

1 **Title**

2  
3 Universal MS/MS Visualization and Retrieval with the Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver Web  
4 Service

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6 **Authors**

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28

29 **Abstract**

30

31 The growth of online mass spectrometry metabolomics resources, including data repositories,  
32 spectral library databases, and online analysis platforms has created an environment of  
33 online/web accessibility. Here, we introduce the Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver  
34 (<https://metabolomics-usi.ucsd.edu/>), a tool that builds upon these exciting developments to allow  
35 for consistent data export (in human and machine-readable forms) and publication-ready  
36 visualisations of tandem mass spectrometry spectra. This tool supports the Human Proteome  
37 Organization – Proteomics Standards Initiative’s Universal Spectrum Identifier (USI) specification,  
38 which has been extended to deal with the metabolomics use cases. To date, this resource already  
39 supports data formats from GNPS, MassBank, MS2LDA, Massive, MetaboLights, and  
40 Metabolomics Workbench and is integrated into several of these resources.

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## 45 **Introduction**

46  
47 The effective exchange and visualization of tandem mass spectrometry (MS/MS) information  
48 across a variety of resources is important in communicating and consequently building confidence  
49 in both data quality and molecule identification throughout the research and publication process.  
50 The inclusion of MS/MS spectra in scientific manuscripts and presentations to provide evidence  
51 of newly discovered molecules in a consistent manner is often challenging and labor intensive  
52 due to heterogeneous data availability and accessibility across public data resources, the variety  
53 of complex file formats in use to store mass spectrometry data, and the lack of suitable software  
54 tools available. Furthermore, it is often difficult to balance the ease of MS/MS figure generation  
55 with the level of customization possible.

56  
57 A few approaches have been introduced to assign universal identifiers to MS/MS spectra. The  
58 SPectraL hASH (SPLASH) identifier has been designed as an unambiguous, database-  
59 independent spectrum identifier<sup>1</sup>. SPLASH identifiers can be used to determine spectral overlap  
60 between libraries and potentially query public data repositories. However, as generating a  
61 SPLASH identifier includes a complex hashing operation, these identifiers cannot be trivially  
62 produced. Alternatively, the Universal Spectrum Identifier (USI) was recently developed by the  
63 Human Proteome Organization – Proteomics Standards Initiative (HUPO-PSI)<sup>2</sup> to provide a  
64 standardized mechanism for encoding a virtual path to spectra contained in proteomics public  
65 repositories<sup>3</sup>. Although USIs are easy to construct, the USI standard currently mainly supports  
66 proteomics spectral data deposited via ProteomeXchange<sup>4</sup> and does not natively support spectral  
67 data stored in metabolomics repositories.

68  
69 Additionally, producing high-quality figures of MS/MS spectra is challenging as well. On one hand,  
70 existing software such as the Proteomics Data Viewer (PDV)<sup>5</sup>, the Interactive Peptide Spectral  
71 Annotator (IPSA)<sup>6</sup>, and Lorikeet<sup>7</sup> proteomics data viewers, as well as vendor software, are able  
72 to draw MS/MS spectra, but are mainly aimed at interactive visualization. Three key features are  
73 often missing from such software: the ability to export vector graphics (to ensure high resolution),  
74 customization of spectral visualization, and high-throughput automated figure generation. On the  
75 other end of the spectrum are generic vector graphics editors such as Adobe Illustrator or  
76 Inkscape. While such generic editors are powerful, they lack MS/MS specific features and  
77 producing images ready for publication with these tools requires a significant time investment to  
78 achieve high levels of customization.

79  
80 We present here the Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver (<https://metabolomics-usi.ucsd.edu/>), a  
81 web tool that enables: 1) integration with major metabolomics data repositories to retrieve MS/MS  
82 metabolomics data from various sources in a unified fashion, 2) high-quality and customizable  
83 vector graphics drawing, 3) direct integration with common online analysis tools, and 4) a web  
84 API to programmatically retrieve spectral data.

## 85 86 **Results and Discussion**

87  
88 *MS/MS Data Sources - Integration with Community Resources*

89 The Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver builds upon the USI standard developed by the HUPO-  
90 PSI<sup>3</sup>. USIs are formatted as follows:

91  
92 `mzspec:<collection>:<msRun>:<indexType>:<indexNumber>:<optional interpretation>`

93  
94 For more details on the USI, including its formal specification, see the HUPO-PSI website  
95 (<http://www.psidev.info/usi>).

96  
97 The USI standard has originally been developed for proteomics data, with only ProteomeXchange  
98 identifiers and related identifiers from its member repositories allowed in the “collection” field. We  
99 have extended the USI specification to support several major metabolomics resources as well.  
100 Concretely, the following metabolomics data services are currently supported (**Table 1**):

- 101 • Data repositories: MassIVE<sup>8</sup>, MetaboLights<sup>9</sup>, Metabolomics Workbench<sup>10</sup>.
- 102 • Reference spectral library resources: MassBank<sup>11</sup>, MoNA  
103 (<https://mona.fiehnlab.ucdavis.edu/>), GNPS<sup>12</sup>, and MS2LDA.org MOTIFDB<sup>13</sup>.
- 104 • Online informatics pipelines: GNPS Molecular Networking<sup>12</sup> / Library Search / MASST<sup>14</sup> /  
105 Feature-based Molecular Networking<sup>15</sup>, and MS2LDA.org<sup>13</sup>.

106  
107 As such, the Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver provides a universal interface to more than 450M  
108 MS/MS spectra from various public metabolomics repositories. It also supports linking back to the  
109 source spectra in their original data resources to allow users to explore the original context of the  
110 MS/MS spectra. Several resources (MassBank, GNPS, and MS2LDA.org) have already  
111 integrated links to the Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver to facilitate bidirectional interoperability.  
112 Additionally, SPLASH identifiers<sup>1</sup> are computed for all spectra retrieved through the Metabolomics  
113 Spectrum Resolver to enable their comparison across different resources.

114

115 **Table 1 - Examples of the Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver from various public data**  
 116 **resources.**

Resource	USI Format	Example USI
MassBank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collection: MASSBANK</li> <li>msRun: none</li> <li>index: accession:&lt;spectrumId&gt;</li> </ul>	<a href="#">mzspec:MASSBANK::accession:SM858102</a>
GNPS Spectral Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collection: GNPS</li> <li>msRun: GNPS-LIBRARY</li> <li>index: accession:&lt;spectrumId&gt;</li> </ul>	<a href="#">mzspec:GNPS:GNPS-LIBRARY:accession:CCMSLIB00005436077</a>
GNPS Molecular Networking Spectrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collection: GNPS</li> <li>msRun: TASK-&lt;taskId&gt;</li> <li>index: scan:&lt;scanNr&gt;</li> </ul>	<a href="#">mzspec:GNPS:TASK-c95481f0c53d42e78a61bf899e9f9adb-spectra/specs.ms.mgf:scan:1943</a>
MS2LDA MotifDB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collection: MOTIFDB</li> <li>msRun: none</li> <li>index: accession:&lt;motifId&gt;</li> </ul>	<a href="#">mzspec:MOTIFDB::accession:171163</a>
MS2LDA Analysis Spectrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collection: MS2LDA</li> <li>msRun: TASK-&lt;taskId&gt;</li> <li>Index: accession:&lt;spectrumId&gt;</li> </ul>	<a href="#">mzspec:MS2LDA:TASK-190:accession:270684</a>
MassIVE/GNPS Repository Spectrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collection:MassIVE/ProteomeXchange identifier</li> <li>msRun: filename</li> <li>index: scan:&lt;scanNr&gt;</li> </ul>	<a href="#">mzspec:MSV000078547:120228_nbut_3610_it_it_take2:scan:389</a>
Metabolights Repository Spectrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collection: MSV000082791</li> <li>msRun: filename</li> <li>index: scan:&lt;scanNr&gt;</li> </ul>	<a href="#">mzspec:MSV000082791:(-)-epigallocatechin:scan:2</a>
Metabolomics Workbench Repository Spectrum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>collection: MSV000082680</li> <li>msRun: filename</li> <li>index: scan:&lt;scanNr&gt;</li> </ul>	<a href="#">mzspec:MSV000082680:iPSC-T1R1:scan:3</a>

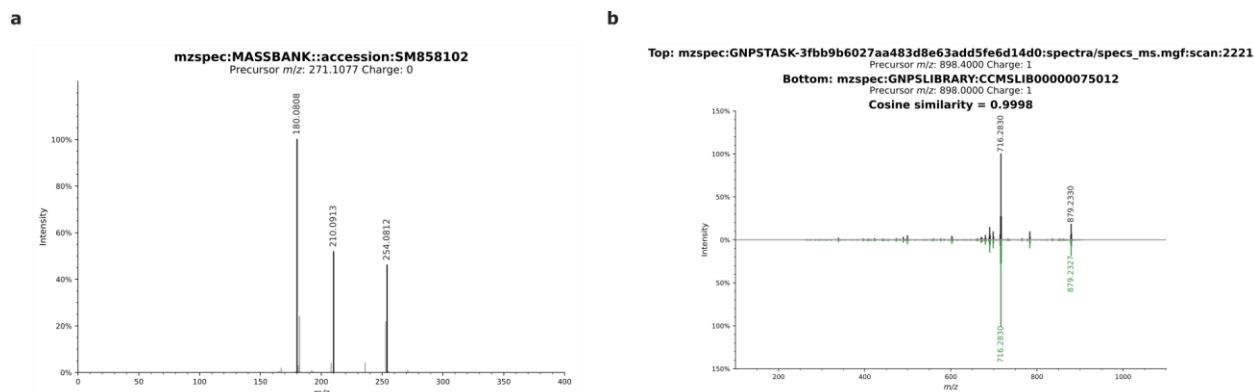
117  
 118 The Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver provides powerful visualization capabilities to plot spectral  
 119 data (see below). Additionally, the raw spectral data can be retrieved directly in different machine  
 120 readable formats (JSON or CSV) via web APIs. This enables inspection of the spectral data by  
 121 both humans and automated tools, for example to provide visual evidence of newly discovered  
 122 molecules in scientific manuscripts or to re-evaluate spectral identifications with alternative  
 123 computational tools. Furthermore, using the programmatic web API, software developers are able  
 124 to integrate high-throughput figure creation in a programming language-agnostic fashion. This  
 125 functionality is already being used by members of the community to programmatically retrieve  
 126 spectral data in a standardized fashion and facilitate figure generation<sup>16</sup>.

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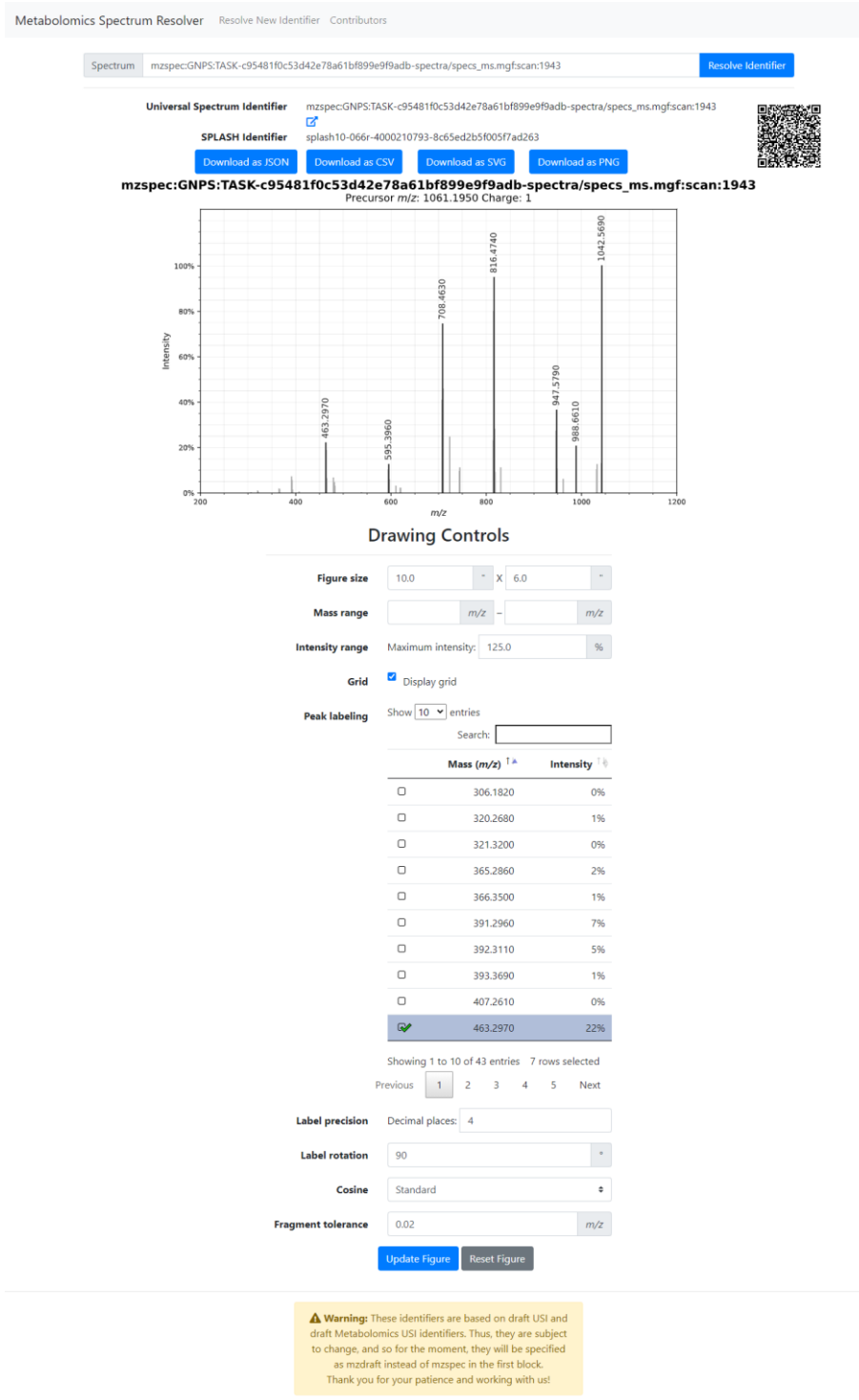
## Visualization Capabilities

The Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver enables users to plot individual MS/MS spectra (**Figure 1a**) and mirror matches between pairs of MS/MS spectra to show their similarity (e.g. between an experimental spectrum and its spectral library match; **Figure 1b**). The resulting figures can be modified by specifying mass ranges, intensity ranges, customizable peak labeling, figure size, decimal points for mass values, and an optional grid. Additionally, the similarity between the two spectra in a mirror plot can be displayed based on the standard cosine similarity or a “shifted cosine similarity” (i.e. also matching peaks that differ by the precursor mass difference between both spectra), with matching peaks between the two spectra highlighted to assess the match quality. The resulting drawing can be downloaded in the SVG (vector), PNG (raster), CSV (comma separated peaks), and JSON (machine readable peaks) formats (**Figure 2**).

Plotting functionality is implemented in Python using `spectrum_utils`<sup>17</sup>, `Matplotlib`<sup>18</sup>, and `Seaborn`<sup>19</sup>. Additionally, `NumPy`<sup>20</sup>, `SciPy`<sup>21</sup>, and `Numba`<sup>22</sup> are used for efficient processing of spectral data.



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147 **Figure 1 - Example MS/MS figure generation of (a) a single MS/MS [spectrum](#) and (b) a [mirror](#)**  
148 **[plot](#).**  
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150  
151 **Figure 2 - Interactive User Interface with Drawing Options.** Enables customizing the  
152 spectrum drawing, linking back to original spectral data via URL and a generated QR code, the  
153 spectrum's SPLASH identifier, spectrum peaks download, and programmatic data download.  
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## 156 **Conclusion**

157  
158 The Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver has been designed to improve the accessibility and  
159 presentation of metabolomics data, both within supported public data resources and for the  
160 community. By extending the nascent USI standard developed by the HUPO-PSI to support  
161 metabolomics repositories and tools as well, it provides a universal interface to metabolomics  
162 spectral data from heterogeneous data resources. The Metabolomics Spectral Resolver supports  
163 a broad range of key online metabolomics resources, provides unified programmatic API access  
164 to spectral data, and facilitates high quality spectrum drawing. Implemented as a freely available  
165 and open source web service, it facilitates and democratizes public data access without the need  
166 to install specialized software.

## 167 **Source Code**

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170 The Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver source code is released as open source under the MIT  
171 License and is available at this DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.4033442](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.4033442). Active development can be found  
172 on GitHub: <https://github.com/mwang87/MetabolomicsSpectrumResolver>.

## 173 **Acknowledgements**

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175  
176 We thank Madeleine Ernst, Alan Jarmusch, and Louis-Felix Nothias for their feedback on the  
177 usability of the Metabolomics Spectrum Resolver. We thank Eric Deutsch and Nuno Bandeira for  
178 feedback on the metabolomics spectrum resolvers. We thank all past and future contributors to  
179 the resolver software. WB is a postdoctoral researcher of the Research Foundation – Flanders  
180 (FWO). ELS acknowledges funding support from the Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR)  
181 for project A18/BM/12341006. MassBank Europe (<https://massbank.eu/MassBank>) is supported  
182 by the NORMAN Association (<https://www.norman-network.net>), de.NBI (FKZ 031L0107),  
183 NaToxAq (Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No. 722493), HBM4EU (European Union  
184 H2020 grant agreement No. 733032) and the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research -  
185 UFZ (<https://www.ufz.de/index.php?en=33573>).

## 186 **Conflict of Interests**

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188  
189 Mingxun Wang is a founder of Ometa Labs LLC. Pieter C. Dorrestein is on the scientific  
190 advisory board of Sirenas and Cybele Microbiome.

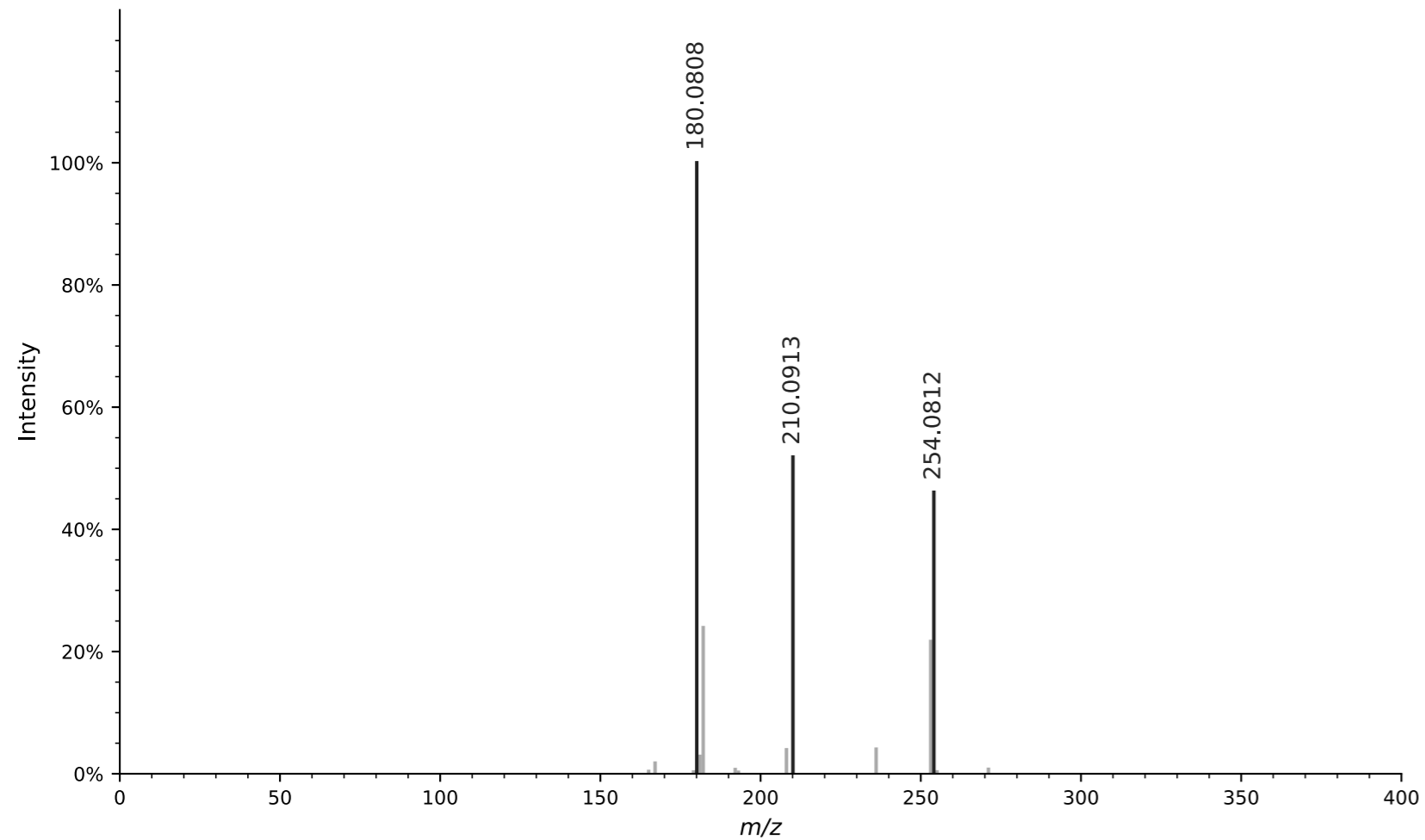
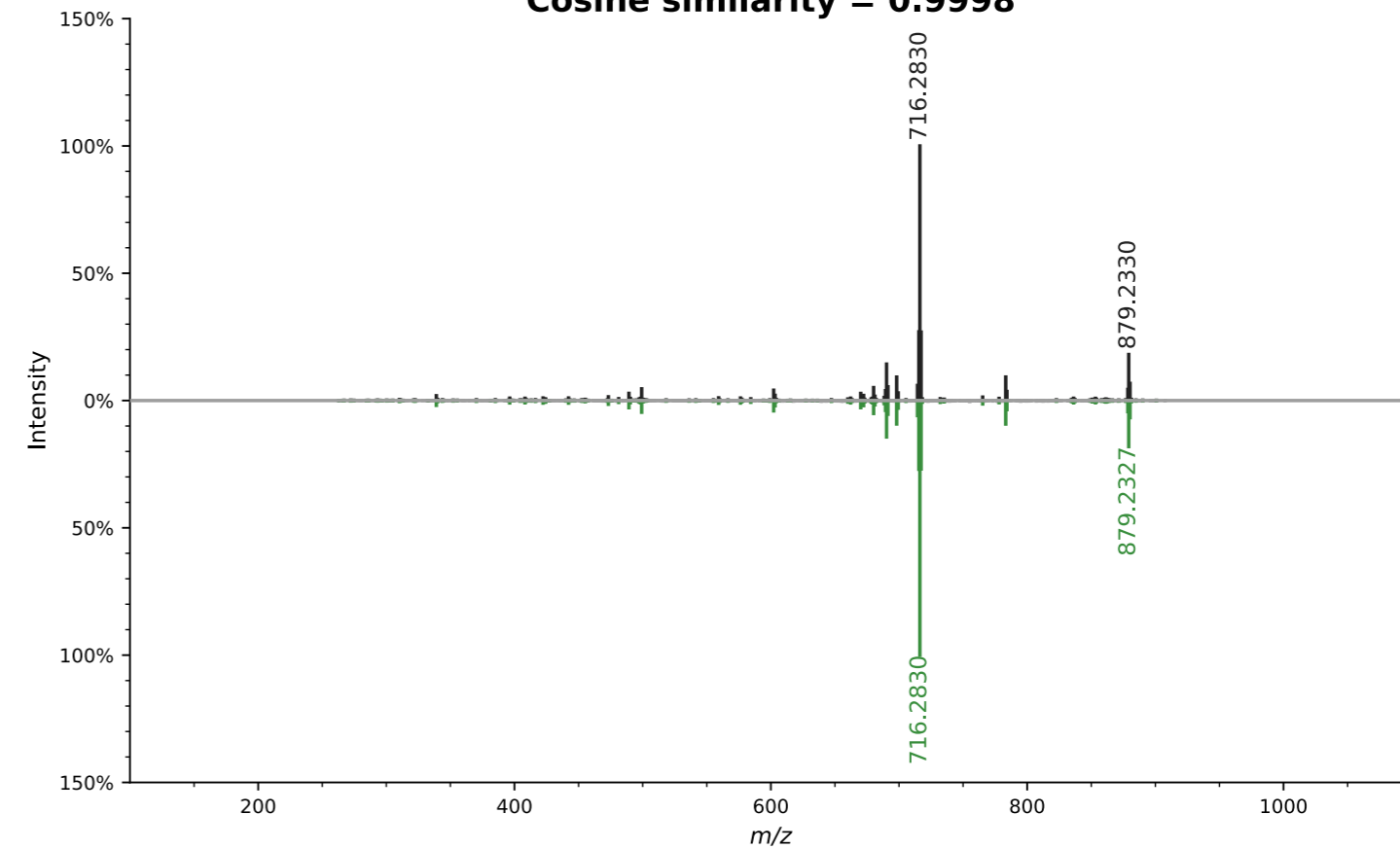
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**a****mzspec:MASSBANK::accession:SM858102**Precursor  $m/z$ : 271.1077 Charge: 0**b****Top: mzspect:GNPSTASK-3fbb9b6027aa483d8e63add5fe6d14d0:spectra/specs\_ms.mgf:scan:2221**Precursor  $m/z$ : 898.4000 Charge: 1**Bottom: mzspect:GNPSLIBRARY:CCMSLIB00000075012**Precursor  $m/z$ : 898.0000 Charge: 1**Cosine similarity = 0.9998**

Spectrum mzspec:GNPS:TASK-c95481f0c53d42e78a61bf899e9f9adb-spectra/specs\_ms.mgf:scan:1943

Resolve Identifier

Universal Spectrum Identifier mzspec:GNPS:TASK-c95481f0c53d42e78a61bf899e9f9adb-spectra/specs\_ms.mgf:scan:1943



SPLASH Identifier splash10-066r-4000210793-8c65ed2b5f005f7ad263

Download as JSON

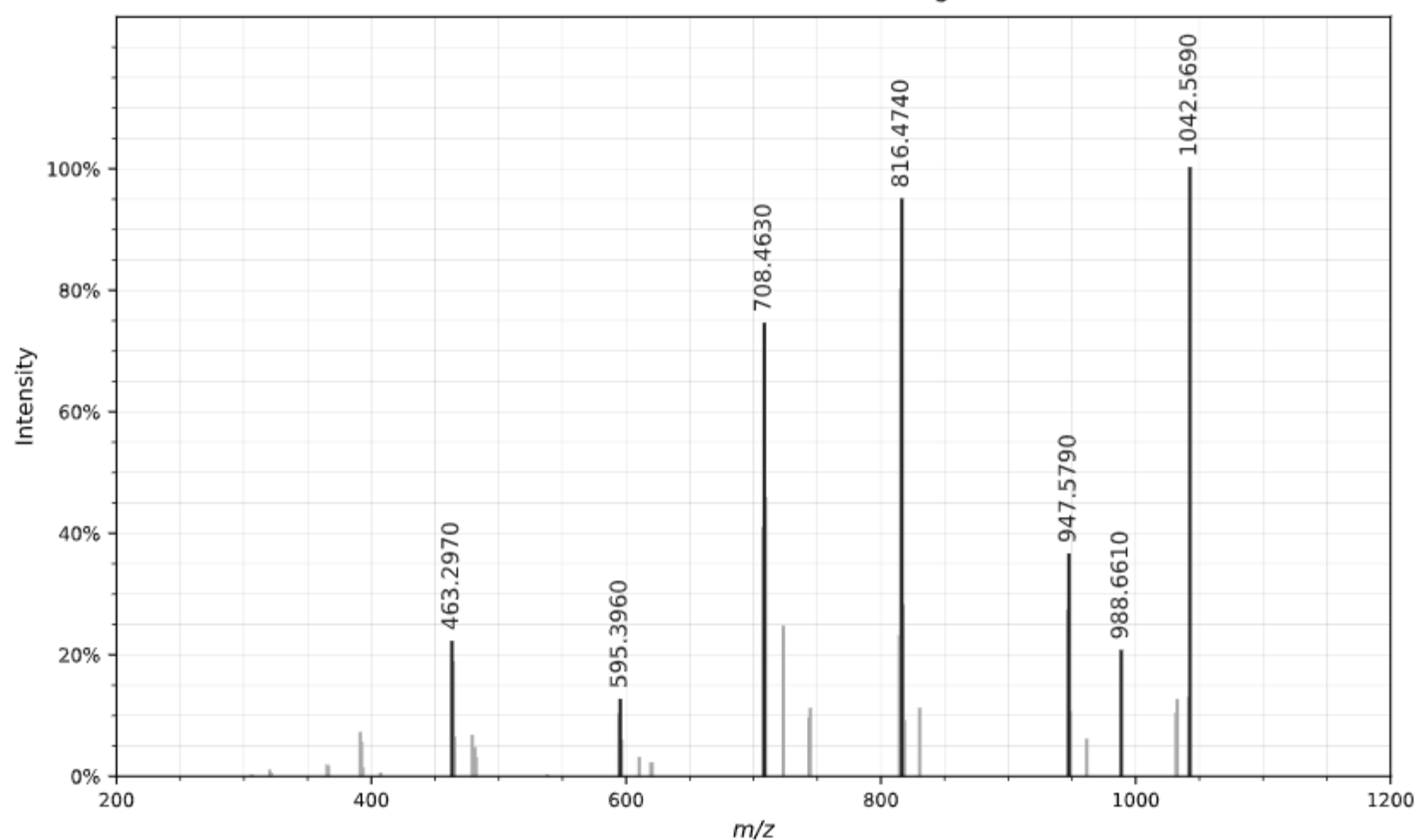
Download as CSV

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mzspec:GNPS:TASK-c95481f0c53d42e78a61bf899e9f9adb-spectra/specs\_ms.mgf:scan:1943

Precursor  $m/z$ : 1061.1950 Charge: 1

## Drawing Controls

Figure size 10.0" X 6.0"

Mass range   $m/z$  -   $m/z$ Intensity range Maximum intensity:  %Grid  Display gridPeak labeling Show  entriesSearch: 

	Mass ( $m/z$ ) ↑	Intensity ↓
<input type="checkbox"/>	06.1820	0%
<input type="checkbox"/>	320.2680	1%
<input type="checkbox"/>	321.3200	0%
<input type="checkbox"/>	365.2860	2%
<input type="checkbox"/>	366.3500	1%
<input type="checkbox"/>	391.2960	7%
<input type="checkbox"/>	392.3110	5%
<input type="checkbox"/>	393.3690	1%
<input type="checkbox"/>	407.2610	0%
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	463.2970	22%

Showing 1 to 10 of 43 entries 7 rows selected

Previous  2 3 4 5 NextLabel precision Decimal places: Label rotation  °Cosine Fragment tolerance   $m/z$ 

Update Figure

Reset Figure

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**Warning:** These identifiers are based on draft USI and draft Metabolomics USI identifiers. Thus, they are subject to change, and so for the moment, they will be specified as mzdraft instead of mzspect in the first block. Thank you for your patience and working with us!