed in each quadrant of the stem.</p>
	30 mm.	<p>Because of practical reasons, the heat pulse method can be used on stems with diameters larger than 30 mm. The measurements can be fully automated.</p>
<b>(ZIM- )</b>		<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Measuring the leaf turgor (ZIM-probe)</b></p> <p>Plant water status is related to the leaf turgor. This is an automated non-destructive method. Part of the leaf surface is placed between two toric magnets and subjected to the magnetic-field-induced pressure.</p>
( ),		<p>The plant water stress is assumed to be proportional to the difference between the magnetic pressure and the turgor (the water pressure in the leaf cells). The pressure difference is measured by a sensor integrated in one of the magnets and connected by a cable to a data-logger or to a radio transmitter.</p>
( )		<p>The distance between the magnets (respectively the pressing force) can be regulated for providing close contact</p>

ZIM-  
(Fernández et al.,  
2012; Zimmermann et al., 2013; Fernández,  
2017).

- according to leaf rigidity and elasticity.  
The ZIM probe works well with hydrated  
and moderately hydrated leaves  
(Fernández et al., 2012; Zimmermann et  
al., 2013; Fernández, 2017).

## CONCLUSIONS

Peculiarity of all methods involving  
plant water status in irrigation  
management is their ability to directly  
estimate the time for irrigation but not the  
water application rate. Therefore, the use  
of plant sensing methods have to be  
combined with estimation/measurement of  
the soil water status or preceded by  
calibration relating the water stress  
indicators to the specific soil and climatic  
conditions.

Most of the presented methods  
allow for a high frequency and automation  
of the measurements, which make them  
appropriate for an irrigation management  
information system bringing in real time  
information and instructions to the  
producer's mobile device (e.g. telephone).

Additionally, the number of the  
sensors per unit area has to be optimized  
in order to guarantee the needed  
representativeness of the measurements.

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## Irrigation management in perennial crops by sensing the soil water status

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### SUMMARY

- The irrigation management is based on various methods for estimation of atmospheric, soil and plant characteristics. The most common ones are related to soil water status because of the soil-water controlling effect on the plant water status. The *feel and appearance* of soil when squeezed and pressed in hand is probably the oldest and the simplest method for soil moisture determination.
- The *gravimetric method* directly determines the soil moisture of samples taken from predefined locations and depths in the irrigation plot; it is used, as well, for calibration of the indirect methods. The *neutron probe* is a robust and precise instrument which can be used for taking unlimited number of readings in different locations and depths, as well as for multiple readings in one and the same point. *Dielectric methods* (TDR, FDR) are based on the relationship between the

(TDR, FDR)

water content and the dielectric constant of the soil; the probes require immediate contact with the soil and soil specific calibration.

*Tensiometers* directly measure the matric potential of the soil water, but they can be used only in conditions of high soil water content. *Resistance blocks* determine the matric soil water potential in a larger range of values measuring the electrical resistance between two electrodes embedded in the sensor; they are temperature dependent and inaccurate under either high soil salinity or concentrated fertilizer application.

The *heat dissipation* method is based on the relationship between the heat conductivity of the soil and its water content; a thermal heat probe consists of a porous block containing a heat source and an accurate temperature sensor.

The *soil psychrometer* determines the matric soil water potential depending on the measured relative humidity of the air in a porous camera; specialized equipment is required for the sensor's excitation and reading.

The number of sensors per unit area is subject of additional optimization against the necessary representativeness of the measurements.

**Key words:** gravimetric method, neutron probe, TDR, FDR, tensiometer, resistance sensor, heat dissipation, psychrometer

## INTRODUCTION

Fruit crops grow normally and exhibit their maximum productive potential if the crop water requirements are met throughout the vegetation season. Water for the fruit plants is provided mainly by the storage accumulated in the soil prior to vegetation, rainfalls during the growing



(Boyer, 1995; NEH 15-1, 1991).

10-15% (Klocke and Fischbach,1984; Niederholzer and Long, 1998; Storlie, 2004).

- , season, and irrigation.
- .
- The regime of irrigation is technologically consistent when both the timing of applications and the application rates conform with the crop specificity and the climate and soil characteristics. The irrigation scheduling and management are based on various methods for assessment of atmospheric, soil, and plant parameters (Boyer, 1995; NEH 15-1, 1991).
- The commonest ones are related to soil water status because of the soil-water controlling effect on the plant water status. Moreover, the soil water regime data are used to calibrate all other methods of irrigation scheduling and management.
- The soil water status can be characterized by either soil moisture (content) or soil-water potential (energy).
- As a rule, the water-potential measuring instruments can be used for soil moisture estimation as well.

### **Soil moisture estimation**

- *The feel and appearance* of soil when squeezed and pressed in hand is probably the oldest and the simplest method for soil moisture determination.
- The accuracy of the method is not high; it depends on the experience and the individual judgment of the irrigator. After long practicing, the error can be reduced to 10-15% of the actual soil moisture (Klocke and Fischbach, 1984; Niederholzer and Long, 1998; Storlie, 2004).

- *The gravimetric method* directly determines the soil moisture of samples taken from predefined locations and depths in the irrigation plot. The mass of the water in the soil sample is obtained by subtracting the mass of the dry sample (after drying it at 105° till reaching

105°

constant readings) from the mass of the fresh sample. The gravimetric soil moisture is calculated dividing the mass of the water by the mass of the dry soil. The volumetric soil moisture is calculated multiplying the gravimetric soil moisture by the bulk density of the soil.

Advantages of the method: direct, equally reliable throughout the whole range of soil moisture values, cheap, and there is no need of calibration. The method is used for calibration of the indirect methods. The main disadvantage is its inability to estimate soil moisture twice in one and the same point (Itier et al., 1996; Pitts and Zazueta, 2001; Top and Ferré, 2002).

(Itier et al., 1996; Pitts and Zazueta, 2001; Top and Ferré, 2002).

*The neutron probe* provides comparatively rapid and easy measurement of soil moisture. It consists of two main parts: the probe with a shield, and the electronic block. The probe contains a source of fast neutrons and a slow (thermalized) neutron detector/counter. During measurements, the probe is lowered to the desired depth in the soil inside a previously installed access tube. The fast neutrons emitted by the source are scattered through multiple chaotic collisions with the hydrogen nuclei in the soil water and loose energy turning into slow neutrons. The detector counts the slow neutrons and the microprocessor converts the raw counts data into counts per unit of time.

After calibration, the counts of slow neutrons are converted into soil moisture values. When used correctly, the neutron probe is an excellent mean for measuring soil moisture. It is robust and precise, the detector ranges over relatively large soil volume which contributes to the representativeness of the single measurements, and the readings are not influenced by soil salinity.

One instrument can be used for taking unlimited number of readings in different

(Hignett and Evett, 2002; and Bacchi et al., 2003).

(Ley et al, 1994; Ferré and Topp, 2002; Starr and Paltineanu, 2002; Evett, 2003; Topp et al., 2003; 2008).

(Time Domain Reflectometry, TDR)

( )

( = 3 5 )

(0.6-1.2 GHz)

(Frequency Domain Reflectometry, FDR)

(5-150 MHz) FDR

FDR TDR

locations and depths, as well as for multiple readings in one and the same point. The measurement process, however, cannot be automated. The neutron probe application is complicated by the presence of a radiation source, which requires both a license to use and a qualified operator. Another limiting factor is the comparably high price (Hignett and Evett, 2002; and Bacchi et al., 2003).

*The dielectric methods* are based on the relationship between the soil water content and the dielectric constant of the soil (Ley et al, 1994; Ferré and Topp, 2002; Starr and Paltineanu, 2002; Evett, 2003; Topp et al., 2003; 2008). The *Time Domain Reflectometry* (TDR) makes use of the fact that the propagation velocity of an electromagnetic pulse (wave) along metal rods that are inserted into the soil depends on the soil dielectric constant, which is mainly dominated by the dielectric constant of the water (  $\epsilon_r \approx 81$  ), while those of the air ( $\epsilon_r = 1$ ) and soil minerals ( $\epsilon_r = 3$  to  $5$ ) are much lower.

After applying a high frequency pulse (0.6-1.2 GHz) at the beginning of the metal rods, the soil dielectric constant is estimated as a function of the time it takes for the electromagnetic pulse (wave) to propagate back and forth along the rods.

The *Frequency Domain Reflectometry* (FDR) estimates the soil moisture as a function of the operating frequency of an electrical circuit, in which the soil is used as a dielectric of a capacitor made of metal plates or rods embedded in the soil. Usually, this is a resonance circuit of a high-frequency (5-150 MHz) transistor oscillator.

The FDR probes are made in different variants: portable, permanently embedded in the soil or lowered into access tubes. TDR and FDR probes require immediate contact between the electrodes and the surrounding soil. They can yield

- significant reading deviations in case of cavities and cracks formed either during their installation or by shrinking of the drying soil.

- The sensing soil volume is relatively small; the measurements are temperature dependent and sensitive to high salt concentrations. The non-linear relationship between the sensor output signal and the soil moisture calibration require a more complicated and soil-specific calibration. The instruments are comparably expensive because of the sophisticated electronics.
- 

**Estimation of the soil water potential**

- *Tensiometers* measure the matric potential of the soil water or, in other words, the retentive force exerted upon the water by soil matrix, expressed in pressure units. The tensiometer is a cylindrical tube with a vacuumeter at the upper end and a porous ceramic cup at the lower one. The ceramic cup is permeable to water and ions, but it is impermeable to air. Thus, the matrix potential of soil water is transmitted to the water filling the tensiometer body and, respectively, to the vacuumeter.

- The vacuumeter can be substituted by a portable pressure transducer, which can read unlimited number of tensiometers. The instrument is equipped with a hollow needle, which punches the tensiometer's septum stopper and transmits the vacuum to the sensible membrane of the pressure transducer.

- In order to prevent the direct contact of the needle with the water, a small volume of air has to be provided below the septum stopper. The tensiometers range of operation is from 0 to 850 HPa, i.e. they can be used only in the conditions of high soil water content. The sensing soil volume is with a radius of about 10 cm.

0 850 HPa, . .

10 cm.

(Smajstra and Harrison, 1998; Young and Sisson, 2002; Storlie, 2004).

The readings are not influenced by soil salinity. No special qualification of the operator is required. Tensiometer can take multiple readings in one and the same point and there is option for automation of the measurements. Tensiometers require frequent maintenance and their response time is relatively slow (Smajstra and Harrison, 1998; Young and Sisson, 2002; Storlie, 2004).

*Resistance sensors* (gypsum blocks and sensors of other hygroscopic materials) are simple, robust and cheap means for measuring either soil water potential or soil moisture.

The measurement is indirect, based electric resistance between two electrodes embedded in the sensor, which is buried in the soil at the desired depth.

33 KPa.

These sensors are most efficient in the dry range of the soil moisture, water potential over 33 KPa. Because of their very slow reaction time, however, they do not work well in sandy soils, where soil water drains more quickly than the sensor can equilibrate. They are temperature dependent and inaccurate under either high soil salinity or concentrated fertilizer application, as far as the ions of the dissolved salts can affect the electrical resistance (Martin, 2001; Scanlon et al, 2002; Van der Gulik, 2006).

(Martin, 2001; Scanlon et al, 2002; Van der Gulik, 2006).

*The heat dissipation* method is based on the relationship between heat conductivity of the soil and its water potential. A thermal heat probe consists of a porous block containing a heat source and an accurate temperature sensor. After the water potential in the porous block is equilibrated with the soil water potential, the block temperature is measured before and after the application of a few-seconds heat pulse. The soil water potential is estimated as a function

0.01-3.00  
1.00-3.00  
10 cm.  
(Scanlon et al, 2002;  
Muñoz-Carpena, 2015).

of the difference between the temperatures in the sensor before and after the heat pulse application.

The water potential measurement range is 1.00-3.00, but readings in the interval 1.00-3.00 are less precise. The sensing soil volume is with a radius of about 10 cm. Once installed, the sensors do not need maintenance. The readings are not affected by soil salinity.

There is option for automation of the measurements. However, measurements require sophisticated electronics. The sensors can show slow reaction time in light soils where soil water drains more quickly than the sensor can equilibrate.

The frequent readings require comparably large power consumption (Scanlon et al, 2002; Muñoz-Carpena, 2015).

*The soil psychrometer* estimates the matric soil water potential from the measured relative humidity of the air in a porous camera (sensor), on condition that the water potential in the camera walls is in equilibrium with the soil water potential.

The camera walls can be either ceramic or screen of stainless steel, in case of high salinity environments. Physical base of the method is the direct relation between the water potential in the camera walls and the vapor pressure in the air inside the camera, which, in turn, is calculated from the dew-point temperature depression measured by several thermocouple junctions.

0.05-3.00  
1.00-3.00

The water potential measurement range is 0.05-3.00, but readings in the interval 1.00-3.00 are less accurate. The sensor is highly sensitive when typical moisture conditions are very dry, but its accuracy is much lower in the wet range. It is characterized by a very slow reaction time, because reaching vapor equilibrium takes time.

(Andraski and Scanlon, 2002; Muñoz-Carpena, 2015).

- Specialized equipment is required for the sensor's excitation and reading (Andraski and Scanlon, 2002; Muñoz-Carpena, 2015).

### General notes

The qualitative evaluation of some of the discussed methods for soil water monitoring and the measurement tools is presented in Table 1. The final scores are obtained after tests on different soil types and under different irrigation regimes.

1.

1.

10 (Ley et al., 1994)

**Table 1. Qualitative evaluation of some of the soil water monitoring devices; least favorable score – 1, most favorable score – 10 (after Ley et al., 1994)**

Criterion \ Device	NP	TDR	GM	AP	AQ	TM	GB	WB
Initial cost	3	1	8	2	7	8	8	8
Field site setup requirements	7	3	10	3	10	7	6	6
Obtaining a routine reading	8	8	1	8	4	10	8	8
Interpretation of readings	10	10	10	10	3	5	3	5
Accuracy	10	10	10	8	2	7	2	3
Maintenance	9	9	8	9	7	3	9	9
Special considerations	2	8	5	8	9	7	5	8
<b>Composite rating</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>47</b>

NP – neutron probe  
 GM – gravimetric method  
 AQ – FDR (Aquaterr Probe)  
 GB – ( . . . )  
 gypsum block (el. resistance)

TDR – Time Domain Reflectometry  
 AP – FDR (Troxler Sentry 200-AP)  
 TM – tensiometer  
 WB – Watermark ( . . . )  
 Watermark block (el. resistance)

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## (*Chaenomeles* sp.)

1\*, 2, 1  
1, 5600  
2, 4003

### Study on biochemical composition and antiradical capacity of dried fruits of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles* sp.)

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#### SUMMARY

Products were made, such as dried fruits of different genotypes of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles* sp.) grown and provided by the Research Institute of Mountain Stockbreeding and Agriculture, Troyan.

The biochemical composition of some selected genetic types of chaenomeles and their dried products was studied at the laboratory of the Research Institute of Mountain Stockbreeding and Agriculture in Troyan.

The technological drying process was carried out in a heat pumping stand for drying, on a thin layer with a crosswise air flow direction towards the layer of the product at a temperature of  $45 \pm 2^\circ\text{C}$  and a low relative humidity of the circulating air (10% on average for the process). The total antioxidant capacity was assessed by determination of antiradical capacity (DPPH test) and total polyphenols content

(DPPH - )

*Chaenomeles sp.*,

*sp.*)

et al., 2006).

mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup>,

(Krasnova et al., 2007).

100 ml<sup>-1</sup>

*Chaenomeles japonica* 210-592 mg 100 ml<sup>-1</sup> (Hellin et al., 2003).

(Mezhenskii, 2004; Mondeshka, 2005; Graeme et al., 2007; Rupasova et al, 2008; Figueiredo, 2009; Zhu et al., 2012; Zhang et al., 2014).

of fresh fruit and dried products at the Food Research and Development Institute, Plovdiv.

**Key words:** Japanese quince, *Chaenomeles sp.*, dried fruit, biochemical composition, antioxidant capacity, antiradical capacity

## INTRODUCTION

Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles sp.*) is a widespread decorative plant in Bulgaria. Besides its beautiful blossoms, *Chaenomeles* attracts attention in autumn with its golden aromatic fruits.

In some countries, they are used in the food processing industry because of their high content of biologically active substances, such as organic acids, ascorbic acid, polyphenols, pectin, aromatic compounds (Lesinska et al., 2006). Vitamin C content in fruits varies from 41.2 to 105.8 mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup>, phenolic compounds vary from 523.9 to 1271.7 mg 100 g

Another property of great interest is its supposed high antioxidant capacity due to the content of vitamin C and phenolic compounds. Vitamin C content is 45 to 109 mg 100 ml<sup>-1</sup> and phenolic compounds in the juice of *Chaenomeles japonica* are 210-592 mg 100 ml<sup>-1</sup> (Hellin et al., 2003).

Drying is applied as a method to preserve fruits. The process involves different application variants to produce the final product. An important element in the different drying technologies is to study the changes in the biochemical compositions of fruits (Mezhenskii, 2004; Mondeshka, 2005; Graeme et al., 2007; Rupasova et al, 2008; Figueiredo, 2009; Zhu et al. Zhang et al., 2014).

Dried fruit in the form of a powder is a food supplement that prevents atherosclerosis and has an antioxidant effect, improves the health of the

(Tang et al., 2000; Dharmananda, 2005, Malgorzata et al, 2007; Tang et al., 2010).

*Chaenomeles* sp.

(Chace and Zhang, 1997; Dharmananda, 2005; Sagar et al., 2010; Figueiredo, 2009).

*Chaenomeles* sp.

(Zhao et al., 2008; Graeme, 2007; Zhang et al., 2014; Lim, 2012; Watychowicz et al., 2017).

(DPPH - )

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach),

organism (Tang et al., 2000, Dharmananda, 2005, Malgorzata et al, 2007, Tang et al., 2010).

Dried fruits of *Chaenomeles* sp. have been used for thousands of years in Chinese medicine and occupy a considerable amount of prescriptions (Chace and Zhang, 1997; Dharmananda, 2005; Sagar et al., 2010; Figueiredo, 2009). The plant is successfully used as a means to enhance immunity, for joint, liver, cancer, and many other diseases. A number of contemporary scientists prove the efficacy of *Chaenomeles* sp. fruit in the treatment of tumor diseases, AIDS, rheumatoid arthritis etc. (Zhao et al., 2008, Graeme, 2007, Zhang et al., 2014, Lim, 2012, Watychowicz et al., 2017).

The aim of the paper is to examine the biochemical results of the total antioxidant capacity, assessed by specifying the antiradical capacity (DPPH - test) and total polyphenols content of fresh and dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach) depending on the forms of genotype and the cultivation methods for fruit growing.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### Raw fruit

The studied genetic types are thornless, picked out in the collection plantations of RIMSA, Troyan. The planting distance is 1.5x2m. The plantations are nonirrigated. The bush height is up to 150 cm. The yields of the studied forms are in the range of 2 to 5 kg, and the average fruit weight is 40-60 g.

### Experimental design

The object of this study is four different genotypes of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach) genotype 3p8h; genotype 2p2h BBD; genotype 4p9h D and genotype

1,5 2m.

150 m.

2 5 kg, 40-60 g.

4

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach) 3p8h; 2p2h ; 4p9h 4p10h .

4p10h BBD.

The fruit was sliced across.

Prepreparation of the raw material was done in the following order: accepting washing with running water weighing cutting draining drying.

The fruits were tested in a heat pumping stand, in a thin layer, with a crosswise air flow direction towards the product layer. Heat-pumped drying takes place at a temperature of  $45 \pm 2^\circ\text{C}$  and a low relative humidity of the circulating air (average for the process 10%). The constant sample weight is considered as the end of the drying experiment. Samples, after being dried and chilled, were packed in paper bags. They were stored at a room temperature in the absence of light.

**Methods:**

- Dry matter assessment (weight), % BDS EN 12143-00;
- dry matter (refractometrically), BDS 17257
- total titratable acidity, % - BDS 6996-93
- total sugars, % - BDS 7169-89
- ascorbic acid assessment, mg % - BDS 11812-91
- pectin, % according to the method of Melitz;
- tanning substances, % - according to Leventhal-Neubaurer.

**Preparation of samples for chemical analysis**

5 g samples obtained were placed in a 50 mL volumetric flask. The content of the flask were adjusted to ~ 2/3 of the volume with acidified (2300µL 37% HCl in 1L methanol) methanol. After staying overnight under refrigeration conditions (10 ° C), the content of the flask were added to the mark. The resulting methanol extracts were filtered through a folded filter and analyzed.

All measurements were performed

4p10h BBD.

The fruit was sliced across.

Prepreparation of the raw material was done in the following order: accepting washing with running water weighing cutting draining drying.

The fruits were tested in a heat pumping stand, in a thin layer, with a crosswise air flow direction towards the product layer. Heat-pumped drying takes place at a temperature of  $45 \pm 2^\circ\text{C}$  and a low relative humidity of the circulating air (average for the process 10%). The constant sample weight is considered as the end of the drying experiment. Samples, after being dried and chilled, were packed in paper bags. They were stored at a room temperature in the absence of light.

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All measurements were performed

UV-Vis Helios  
Omega  
VISIONlite (Thermo Fisher Scientific,  
Madison, WI, USA),  
1 cm.

•  
-  
Singleton and Rossi (1965)  
:  
10 mL  
0.1 mL, ~7 mL  
, 0.5 mL FC-  
( 1:4 )  
1.5 mL 7.5%  
,  
10 mL.  
2 h  
750 nm.

(GAE) mg 100 g .  
•  
-  
pH- (Giusti  
and Wrolstad, 2001).  
pH 1.0 (0.025 )  
pH 4.5 (0.4 ).  
1 h  
520 700 nm.

26900 L/(mol cm)  
449.2 g/mol  
-3-  
(CGE) mg 100 g .  
•  
-  
(DPPH - ). Trolox,  
E,

with a Helios Omega UV-Vis Spectrophotometer with VISIONlite software installed (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Madison, WI, USA) using 1 cm optical paths.

• **Total polyphenols assessment -**

The content of total polyphenols was determined by the method of Singleton and Rossi (1965) in the following modification: 0.1 mL of extract, ~7 mL of distilled water, 0.5 mL of FC reagent (diluted 1: 4 with distilled water) and 1.5 mL of 7.5% aqueous sodium carbonate solution.

- After shaking the test-tubes, the volume was brought to distilled water to 10 mL.
- After staying for 2 h at a room temperature, the absorption of the reaction mixture was measured at 750 nm. An analogous blank sample was prepared using distilled water instead of extract. The results obtained are reported in comparison with the standard straight line and are presented as GAE in mg per 100 g of sample.

• **Assessment of total anthocyanins -**

The amount of total monomeric anthocyanins was determined by the pH-differential method (Giusti and Wrolstad, 2001). The methanolic extract was diluted in parallel with buffer pH 1.0 (0.025 M potassium chloride) and buffer pH 4.5 (0.4 M sodium acetate). After staying for 1 hour at room temperature without motion, the absorptions at 520 and 700 nm were measured. The results were calculated using a molar absorption coefficient of 26900 L / mole and a molecular weight of 449.2 g / mol and were expressed as cyanidine-3-glucoside (CGE) equivalents in mg per 100 g sample.

• **Total antioxidant capacity -**

The total antioxidant capacity was assessed by the antiradical capacity (DPPH - test). Trolox, a water-soluble vitamin E analogue, was used as a standard and the results were expressed as Trolox

( )  $\mu\text{mol}$  100 g  
**DPPH-**

Brand-Williams et al. (1995),  
: DPPH (6  
2250  $\mu\text{L}$  250  $\mu\text{L}$  -  
10-5 M) ( 1:3, v/v); -  
515 nm 15  
min

5%.

ANOVA, Microsoft Excel.

1 16

13,81%  
4 10 h 20,20%  
3p8h.

3p8h,

( 1 2).

Trolox

equivalents (TE) in  $\mu\text{mol}$  per 100 g sample.

### DPPH-test

The procedure is based on the method of Brand-Williams et al. (1995), applied in the following modification: 2250  $\mu\text{L}$  of DPPH methanolic solution ( $6 \times 10^{-5}$  M) were mixed with 250  $\mu\text{L}$  of methanol extract (diluted with distilled water in a 1:3 v / v ratio); the absorption at 515 nm was measured after 15 minutes of staying of the reaction mixture in a closed vessel in dark place at a room temperature.

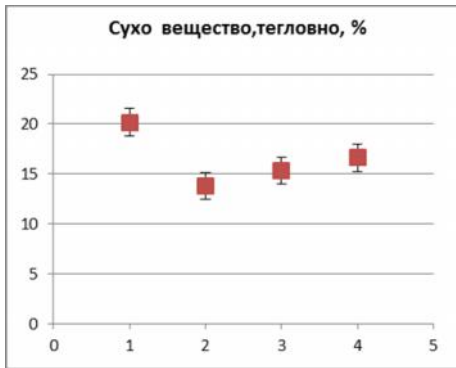
### • Mathematical and statistical processing

These results are arithmetic mean values of at least three parallel determinations, with coefficients of variation less than 5%. Statistical data processing was performed with ANOVA, Microsoft Excel programs.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Figures 1 to 16 show the data from biochemical analyzes carried out and the antiradical capacity of fresh and dried fruits of different forms of Japanese quince.

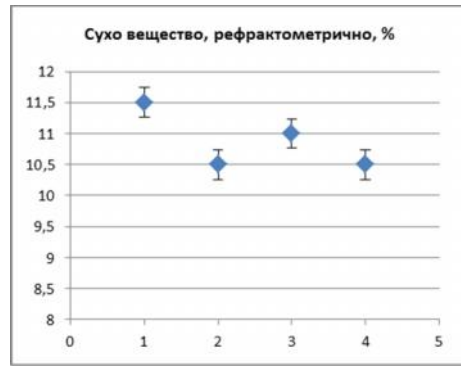
The biochemical characteristics of Chaenomeles fruits grown in the town of Troyan shows that the total dry matter content determined by weighing method is 13.81% for fruits with number 4r10h to 20.20% for fruit with number 3p8h. The values are statistically identifiable in a 3p8h fresh fruit sample versus the other three forms of Japanese quince (Figures 1 and 2).



. 1. ( )

*(Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)*

Fig.1. Dry matter (weight) of fresh fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach*)



. 2. ( )

*(Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)*

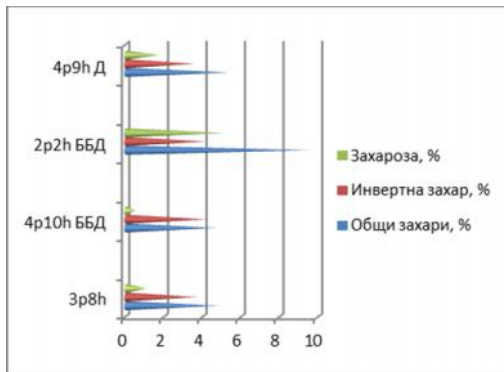
Fig. 2. Dry matter (refractometrically) of fresh fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach*)

2 2h (9,55%),  
4,70 5,35%.

2 2h 4 10h  
- 3,70%.

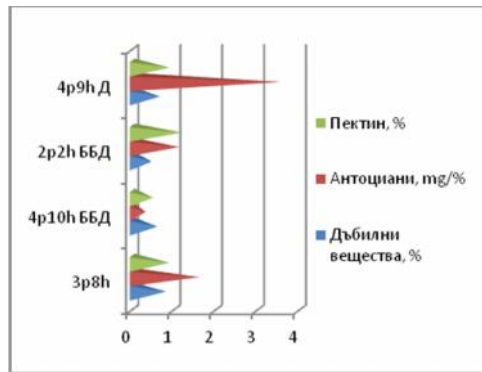
4 10h 0,48%  
2 2h ( 3). 5,08%

The total carbohydrate content was highest in fruits with number 2p2h (9.55%), as it was lower than 4.70 to 5.35% for the other fruits. The percentage of invert sugar in fruit is statistically indistinguishable in fruit with numbers 2p2h and 4p10h and statistically distinct in fruit with number 3p8h with a content of 3,70%. The sucrose amount in fruits was in large variations of 0.48% for fruits with numbers 4r10h to 5.08% for fruit with number 2p2h (Figure 3).



. 3. (*Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach*)

Fig. 3. Total sugars of fresh fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach*)

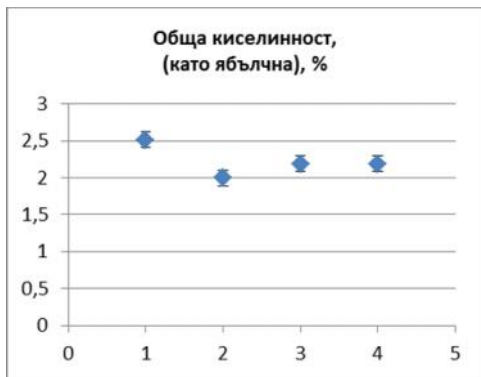


. 4. (*Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach*)

Fig. 4. Biological active substances of fresh fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach*)



( 2 %) ,  
 ( 5).  
 4 9h -  
 , (88,00 mg%),  
 -  
 4 10h, 2 2h  
 ( 6). 52,00 mg%

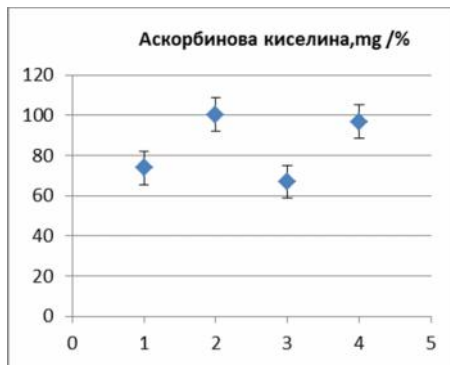


. 5.

(Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)  
 Fig. 5. Total acidity of fresh fruit of Japanese quince (Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

Significantly high organic acid content, defined as malic (over 2%) for all fruit examined, makes the fruit unsuitable for fresh consumption (Figure 5).

Fresh fruit with numbers 3p8h and 4p9h had a statistically indistinguishable percentage of ascorbic acid (88.00 mg%) but the value is higher in comparison to the other selected fruits 2p2h and 4p10h with a value of 52.00 mg % (Figure 6).



. 6.

(Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)  
 Fig. 6. Ascorbic acid of fresh fruit of Japanese quince (Chaenomeles japonica (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

0,475% 2 2h 0,810%  
 3 8h,  
 .  
 ,  
 -  
 ( 4).  
 -  
 0,50 % 4 10h 1,20 %  
 2 2h,  
 3 8h 4 9h  
 0,89 % ( 5).

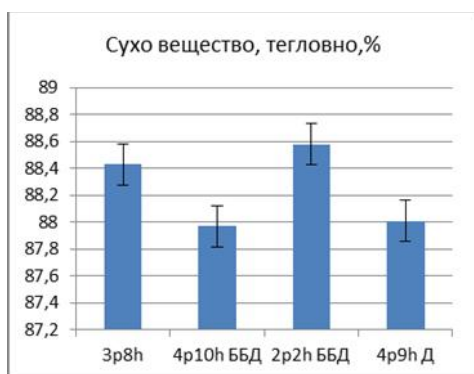
The percentage of tanning substances was high and ranged from 0.475% for fruits 2p2h to 0.810% for fruit with number 3p8h, which gives the tart flavour of fruit. Data are statistically significant due to the differences in the forms of the genotype of fruits (Figure 4).

Pectin substances determined in the fresh fruits ranged from 0.50% at 4p10h to 1.20% in fruits 2p2h, while in the other two samples 3p8h and 4p9h the percentage of pectins was statistically indistinguishable 0.89% (Figure 5).

3p8h -  
 11,5%, 2,51%, 4,85%, 0,81 %, 0,89 %.  
 88,0 mg %, 11,4 12 %, 3 8h 2p2h  
 4p9h (> 0,05). 4p10h  
 ( 7 8).

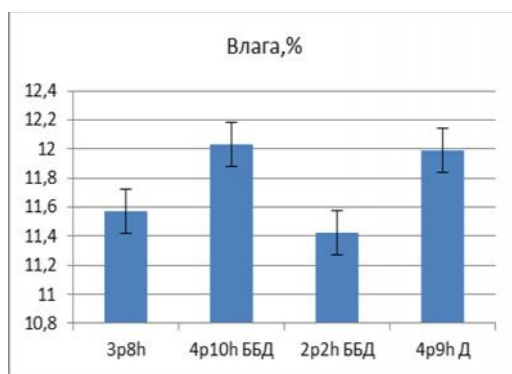
It has been found that the most suitable form for drying is a genotype 3p8h with a content of dry water-soluble matter of 11.5%, total sugars of 4.85%, total acidity of 2.51%, ascorbic acid 88.0 mg%, tanning substances 0.81%, pectin substances 0.89%.

The measured moisture for all samples ranged from 11.4 to 12%, with sample 3ss8h and 2p2hBBD having statistically non-detectable percentages, as well as samples 4p10h BBD and 4p9hD ( $p > 0.05$ ). Similar results are given for dry matter weight (Figure 7 and 8).



. 7.

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)  
 Fig. 7. Dry matter of dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

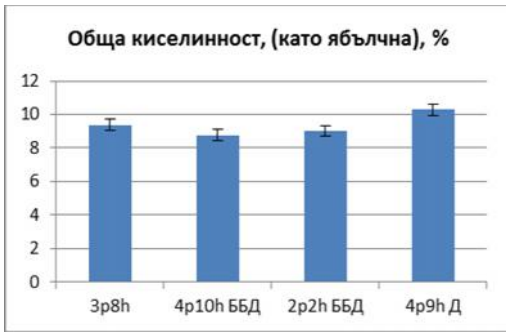


. 8.

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)  
 Fig. 8. Moisture in dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

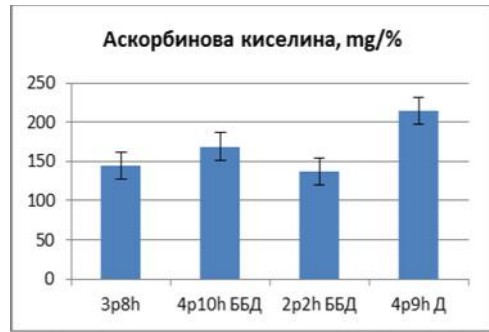
The analyzes of total acidity and ascorbic acid content for all samples were statistically insignificant and the drying process had no effect on percentages ( $p > 0.05$ ) (Figure 9 and 10).

(>0,05) ( 9 10).



. 9.

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)  
 Fig. 9. Total acidity of dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)



. 10.

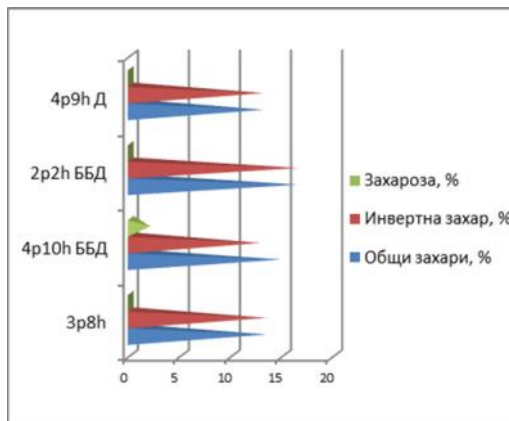
(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)  
 Fig. 10. Ascorbic acid of dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

2p2h

( <0,05).

11 12.

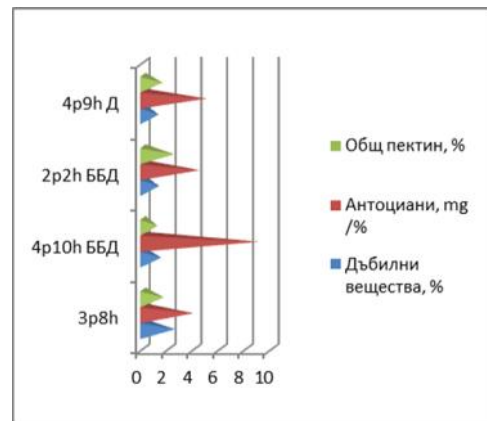
The total sugars, invert sugar and pectin content had the highest statistically distinct values for dried fruit with number 2p2h BBD, compared to other samples of dried fruit ( $p < 0.05$ ). Data are presented in Figures 11 and 12.



. 11.

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

Fig. 11. Total sugars of dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)



. 12.

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

Fig. 12. Biological active substances of dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

3p8h  
 ( <0,05).

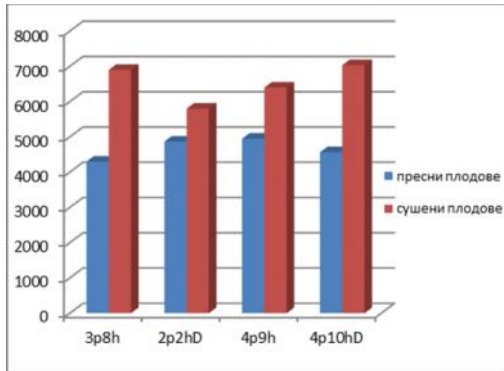
The percentage of tanning substances dominated in samples of fruit with number 3p8h and after the drying process ( $p < 0.05$ ). For the other three

( >0,05).

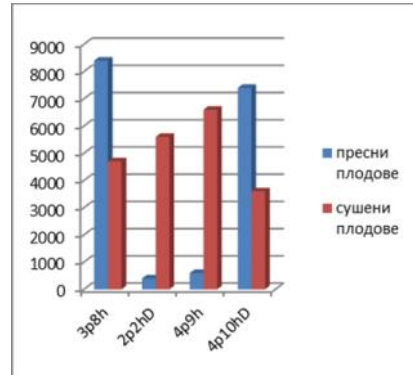
samples, the results were statistically indistinguishable ( $p > 0.05$ ).

Antiradical capacity for all analyzed samples was higher than fresh fruit due to the higher dry matter content resulting from the drying process and was not due to the content of total polyphenols (Figures 13 and 14).

( 13 14).



. 13.



. 14.

(*Chaenomeles Japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

Fig. 13. Antiradical activity of fresh and dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles Japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

(*Chaenomeles Japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

Fig. 14. Total polyphenols of fresh and dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles Japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

4p10h  
3p8h,  
2p2h  
( <0,05).  
1,7  
3p8h 2  
4p10h D.  
4p9h,  
2p2h D.  
( <0,05).

Dried fruits with number 4p10hBBD, followed by 3p8h had the highest antiradical capacity, while fruit with number 2p2hBBD had the lowest value as a result of the drying process.

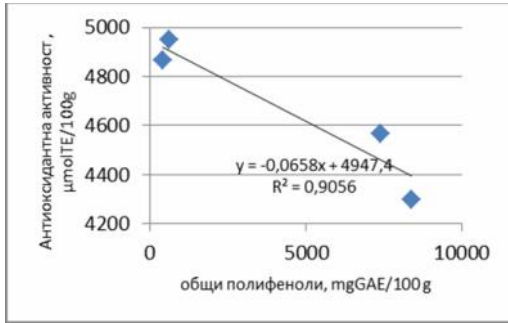
Data are statistically significant due to the drying process ( $p < 0.05$ ).

As a result of the applied drying regime, the total polyphenols content decreased from 1.7 for samples with number 3p8h to 2 times for dried fruit with number 4p10h D. The highest contents of total polyphenols had dried fruits with number 4p9h, followed by fruits with number 2p2h D. Data are statistically significant due to the applied technological process, i.e. drying ( $p < 0.05$ ).

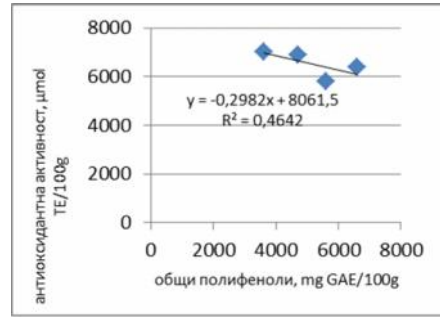
15 16).

$$R^2 = 0,9056,$$

Negative linear dependence, with a higher determination coefficient  $R^2 = 0.9056$ , was found between the antioxidant activity and the total polyphenols content in fresh fruit as compared to the analyzed dried samples (Figures 15 and 16).



15.



16.

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

Fig. 15. Linear dependence between content of total polyphenols and antiradical activity of fresh fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

(*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

Fig. 16. Linear dependence between content of total polyphenols and antiradical activity of dried fruit of Japanese quince (*Chaenomeles japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl. ex Spach)

## CONCLUSIONS

The effect of drying process on individual biochemical parameters and antiradical capacity of fresh and dried fruit in different forms of Japanese quince is observed.

Significantly high levels of organic acids, tanning substances for all tested fruits make the fruit unsuitable for fresh consumption.

After the drying process, the amount of ascorbic acid was better preserved in fruits of genotype 4p9h and 3p8h.

Dried fruits with number 4p10hBBD had the highest antiradical capacity, followed by 3p8h fruit, while fruits with number 2p2hBBD had the lowest value as

4 9h 3p8h.  
4p10h  
3p8h,

2p2h	.			a result of the drying process.
	3p8h			Genotype 3p8h is suitable for
		11,5%,		drying with a content of dry water-soluble
	4,85%,			matter of 11.5%, total sugars of 4.85%,
2,51%,		88,0 mg		total acidity of 2.51%, ascorbic acid 88.0
%,		-		mg%, tannins 0.81%, pectin substances
	0,89 %	0,81 %,		0.89%.
		-		

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