

1 **Multiple quantitative trait loci contribute tolerance to bacterial canker**
2 **incited by *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *actinidiae* in kiwifruit (*Actinidia***
3 ***chinensis*)**

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18

19 **Abstract:**

20 *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *actinidiae* (Psa) Biovar 3, a virulent, canker-inducing pathogen is an
21 economic threat to the kiwifruit (*Actinidia* spp.) industry worldwide. The commercially grown
22 diploid (2x) *A. chinensis* var. *chinensis* is more susceptible to Psa than tetraploid and hexaploid
23 kiwifruit. However information on the genetic loci modulating Psa resistance in kiwifruit is not
24 available. Here we report mapping of quantitative trait loci (QTLs) regulating tolerance to Psa in
25 a diploid kiwifruit population, derived from a cross between an elite Psa-susceptible ‘Hort16A’
26 and a tolerant male breeding parent P1. Using high-density genetic maps and intensive
27 phenotyping, we identified a single QTL for Psa tolerance on Linkage Group (LG) 27 of
28 ‘Hort16A’ revealing 16-19% phenotypic variance and candidate alleles for susceptibility and
29 tolerance at this loci. In addition, six minor QTLs were identified in P1 on distinct LGs, exerting

30 4-9% variance. Complete tolerance in the F1 population is attained by additive effects from
31 ‘Hort16A’ and P1 QTLs providing evidence that divergent genetic pathways fend-off virulent
32 Psa strain. Two different bioassays further identified new QTLs for tissue-specific responses to
33 Psa. Transcriptome analysis of Psa-tolerant and susceptible genotypes in field revealed hallmarks
34 of basal defense and provided candidate RNA-biomarkers for screening Psa tolerance.

35 **Keywords:**

36 Psa, kiwifruit, QTLs, field tolerance, bioassays, oligogenic tolerance, innate immunity

37

38 **Introduction**

39 *Pseudomonas syringae* is a hemi-biotrophic bacterial complex ¹ that can infect a range of plant
40 species. It comprises pathovars which cause similar symptoms on their host plants and several
41 pathovars can lead to severe crop loss. *P. syringae* pv. *actinidiae* (Psa) infects several species of
42 *Actinidia* (kiwifruit) ^{2,3} and virulent Psa strains induce a range of symptoms on the main stem of
43 the vine, foliage, floral buds and fruits ⁴. Psa pathovar’s strains can be grouped into five biovars
44 based on their genetic and biological characteristics ^{4,5}. Strains of *biovar* 3, previously called
45 Psa-V (referred to here as Psa), are currently the most aggressive and were responsible for
46 outbreaks from the year 2008 ⁶⁻⁹. Psa has cost the kiwifruit industry billions of dollars worldwide
47 and its incursion in New Zealand in 2010 completely destroyed vines of the Psa-susceptible
48 diploid *A. chinensis* ‘Hort16A’ ^{4,8,10}.

49 Most of the globally cultivated cultivars of kiwifruit, including *A. chinensis* (A Planch.) var.
50 *chinensis*, *A. chinensis* (A Chev.) C.F. Liang et A.R. Ferguson var. *deliciosa*, as well as
51 accessions from *A. arguta* and *A. kolomikta* are natural hosts of Psa ¹⁰⁻¹⁸. Early reports of Psa
52 infections and symptoms in *Actinidia* species emerged from Japan, China, Korea and Italy from
53 1984 to 1994 ^{2,3,13,14,16,17,19}. The symptoms include cankers on trunk and leaders, cane death and
54 stem collapse, discharge of red and milky exudates (ooze) from cankers, canes and abaxial leaf
55 surfaces, tip browning, angular leaf necrosis (sometimes with chlorotic halos), shoot and leaf
56 wilt, bud browning and flower blight. Strains of Psa infect *Actinidia* species with varying degrees
57 of virulence, indicating a classical host-pathogen evolutionary relationship ^{5,9,20-24}.

58 Screening of thousands of *Actinidia* genotypes from 24 taxa in the breeding program at The New
59 Zealand Institute for Plant & Food Research Limited (PFR) for tolerance to natural and artificial
60 Psa infections^{25,26} revealed that diploid (2x) *A. chinensis* var. *chinensis* are more susceptible to
61 Psa infection than tetraploid (4x) *A. chinensis* var. *chinensis*, which in turn are more susceptible
62 than diploid and hexaploid (6x) *A. chinensis* var. *deliciosa*²⁵⁻²⁷. Many species outside the *A.*
63 *chinensis* complex are more tolerant to Psa than *A. chinensis* and the germplasm holds diverse
64 genetic potential for Psa tolerance²⁸. Information on the genetic markers and molecular
65 mechanisms associated with *Psa* tolerance and resistance in the commercial cultivars producing
66 taxas including *A. chinensis*, *A. deliciosa* and *A. arguta* is however limited. In this study we
67 provide the first detailed view of the genetic loci modulating Psa tolerance and tissue-specific
68 response in diploid *A. chinensis*, utilizing an intensively phenotyped population of seedlings
69 developed from a cross between Psa-susceptible ‘Hort16A’ and a tolerant breeding parent (P1),
70 as our experimental material for quantitative trait locus (QTL) analysis.

71 **Results**

72 **Intensive phenotyping targets diverse developmental stages and environmental conditions**

73 Initially, a pilot population of 53 genotypes from ‘Hort16A’ × P1 were replicated 3 times and
74 phenotyped following natural field infection with Psa. The response to Psa infection in the
75 expanded population was measured on 236 genotypes of ‘Hort16A’×P1 population, which were
76 clonally replicated ~30 times. Phenotyping of the population was performed under field
77 conditions following natural infection as well as using two bioassays (scheme for phenotyping is
78 laid out in Supplementary Fig.1a). Multiple phenotypes were recorded in field (Fig. 1a-e) to
79 develop a combined score referred to as Psa_score_Field (Fig. 2a). The mean clonal repeatability
80 for this score was 0.65, while the repeatability of clonal means at 0.8. For the stab assay²⁶,
81 various tissue-specific phenotypic responses were recorded, including Stem_necrosis,
82 Leaf_spots, Ooze, Stem_collapse, Tip_death and Wilt (Fig. 1f-k, Fig. 2b), with repeatability of
83 clonal means for these scores as 0.60, 0.766, 0.64, 0.79, 0.78 and 0.71 respectively. A
84 Psa_score_Stab was also calculated (Fig. 2b) from all phenotypes assessed in the Stab assay (see
85 Experimental Procedures). In the flood bioassay, adapted from²⁹, overall health was scored at
86 weekly intervals post-inoculation (Flood Assay/FA_Week1 to FA_Week5) (Fig. 1l). The
87 frequency distribution of phenotypes and Psa_scores revealed that most exhibited non-Normal

88 distribution based on the Shapiro-Wilk test (Fig. 2). However, for the stab assay, the majority of
89 the observations displayed normal distributions. (Fig. 2b). As such, the correlation among the
90 phenotypic scores from the field assessments and the bioassays was found to be poor
91 (Supplementary Fig.1b). The correlation among different phenotypes within the bioassays was
92 medium to high. A 3-dimensional principal components analysis (PCA) on the correlation matrix
93 of the field assessment, stab assay and flood assay displays a high degree of divergence in the
94 rankings of the population for Psa response and tolerance when assessed through different
95 approaches (Fig. 2d).

96 **Genotyping-by-Sequencing provided high-density genetic maps for ‘Hort16A’×P1** 97 **genotypes**

98 Using genotyping-by-sequencing (GBS)³⁰, the population of ‘Hort16A’×P1 enabled the
99 construction of high-density genetic maps utilizing 3,777 and 3,454 SNP markers, for ‘Hort16A’
100 and P1 respectively (Supplementary Fig. 2 and 3) using Red5³¹ and Hongyang³² as reference
101 genomes. The maps for ‘Hort16A’ and P1 encompassed a total genetic distance of 3,499 cM and
102 3,875 cM, respectively, with an average density of 1 marker/ 2cM for both parents. All predicted
103 29 LGs were constructed for ‘Hort16A’; however some were fragmented in P1 (LGs 3, 16, 19,
104 23, 25, 27).

105 **QTL mapping from field phenotype scores confirmed oligogenic nature of Psa field** 106 **tolerance**

107 A QTL for control of field tolerance to Psa, Psa_score_Field, was identified in ‘Hort16A’ on the
108 upper arm of LG27 (Fig. 3a) using multiple models for QTL discovery. At a LOD score of 7.02
109 (Fig. 3a), the location of the LG27 QTL on the Red5 genome (version 1.69.0)³³ is between ~3.4
110 to 4.6 Mbp. The LG27 QTL was also identified for Psa_score-Field, in ‘Hort16A’ from the pilot
111 trial (Supplementary Table1). A SNP marker G9P1 developed from Acc30822, a gene of
112 unknown function underlying the QTL and a multi-allelic Simple Sequence Repeat (SSR)
113 marker SSRLG27_439F4R4, contributed 16% (favorable allele *b*) and 19% (favorable allele *v*,
114 band size 428 bp) of the population phenotypic variance, respectively (Fig. 3g and
115 Supplementary Table 1). The multi-allelic SSR marker revealed the contribution of the favorable
116 428 bp *A. chinensis* grandparental allele *v*, to Psa tolerance (Fig. 3g), compared to the other 408
117 bp allele *u* which is associated with susceptibility.

118 Using interval mapping and KW analysis, six QTLs were identified in P1, for Psa_score_Field
119 indicating Psa tolerance is multigenic in P1. A single QTL with LOD score above 3 was located
120 on the upper arm of LG22 (Fig. 3b), while three additional QTLs on LGs 3.1, 15 and 24
121 (Supplementary Fig. 4), as well as two KW QTLs on LG14 (S14_5310060, K value > 9 , $P <$
122 0.0001) and LG28 (S28_1476180, K value > 7 , $P < 0.0001$). From these, the effect of favorable
123 grandparent alleles from P1 on field tolerance was verified from at least 3 QTLs i.e., by analysis
124 of an SSR marker designed in the region underlying the LG22 QTL (SSRLG22_8032664) (Fig
125 3g and Supplementary Table1), a SNP marker E6P3 designed in a putative cell wall protein
126 encoding gene Acc15766 within the LG14 QTL (Supplementary Fig. 5, Supplementary Table 1),
127 and the LG28 QTL (SSRLG28_1378F5R5) (Supplementary Fig. 5). Screening of
128 SSRLG27_439F4R4 in another set of field-grown ‘Hort16A’ \times P1 progeny confirmed
129 association of the v allele with tolerance (Supplementary Fig. 6a). The combination of favorable
130 alleles from the ‘Hort16A’ LG27 QTL and three QTLs from P1 (LGs 14, 22 and 28) yielded a
131 percentage variance of 40.6% (Supplementary Table 1): this combination identified ~80% of the
132 tolerant ‘Hort16A’ \times P1 genotypes in the field (Supplementary Fig. 7).

133 Since the QTL identified in ‘Hort16A’ has the highest effect, we predicted that this locus could
134 be linked to susceptibility observed in diploid kiwifruit breeding parents. For this purpose, we
135 performed validation of the LG27 QTL in another field grown *A. chinensis* population, derived
136 from two Psa-susceptible parents ‘Hort22D’ and P2, using SSRLG27_439F5R5 located ~3 kb
137 distant from SSRLG27_439F4R4. Data revealed that the 430/432 bp allele linked in *cis* with the
138 previously described allele v was associated with tolerance in this population and was present in
139 both parents, while the 440 bp allele z (size 440 bp) was linked to susceptibility and present in
140 ‘Hort22D’ (Supplementary Fig. 6b). The region underlying the QTL on chromosome 27 spans
141 orthologues of genes with putative functions involved in Pathogen-Associated Molecular Pattern
142 (PAMPs) -triggered immunity (PTI), including cysteine rich receptor-like protein kinases, serine-
143 threonine like protein kinase, enzymes involved in amino acid, carbohydrate and phosphate
144 metabolism, sugar transporter, transcription factors, auxin-responsive and transport protein,
145 epigenetic modulators and heat repeat-containing protein (Supplementary Table 2).

146 **Additional genetic hotspots associated with tissue and environment-specific phenotypic**
147 **responses to Psa infection identified using bioassays**

148 *Analysis of Psa tolerance in P1 using stab assay and leaf infection*

149 The stab assay targets the vascular system and enabled a range of different phenotypes to be
150 scored following Psa infection (Fig. 1f to k). P1 appeared to be relatively tolerant in comparison
151 with ‘Hort16A’ in the stab assay, as in the field and grouped close to Psa-tolerant *A. arguta* and
152 *A. chinensis* var. *deliciosa* for the Stem_necrosis response to infection (Supplementary Fig. 8).
153 Consistent with this, ‘Hort16A’ hosted significant growth of endophytic populations of Psa in the
154 leaves, 10 days post-inoculation (Supplementary Fig. 9), compared with P1 and a Psa-tolerant
155 tetraploid *A. chinensis* genotype both of which did not support endophytic growth of Psa over the
156 same time period (Supplementary Fig. 9).

157 *QTLs for control of stem necrosis and collapse, tip death and Psa score determined in the stab*
158 *bioassay*

159 Multiple interval mapping methods identified QTLs for control of Stem_necrosis on LG13 in
160 ‘Hort16A’ at three positions; S13_6915810 and S13_10678547, with a LOD score ranging
161 between 4.5 and 9 (Fig. 3c) and S13_13629983 (Supplementary Table 3). Moreover, QTLs were
162 detected in the same region on LG13 for control of Stem_collapse and Psa_score_Stab,
163 indicating these were genetic hotspots for host-pathogen interaction in vascular tissues.
164 Interestingly, QTLs for the control of Stem_necrosis in P1 were identified on different
165 chromosomes from those of ‘Hort16A’, namely the upper arm of LG16 and lower arm of LG23
166 (Supplementary Table 4 and Supplementary Fig. 10). As for ‘Hort16A’, QTLs from P1
167 coincided with those for other phenotypes including Tip_death and Psa_score_Stab. A
168 significant QTL for control of Psa_score_Stab was also detected on LG1 of P1 (Fig. 3f,
169 Supplementary Fig. 11). It was noticeable that the Tip_death phenotype generated multiple
170 putative QTLs from both ‘Hort16A’ and P1 (Supplementary Fig. 12 and 13).

171 *Oozing as a symptom of Psa infection*

172 Oozing of a bacterial exudate was observed following Psa infection and QTLs for control of this
173 phenotype were identified on LGs 2, 13 and LG15 (Supplementary Table 3 and Supplementary
174 Fig.10) of ‘Hort16A’. For P1, QTLs were detected on the upper arm of LG27 (Fig 3d and
175 Supplementary Table 4) and LG13. QTLs for control of the Ooze phenotype detected on LG13
176 and 27 overlapped QTLs detected in ‘Hort16A’ for the Stem_necrosis phenotype, as well as

177 Psa_score_Field. Other QTLs identified in ‘Hort16A’ and P1 using KW analysis for the Ooze
178 phenotype are listed in Supplementary Table 3 and 4, respectively.

179 *Leaf spots and Wilt*

180 We observed symptomatic responses to Psa infection in leaf tissues distant from the point of
181 inoculation in the stem. In ‘Hort16A’, QTLs for Leaf_spots (Supplementary Table 3 and
182 Supplementary Fig. 10) were detected on LGs 2, 5, 13 and 26. QTLs for Wilt in ‘Hort16A’ were
183 detected on LGs 3, 13, 15 and 18. Most of these overlapped QTLs identified for Ooze and
184 Stem_necrosis. In P1, QTLs for Leaf_spots (Supplementary Table 4 and Supplementary Fig. 11)
185 were detected on LGs 1 and 5. A significant QTL was detected on LG10 of P1 for Wilt (Fig. 3e
186 and Supplementary Table 4).

187 *Phenotypic tolerance to Psa exposure in tissue culture*

188 When ‘Hort16A’ x P1 population grown aseptically in tissue culture were challenged with Psa,
189 multiple QTLs were detected for a health score at each weekly time-point (FA_Week1 to
190 FA_Week5) (Supplementary Table 5). For ‘Hort16A’, *K* values were significant on LG15 at the
191 third and fourth weeks following infection. A QTL on LG27 with lower significance overlapped
192 the major QTL on LG27 identified in ‘Hort16A’ for Psa_score_Field. For P1, a significant QTL
193 identified on the upper arm of LG13 for 3 and 4 weeks post-infection and overlapped the QTL
194 region identified from phenotypes in the stab assay. Plant phenotypes changed dramatically
195 during the period post-infection and additional QTLs were identified for health score at different
196 time points (Supplementary Table 5).

197 The coordinates for all the QTLs in the Red5 genome versions 1.69.0³³ and 1.68.5³¹ are
198 provided in Supplementary Data 1.

199 **RNA-seq of ‘Hort16A’, P1 and F1 genotypes exhibiting Psa tolerance or susceptibility in** 200 **the field revealed patterns of innate immunity**

201 RNA-seq performed on healthy young leaf tissues from three groups of ‘Hort16A’ × P1 F1
202 genotypes differing in field tolerance to Psa demonstrated clear differences in gene expression.
203 The first group included three relatively tolerant- to medium-tolerant genotypes, including P1
204 (Psa-TMT), while the second group included three fully susceptible genotypes, including

205 ‘Hort16A’ (Psa-Sus). At the same time, samples were harvested from the three most tolerant
206 ‘Hort16A’xP1 genotypes, which had shown tolerance for four years in the field (Psa-FT). Heat
207 maps and PCA plots of expression data from the pair-wise comparison between the three groups
208 demonstrated extreme variation between the susceptible (Psa-Sus) and two tolerant groups (Psa-
209 TMT and Psa-FT) (Fig. 4a to d). Differential gene expression analysis conducted between the
210 groups of tolerant and susceptible genotypes at $\alpha < 0.005$ with p values adjusted < 0.1 revealed
211 that from 31,588 genes, 23 (0.076%) were upregulated and 88 (0.28%) were downregulated in
212 Psa-TMT compared with Psa-Sus (Supplementary Data2). Psa-FT genotypes exhibited 712
213 differentially expressed genes (DEGs) when compared with Psa-Sus. Of these, 172 (0.59%) were
214 upregulated and 539 (1.9%) were downregulated in Psa-FT genotypes compared to Psa-Sus
215 (Supplementary Data2). Seventy-seven genes (0.24%) were differentially expressed in common
216 among tolerant genotypes of the Psa-FT and Psa-TMT groups when each was compared with
217 Psa-Sus (Fig. 4e and f and Supplementary Data 2).

218 *DEGs in Psa-TMT and Psa-FT groups compared to Psa-Sus genotypes*

219 The gene families upregulated in common in Psa-TMT and Psa-FT genotypes are mostly
220 orthologues of protein-coding genes involved in plant basal defense against pathogens or
221 Pathogen-Associated Molecular Patterns (PAMPs)-triggered immunity (PTI), cost of defense,
222 cell wall and carbohydrate metabolism and other functions (Table 1). Psa-FT genotypes exhibit
223 upregulation of a high number of genes with functions related to defense. The genes significantly
224 downregulated in common in both tolerant genotypes, Psa-TMT and Psa-FT compared with Psa-
225 Sus, are orthologues of protein coding genes involved in chromatin modulation such as histone
226 encoding proteins, auxin efflux, and abiotic and biotic defense (Table 1).

227 *Integrated view of QTLs and DEG in field*

228 A Circos plot of all the QTLs and the DEGs anchored on the Red5 genome 1.69.0, highlighted a
229 number of DEGs that co-localized with the QTL regions (Fig. 5). Circos diagrams for individual
230 phenotypes are presented in Supplementary Figs.14 to 16 for phenotypes from the field, Stab
231 bioassay and Flood bioassay, respectively.

232 *Validation of expression of candidate genes*

233 From the list of candidate DEGs (Table 1), relative expression of a few genes with diverse
234 putative functions was verified in the genotypes from all three groups (Psa-TMT, Psa-FT, Psa-
235 Sus), using real time quantitative reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-qRT-PCR)
236 (Fig 6). Genes including Acc23960.1 (*Transducin/WD40 repeat-like superfamily protein*),
237 Acc16485.1 (*alpha-glucan phosphorylase*) Acc30767.1 (*UDP-Glycosyltransferase superfamily*
238 *protein*), Acc08664.1 (*Ammonium transporter*), Acc18987.1 (*MLP-like protein 423*),
239 Acc03527.1 (*AGAMOUS-like*) and Acc08233.1 (*NAD(P) binding protein superfamily*), showed
240 significantly higher expression in Psa-FT and Psa-TMT genotypes compared to Psa-Sus
241 genotypes. Comparatively, genes including Acc01014.1 (*Salicylic acid carboxyl*
242 *methyltransferase*), Acc24057.1 (*Auxin efflux carrier family protein*), Acc04255.1 (*Acyl-CoA N-*
243 *acyltransferases (NAT) superfamily*) and Acc13577.1 (*Nudix hydrolase*) were significantly
244 expressed in Psa-Sus compared to Psa-FT and Psa-TMT genotypes.

245 Further we explored the expression of these genes in leaf tissues of ‘Hort16A’ and P1 plants,
246 inoculated with Psa for bacterial growth assessments (Supplementary Fig. 9), at 0 and 24 hrs
247 time points post-infection. We found that Acc16485.1 (*alpha-glucan phosphorylase*) and
248 Acc03527.1 (*AGAMOUS-like*) were significantly upregulated in P1 at 0 and 24 hrs post-infection
249 compared to ‘Hort16A’ suggesting that their expression is naturally higher in the tolerant parent
250 or suppressed in the susceptible parent and is not induced during early hours of Psa infection
251 (Supplementary Fig. 17). Rest of the candidate genes were not differentially expressed in
252 between the two parents at both time points except Acc08664.1 (*Ammonium transporter*) which
253 was found to be significantly up-regulated in P1 within 24 hrs post-infection compared to
254 ‘Hort16A’ (Supplementary Fig. 17).

255 .

256 Discussion

257 This study provides the first information about genetic loci involved in the host-pathogen
258 relationship between *A. chinensis* and Psa. Although a genetic map of the chromosomal location
259 of basal defense and R-genes has been reported³⁴, there has been no previous genetic mapping
260 of Psa resistance. Our study employed natural field and artificial infection data in three
261 environments over multiple years, combined with genetic and transcriptomic experiments in a
262 segregating population resulting from a cross between Psa-susceptible ‘Hort16A’ and a tolerant

263 male P1, to develop an understanding of the genetic factors underpinning quantitative tolerance
264 to Psa in diploid *A. chinensis*.

265 QTL mapping of the field phenotypic data following natural infection demonstrated the
266 oligogenic nature of this field tolerance, with a single major-effect QTL for tolerance being
267 identified on LG27 in ‘Hort16A’ and six minor-effect QTLs on LGs 3, 14, 15, 22, 24 and 28 of
268 P1. In addition, we demonstrated the interaction of four of the QTLs (LGs 27, 14, 22, 28),
269 accounting for 30 to 40% of the total variance. Our results are consistent with reports of
270 quantitative tolerance against sub-species of *Pseudomonas syringae*³⁵⁻³⁸ in other hosts and
271 reinforce the long-standing view that no single genetic model can account for incomplete or
272 partial resistance^{39,40}. The major QTL on LG27 of ‘Hort16A’ (initially identified in the field for
273 control of tolerance and expressed as Psa_score_Field) overlaps QTLs for tissue specific
274 responses (Fig. 5). These were for the Ooze phenotype in the stab bioassay in both parents (on
275 LG27.1 S27_4621046 in P1 and LG27 4358305 in ‘Hort16A’) and for the FA_Week3 phenotype
276 in ‘Hort16A’ (on LG27, S27_4853516). In addition, a number of other QTLs identified from the
277 stab bioassay overlapped in the genomic regions S13_6915810 and S13_10678547 on LG13
278 (Ooze, Tip_death, Stem_necrosis and Psa_score_Stab) (Fig. 5). As stem necrosis leads to
279 collapse of the vascular structure, we suggest that oozing, together with stem necrosis, is not only
280 an important phenotype for assessing tolerance to Psa, but also possibly points towards diverse
281 mechanisms providing field tolerance in *A. chinensis*, that might involve cell wall strengthening
282 and basal defense.

283 Validation of SSR markers underlying the QTL on LG27 in an independent population of the
284 same cross, as well as another diploid *A. chinensis* population, supports association of this region
285 with Psa tolerance. Genetic analysis of the polymorphism under the LG27 QTL region in
286 ‘Hort16A’ × P1 and other populations indicated that tolerance to Psa is recessive and derived
287 from the male parent of ‘Hort16A’ and that there is likely a susceptibility gene(s) in this region
288 of diploid *A. chinensis*. Further investigation in the kiwifruit germplasm for tolerance-associated
289 haplotypes in this region will aid in fine mapping and the search for candidate gene(s) for Psa
290 tolerance.

291 Pyramiding of pest and disease resistance loci to enhance durability is an important focus of
292 most crop breeding programs^{40,41}. Marker-Assisted Selection (MAS) has been recognized as a

293 useful tool in breeding perennial fruit crops for major traits such as disease tolerance, flowering,
294 ripening⁴²⁻⁴⁵ and is the most efficient route to pyramiding of resistance loci. The first step
295 towards using MAS to improve the efficiency of breeding new Psa-tolerant *A. chinensis* cultivars
296 is the identification of key genetic loci controlling field tolerance to Psa. The moderate-high to
297 high resistance to Psa identified in diploid *A. chinensis* seedlings in PFR breeding populations
298 was reported to be under polygenic control²⁵ and our study has identified a number of genetic
299 loci associated with field tolerance and tissue-specific responses to Psa.

300 The polygenic nature of tolerance to the pathogen is both an advantage and a disadvantage for
301 breeders. Quantitative resistances that aggregate small effects from multiple genes are relatively
302 durable in comparison to qualitative resistances, as virulent pathovars can more readily evade
303 single *Resistance (R)* gene-based resistance^{46,47}. Furthermore, quantitative resistances can also
304 improve the durability of *R*-gene mediated resistances⁴⁸. However, validation of genetic markers
305 for multiple QTLs in the populations of different ploidy levels that exist in *A. chinensis* can be a
306 challenge. As multiple sources of resistance to *Psa* from a range of species exist in New Zealand
307 kiwifruit germplasm^{25,27,49}, resistance pyramiding based on multiple QTLs is a sustainable first
308 approach in a kiwifruit breeding program and can be strengthened in future with yet unidentified
309 *R* gene resistances against Psa. The oligogenic tolerance to Psa in *A. chinensis* that we have
310 described provides a framework that could lead to the development of durably Psa-resistant
311 cultivars.

312 Pathovars of *P. syringae* have a complex relationship with their hosts⁵⁰ and develop a range of
313 phenotypes in annual or perennial plant species⁵¹. Additional QTLs were identified for
314 associated with tissue-specific responses of *A. chinensis* to Psa in the stab and flood bioassays
315 and some of these overlapped. For example, QTLs for phenotypes in vascular tissues including
316 Stem_necrosis, Stem_collapse and Ooze were adjacent or overlapped on LGs 13 and 16, but
317 QTLs for leaf-associated phenotypes in the stab assay including Wilt, Leaf_spots and Tip death
318 and overall health score recorded in the flood assay (FA_Week1-5) were located on LGs 3, 5, 7,
319 10 and 18 (Fig 5). This is consistent with a previous finding where distinct quantitative genetic
320 variation underlies leaf and stem specific phenotypic responses to a pathogen⁵². As the QTLs
321 located using bioassays were not identified for field Psa tolerance, it appears probable that
322 different genetic mechanisms regulate the response to Psa infection in different environments
323 and in different tissues. Many environmental factors differ in greenhouse and in *in vitro* growth

324 conditions compared to the field so might contribute to the plasticity of plant phenotypic
325 responses. This includes factors such as temperature⁵³⁻⁵⁵, humidity⁵⁶⁻⁶⁰, other microbial
326 communities in the field, as well as physiological changes during the growth and aging of *A.*
327 *chinensis* vines may have an effect. In the future, elucidation of the role of the genetic loci
328 regulating the observed tissue-specific responses to Psa infection will be helpful in determining
329 the dynamics of the host-pathogen relationship in the disease triangle of the *A. chinensis* / Psa
330 patho-system⁶¹. Remarkably, a number of the QTLs identified in the bioassays overlie
331 differentially expressed genes, identified from RNA-seq data from field tolerant and susceptible
332 genotypes (Fig. 5).

333 In general, the association of genes determining quantitative tolerance with a range of
334 mechanisms of innate immunity or PTI enables them to act effectively to counter the virulence
335 strategies of pathogens during different stages of plant development⁶². In *A. chinensis*, the
336 genome assembly has demonstrated that more genes are associated with PTI, than with *R* gene
337 based Effector-Triggered Immunity (ETI), implying a strong selective pressure on the expansion
338 of genes involved in PTI³². Further evidence for this notion comes from studies exploring the
339 transcriptome of the kiwifruit-Psa interaction the in period directly following inoculation⁶³⁻⁶⁵.
340 Data obtained from our study have provided a list of classes of gene families underlying the
341 QTLs that might be directly or indirectly involved in the innate immune response of *Actinidia*
342 and its host-pathogen relationship with Psa over the longer term in the field.

343 The region underlying the most significant QTL on chromosome 27 are associated with plant
344 defense. (Supplementary Table 2).. A gene encoding a putative cell wall protein Acc15766
345 (Acc15766.1), located under the P1 LG14 QTL for field tolerance, was employed to design SNP
346 marker E6P3. Two QTLs on LG13 of 'Hort16A' were repeatedly identified in association with
347 control of stem necrosis and health, and Psa score in bioassays, as well as in field screens.
348 Underlying these QTLs were two genes, one an orthologue of *Ethylene production protein*
349 *1/ETO1* (Acc14810.1) that is intricately linked with a plant's susceptibility to pathogens⁶⁶, and
350 the other a *Protein ENHANCED DOWNY MILDEW 2/EDM2* (Acc14938.1), which is involved in
351 DNA methylation, transcriptional regulation and plant resistance to an oomycete pathogen⁶⁷.

352 In the present study we performed RNA-seq on different groups of F1 genotypes from a single
353 population exhibiting extreme variation in field tolerance and susceptibility to natural Psa levels

354 for at least 3 years to explore genes that are associated with Psa tolerance and susceptibility in
355 field over an extended time period. A putative orthologue of *UGT72B1*, which is highly
356 expressed in tolerant Psa_TMT and Psa_FT genotypes and localized within 2-LOD interval of
357 Psa_score_Field QTL on LG 27. Association of *UGT72B1* with non-host resistance against a
358 fungal pathogen has been suggested, as it encodes an enzyme of the phenylpropanoid pathway⁶⁸.
359 RT-qRT-PCR analysis on samples from controlled inoculation further showed that this gene is
360 induced 24 hrs post-Psa infection in both ‘Hort16A’ and P1, however this needs to be validated
361 if this is the causal gene in Psa tolerance. *EDM2* is significantly upregulated in the field-tolerant
362 Psa-FT genotypes and co-localizes with the QTL on LG13 associated to stem necrosis and
363 collpase. A gene encoding putative cellulose synthase (Acc15562.1), located on the upper arm of
364 LG14, was upregulated in field-tolerant genotypes and might play a role in strengthening the
365 vascular system. On LG24, an orthologue of a Histone protein coding gene (Acc27699.1) that
366 was downregulated in field-tolerant genotypes (Psa-FT and Psa-TMT) underlies a P1 QTL that is
367 associated with field tolerance.

368 Other gene families that are differentially expressed encode proteins with putative functions
369 associated with PTI, for example detoxification-like protein Acc00747.1⁶⁹, a MADS-box like
370 transcription factor Acc03527.1⁷⁰, terpene synthases Acc13740.1, Acc13742.1, Acc22685.1,
371 Acc22685.1⁷¹, MLP-like proteins Acc18987.1, Acc13742.1⁷² Acc20584.1, Acc20586.1
372 thioredoxin-like protein⁷³, cellulose synthase-like protein Acc27502.1⁷⁴, WD40-repeat
373 containing super-family protein Acc23960.1⁷⁵, UV-B-induced protein DUF760 Acc25706.1,
374 Acc14728⁷⁶, protein of unknown function (DUF247) /Acc08767, ammonium transporter 2/
375 Acc08664.1⁷⁷. A defense gene that is linked to carbohydrate metabolism that was upregulated in
376 Psa-TMT but downregulated in Psa-FT encodes a putative beta-galactosidase Acc13005.1.

377 Furthermore, we also verified the expression of the candidate genes associated with plant
378 immunity in Psa-TMT, Psa-FT and Psa-Sus genotypes using gene-specific primers. Consistent
379 with the RNAseq data, we found these genes to be significantly differentially expressed in the
380 tolerant genotypes compared to susceptible genotypes. Specifically, Acc16485.1 (*Alpha-glucan*
381 *phosphorylase*), Acc03527.1 (*AGAMOUS-like*) and Acc08664.1 (*Ammonium transporter*) genes
382 were confirmed to be significantly induced in P1 in greenhouse and field tolerant genotypes.
383 Acc03527.1 (*AGAMOUS-like*) is located very close to the QTL on LG3 in P1 for
384 Psa_score_Field and an ammonium transporter gene has been recently shown to be involved in

385 stem rust resistance in wheat⁷⁷. Our study therefore provide new resource for candidate RNA-
386 biomarkers for predicting tolerance in kiwifruit field breeding nurseries that can lead to improve
387 the speed of selective breeding of multi-genic trait⁷⁸.

388 Expansion of the pathogenic *P. syringae* strains and their divergence with respect to virulence
389 factors and toxins, as well as antimicrobial compounds^{5,79,80}, indicate that the capabilities of this
390 pathogen in suppressing plant defense are remarkable. Advances in the genomics of both *A.*
391 *chinensis* and *Psa* make them a powerful plant–pathogen model system in the context of
392 perennial host species. Results from this study will be utilized to develop MAS for *Psa* tolerance
393 in diploid breeding populations and to elucidate the molecular mechanisms to fend off the
394 virulent strain of *Psa*.

395 **Methods**

396 *Plant material*

397 The populations for genetic mapping of resistance to *Psa* were progeny of a cross between *Psa*-
398 susceptible ‘Hort16A’ (female) and tolerant P1 (male) and comprised of three sets of population.
399 The first set, a pilot population comprised 53 genotypes that were clonally propagated 3 to 5
400 times through cuttings, planted at the PFR Te Puke Research orchard and maintained under
401 standard orchard conditions from 2013 to 2016. The expanded population of 236 ‘Hort16A’ × P1
402 F1 genotypes was germinated in 2015 aseptically in standard tissue culture growth conditions⁸¹.
403 Each genotype was replicated 35–40 times from cuttings, either in tissue culture or under
404 standard greenhouse conditions, prior to field phenotyping or bioassays (Supplementary Fig. 1).
405 Field planting of 230 genotypes (6 to 14 replicates per genotype), was in a randomized block
406 design, in February 2017 at Te Puke and Kerikeri research orchards. A third ‘Hort16A’ × P1
407 population, of 128 genotypes, was planted in February 2016 in Te Puke and utilized for
408 validation of the genetic markers developed in the other two populations. A diploid *A. chinensis*
409 population ‘Hort22D’ × P2 with 433 individuals was used for marker validation. This
410 population, was maintained under standard orchard conditions from 2011 to 2017 in the Kerikeri
411 research orchard where it was sprayed with antibacterial sprays including copper to suppress
412 disease symptoms, in accordance with the Kiwifruit Vine Health guidelines. We note that the
413 great great grandfather of P2 is the father of ‘Hort16A’.

414 *Phenotyping*

415 The pilot field population was phenotyped monthly for symptoms from natural Psa infection
416 between 2013 and 2015 and the data used to develop the phenotypic scoring for the expanded
417 population, for which phenotyping was monthly from February 2017 to September 2018. Traits
418 scored included cane death, ooze, shoot death and tip death (Fig. 1). Presence/absence of leaf
419 spots was not recorded, as scores in the pilot study exhibited high between-plant variability. A
420 cumulative Psa score (Psa_score_Field) was calculated, with removals due to oozing and >50%
421 cane death scoring twice as highly as tip death and shoot death. Least squares mean (LS Mean)
422 was calculated for each individual genotype, based on this score.

423 The bioassays were performed in controlled environments, with the stab bioassay ²⁶, being
424 performed between September to December and February to April, in 2016, 2017 and 2018.
425 Inoculations were performed with 10627 SmR, a naturally occurring streptomycin-resistant
426 isolate of Psa biovar 3 ^{82,83}, in the greenhouse with temperatures of 22 to 30°C. In total, 200
427 genotypes were phenotyped using the stab bioassay, with 35 batches phenotyped across three
428 years. Details are in Supplemental Methods S1. The flood bioassay ²⁹ was performed by flooding
429 six biological replicates of each genotype with Psa, that had been grown on tissue-culture media
430 in an aseptic growth medium in a tub for 4 to 6 weeks. Details are provided in Supplemental
431 Methods S1.

432 *Bacterial inoculations for assessment of growth curve in resistant vs. susceptible plants*

433 Assessment of the growth curve for Psa in ‘Hort16A’ and P1 was performed using multiple
434 biological replicates in the greenhouse, as described for the stab test bioassay. Young potted
435 kiwifruit plants were inoculated with Psa, on 8 to 10 biological replicates of each genotype in
436 February, 2018. Further details are provided in Supplemental Methods S1.

437 *Genotyping, genetic maps and QTL mapping*

438 DNA was extracted from freeze-dried leaves using the Cetyl trimethylammonium bromide
439 (CTAB) method ⁸⁴. GBS libraries were prepared for 53 individuals from the pilot population and
440 236 individuals from the expanded population, as well as the two parents, using the method
441 described in detail by ⁸⁵, modified from the standard GBS protocol ³⁰. The individual and pooled
442 libraries were checked for quality with a Fragment Analyser (Advanced Analytical) and pooled

443 libraries with satisfactory QC were dried down and dispatched to the Australian Genome
444 Research Facility (AGRF) for single-end sequencing on an Illumina® HiSeq™ platform. The
445 sequencing reads were de-multiplexed based on GBS library preparation barcodes using the ea-
446 utils.1.1.2-537 package and those reads starting with the approved barcode immediately followed
447 by the remnant of the *Bam*HI cut site sequence were retained for further analysis. Variant calling
448 and genotyping was performed using TASSEL v3.0 and 5.0 and ~60,000 and 80,000 SNP calls
449 were generated for the individuals in the two populations, respectively. SNP calling was
450 performed using an early version of the Red5 genome (1.68.5), which preceded the 1.69.0
451 version ³³, and the ‘Hongyang’ genome ³² as references. Genome coordinates for the Red5
452 version 1.68.5 were converted to those of the published version using in-house PERL scripts
453 (available on request from Ross Crowhurst, PFR). The coordinates for SNPs associated with the
454 QTL peaks in the published Red5 genome are listed in Supplementary Data1. The SNP calls
455 represented 70% coverage of the expanded population. In our data sets (Supplementary Data 1),
456 Red5 markers begin with S, whereas markers generated from ‘Hongyang’ begin with HY,
457 followed by the number of the linkage group and the position of the marker on the respective
458 physical genome (for example S1_10661198 or HY10_1385907). The SNP data were
459 subsequently filtered to obtain 9,875 and 9,327 SNP markers polymorphic between ‘Hort16A’
460 and P1, respectively (3,364 for P1 in pilot study). JoinMap v 5.0 ⁸⁶ was used to develop genetic
461 linkage maps for both the parents, at a LOD score between 15 and 22. QTL mapping was
462 performed using the rQTL package ⁸⁷ and MapQTL5 software ⁸⁸. Multiple QTL models,
463 including Maximum likelihood (EM), Haley-Knott regression, Non-parametric, multiple
464 imputation and Kruskal-Wallis analysis (KW) were employed for single QTL scans.

465 *RNA-seq and RT-qRT-PCR*

466 Total RNA was extracted from healthy young leaves, at the sixth to ninth position from the
467 apical leaf, from genotypes in the field that were segregated into three groups based on
468 susceptibility to Psa. The first two groups were of two-year-old plants that were defined
469 respectively as: 1) tolerant/medium tolerant (Psa-TMT), consisting of three relatively Psa-
470 tolerant genotypes, including P1, and 2) susceptible (Psa-Sus), comprising three fully Psa-
471 susceptible genotypes including ‘Hort16A’ based on observations of 8 to 11 biological
472 replicates. The third group (Psa-FT) exhibited field tolerance to Psa over four years. RNA
473 extraction was from samples snap frozen with liquid nitrogen, using the Spectrum Total Plant

474 RNA kit (Sigma-Aldridge, Auckland, New Zealand) and QC was performed with the Fragment
475 Analyzer to select RNA with RNA Integrity Number (RIN) of 7.1-8.2. Samples from three
476 biological replicates were pooled. Library preparation at the Australian Genome Research
477 Facility used the TruSeq Stranded kit and subsequent paired-end Illumina® sequencing
478 employed the NovaSeq6000 platform. An average of ~19 million, 150 bp paired-end reads were
479 retrieved for each sample (~6 Gb) and read sequences of low-quality, ribosomal RNA as well as
480 adaptors were filtered out using Trimmomatic⁸⁹ and SortMeRna⁹⁰. RNA-seq reads were aligned
481 to the Red5 reference gene models using STAR and differential expression analysis was
482 performed using DESeq2⁹¹. The details concerning the target file, read statistics and DEGs are
483 provided in Supplementary Data2.

484 For RT-qRT-PCR on field samples, RNA was extracted (as described above) from 3-7 clonal
485 replicates of each genotype from Psa-TMT and Psa-Sus group from healthy leaf tissues. RNA
486 was extracted from leaf tissues of 5 different genotypes in Psa-FT group, as these genotypes are
487 not clonally replicated. For RT-qRT-PCR on infected tissues, samples were harvested from the
488 leaf tissues used for assessment of bacterial growth curve as described above. A 10mm leaf disc
489 was harvested from the region infected with Psa, at 0, 6, 24 and 48 hrs post-infection, and frozen
490 in liquid nitrogen. One leaf disc was harvested from a single clonal replicate of 'Hort16A' and P1
491 per time point and three biological replicates were harvested at each time point. Data from 0 and
492 24 hrs time is only presented in the study. Total RNA (~ 2 µg) was treated with DNase I (Roche
493 Applied Sciences) and used for cDNA synthesis using SuperScript IV Reverse
494 Transcriptase (Life Technologies-Invitrogen). The cDNA was diluted 20-fold and used for
495 qRT-PCR employing a LightCycler® 480 SYBR Green 1 Master PCR labelling kit (Roche
496 Applied Sciences) and RotorGene 3000 Real time PCR machine (Corbett Research, Sydney,
497 Australia). Relative transcript abundance was determined relative to the mean of the expression
498 of *Actin* and *Ubiquitin* genes in the same sample. Comparative quantification was performed as
499 described⁹². Primers used for genes are provided in Supplementary Table 6.

500 *SSR and SNP marker design and screening*

501 Repeats were identified manually in the genome sequence underlying the QTLs. PCR primers for
502 SSR markers were designed using Primer3 and employed to screen DNA extracted from the
503 populations⁹³. Analysis and scoring of the alleles in the amplicons was performed on a Hitachi

504 ABI3500 Applied Biosystems genetic analyzer. Primers were also designed around SNPs in the
505 genes identified in the genomic sequence of Red5 underlying the QTLs. The SNP markers were
506 screened using real-time High Resolution Melting analysis⁹⁴. All primer sequences are provided
507 in Supplementary Supplementary Table 6

508

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516

517 **Author Contributions**

518 JT performed pathogen infection experiments, DNA extractions, GBS, RNA-seq, RT-qRT-
519 PCRs, data analysis, genetic map construction, QTL mapping, designed the SNP and qPCR
520 markers. JT, SEG and DC wrote the manuscript. LG performed field phenotyping. SH performed
521 stab assay. HB developed SSR markers and performed validation of the markers. CB, AC, KT
522 and MM performed flood assay. EM, AW and KF performed replication of the genotypes in the
523 tissue culture and greenhouse. CW performed validation of the breeding parents from the
524 germplasm. CD performed GBS analysis. RC developed circos view of QTLs and RNA-seq data.
525 MK performed DNA extraction for the validation population. JT, DH and LG performed
526 statistical analysis of the data. JV performed bacterial growth assessments. JM performed
527 validation of the LG27 QTL in the breeding germplasm. KH managed orchard plantations of the
528 genotypes.

529 **Competing interests**

530 I declare that the authors have no competing interests as defined by Nature Research, or other
531 interests that might be perceived to influence the results and/or discussion reported in this paper.

532 **Figure Legends**

533 Fig. 1. Phenotypic responses in *Actinidia chinensis* plants in response to *Pseudomonas syringae*
534 pv. *actinidiae* (Psa) exposure. Field phenotypes include (a) Leaf_spots (b) Tip_death (c)
535 Cane_death (d) Ooze and (e) Shoot_death. Phenotypes observed in the stab bioassay include f)
536 Stem_necrosis, g) Leaf_spots, h) Ooze, i) Stem_collapse, j) Tip_death, k) Wilt and l) is a
537 representative flood assay (FA_Week3) phenotype for disease response.

538 Fig. 2. Distribution of phenotypes in the ‘Hort16A’ × P1 mapping population of 236 genotypes.
539 a) Least squares mean (LS Mean) of Psa_score_Field after 15 months in the field. The x-axis
540 displays the progression of susceptibility from left to right, while the y-axis represents frequency
541 in the population. b) LSM of phenotypes from the stab assay, including Stem_necrosis,
542 Stem_collapse, Tip_death, Psa_score_Stab, Ooze, Leaf_spot and Wilt. c) Means of the health
543 score from Flood bioassays (FA_Week 1 to FA_Week5). The WSTATISTIC is from the
544 Shapiro-Wilks test for the null hypothesis that the distribution is normal. Phenotypic scores with
545 $P < 0.001$ are rejected for the hypothesis that these distributions are normal. d) Principal
546 components analysis on the correlation matrix of the field assessment, flood assay and stab assay
547 measures. Genotypes are shown as points and measurements are shown as vectors (lines pointing
548 from the origin) defined by their correlation with the three principal components.

549 Fig. 3. Quantitative trait loci (QTLs) from ‘Hort16A’ and P1 for control of field tolerance and
550 tissue specific symptomatic responses to Psa. The outputs depict quantitative trait loci (QTL)
551 scans with different models. a) linkage group (LG)27 of ‘Hort16A’, b) LG22 of P1, both for
552 Psa_score_Field. From stab assay phenotypes major QTLs on: c) LG13 in ‘Hort16A’ for
553 Stem_necrosis, and in P1 on d) the upper arm of LG27 for Ooze, e) LG10 for Wilt and f) LG1
554 for Psa_score_Stab. SNPs at peaks are indicated. g) shows dot plot analysis of the allelotypes of
555 markers underlying quantitative trait loci derived from the Psa_score_Field for the population
556 ‘Hort 16A’ × P1’.

557 Fig. 4. RNA-seq analysis of ‘Hort16A’ × P1 genotypes, exhibiting tolerance or susceptibility to
558 Psa in the field. RNA-seq was performed on young healthy leaf tissues of field-grown plants
559 belonging to three groups based on relative tolerance / susceptibility. The first group included
560 three relatively Psa-tolerant plants (Tolerant to Medium Tolerant /Psa-TMT). The second group
561 included three fully Psa-susceptible genotypes, including ‘Hort16A’ (Psa-Sus). All had been
562 exposed to Psa for 1 year in the field. The third group represents the three most tolerant

563 genotypes, tolerant over 3 years in the field (Psa-FT). a) and b) show heat-maps for the genome
564 wide differential expression (DE) analysis in Psa-TMT vs Psa-Sus and Psa-FT vs Psa-Sus
565 respectively. c and d) are plots of Principal component analysis for the DE in Psa-TMT vs Psa-
566 Sus and Psa-FT vs Psa-Sus respectively. e) shows volcano plots for the DE, with significantly
567 ($P_{adj} < 0.01 / \log^{10} p_{adj}$, \log_2) upregulated and downregulated genes highlighted in red and
568 blue respectively in the two comparisons, Psa-TMT vs Psa-Sus and Psa-FT vs Psa-Sus. The grey
569 dots indicate non-significantly expressed genes, whereas the green dots highlight the genes that
570 are differentially expressed in common between Psa-TMT vs Psa-Sus and Psa-FT vs Psa-Sus. f)
571 shows the DE genes in common or unique, respectively, between Psa-TMT vs Psa-Sus and Psa-
572 FT vs Psa-Sus.

573 Fig. 5. Circos plot of quantitative trait loci (QTLs) for various phenotypes in field and bioassay
574 as well as RNA-seq data associated with Psa-tolerant and susceptible genotypes, anchored on the
575 chromosomes of the Red5 genome version 1.69.0. Tracks A and B represent differentially
576 expressed genes (DEGs) with $\log_2FC \pm 2$ and above in fully tolerant (Psa-FT) vs susceptible (Psa-
577 Sus) and tolerant to medium tolerant (PsaTMT) vs Psa-Sus genotypes, respectively. On track A,
578 blue circles are upregulated and red circles are downregulated genes in Psa-FT compared to Psa-
579 Sus genotypes. On track B, blue circles are downregulated and red circles are upregulated genes
580 in Psa-TMT compared to Psa-Sus genotypes. Genes with \log_2FC , between 1 and -1, are
581 represented by green circles. Increase in circle diameter indicates increasing \log_2FC value. Track
582 C represents DEGs common to Psa-FT and Psa-TMT. Track D and E are LOD values for
583 Psa_score_Field for 'Hort16A' and P1 respectively. The lines change from black to red for a
584 LOD score > 3 . Track F and G are QTLs detected from all phenotypes listed in QTL key in
585 'Hort16A' and P1 respectively. H represents the lines connecting QTLs for similar phenotype on
586 different chromosomes.

587 Fig. 6. Real-time quantitative PCR of relative gene expression of candidate genes in Psa-TMT,
588 Psa-FT and Psa-Sus genotypes. Expression of the candidate genes was analyzed in Psa-TMT (73,
589 74, 76), Psa-FT (77, 78, 79) and Psa-Sus (82, 83, 84) genotypes using real-time quantitative
590 reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-qRT-PCR). Data represents mean relative
591 gene expression of the candidate genes, in three to seven clonal replicates for each genotype, to
592 the mean of *Actin* and *Ubiquitin* genes and plotted using `geom_boxplot`. Asterisks represents
593 statistically significant differences in the relative expression of the candidate genes in genotypes

594 of Psa-TMT and Psa-FT compared to the mean relative expression of genes in Psa-Sus genotypes
595 using Student's *t*-test.

596

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	Gene Ontology and function	<i>Actinidia</i> gene ID	<i>Arabidopsis</i> orthologue
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888 **Table 1. Candidates from differentially expressed genes in field tolerant genotypes.** Psa-
889 tolerant plants (FT), Psa Tolerant to Medium Tolerant /Psa-TMT and Psa-susceptible genotypes
890 (Psa-Sus).

Upregulated in TMT and FT	MATE efflux family protein, Protein detoxification	Acc00747.1	AT5G52450.1/ <i>DTX16</i>
	<i>MADS</i> -box	Acc03527.1	AT5G62165.2/ <i>AGL42</i>
	Terpene synthases	Acc13740.1, Acc13742.1, Acc22685.1, Acc22685.1	AT5G23960.2/ <i>TPS21</i>
	Major Latex Protein (MLP)-like protein	Acc18987.1, Acc13742.1	AT1G24020.1/ <i>MLP28</i>
	Thioredoxin-like protein	Acc20584.1, Acc20586.1	AT1G11530.1/ <i>CXXS1</i>
	Cellulose synthase-like protein	Acc27502.1, Acc15562.1	AT4G24010.1/ <i>CSLG1</i>
	<i>UDP-glycosyltransferase</i>	Acc30767.1	AT3G02100.1/ <i>UGT72B1</i>
	WD40-repeat containing super-family protein	Acc23960.1	AT1G78070.1
	Protein of unknown function, UV-B-induced protein, <i>DUF760</i>	Acc25706.1, Acc14728.1	AT3G07310.1
	Protein of unknown function, <i>DUF247</i>	Acc08761.1	AT4G31980.1
	Ammonium transporter	Acc08664.1	AT2G38290.1/ <i>AMT2</i>
	<i>Chloroplastic, 3-ketoacyl-acyl carrier protein synthase</i>	Acc08233.1	AT1G24360.1/ <i>KASI</i>
	<i>Alpha-glucan phosphorylase</i>	Acc16485.1	AT3G46970.1
Downregulated in TMT and FT	<i>Histone superfamily protein, Histone H2A, Chromatin assembly factor-1</i>	Acc15097.1, Acc15099.1, Acc17300.1, Acc16944.1, Acc17279.1, Acc20675.1, Acc20918.1, Acc21661.1, Acc25126.1, Acc25392.1, Acc25885.1, Acc26149.1, Acc26150.1, Acc26360.1, Acc27699.1, Acc30085.1, Acc30211.1, Acc30253.1, Acc31646.1, Acc32318.1	AT1G09200.1, AT1G65470.1, AT1G65470.1, AT2G28720.1, AT4G27230.1, AT5G59910.1, AT5G02560.1, AT3G45930.1, AT5G22650.2, AT1G54690.1
	<i>Salicylate carboxymethyltransferase</i>	Acc01014.1	AT1G19640.1
	Auxin efflux carrier family protein	Acc24057.1	AT1G77110.1
	Acyl-CoA N-acyltransferases (NAT) superfamily protein	Acc04255.1	AT2G32030.1
	Serine/threonine-protein kinase PBS1-like	Acc17448.1	AT3G20530.1
	Pathogenesis-related thaumatin superfamily protein	Acc25881.1	AT2G28790.1

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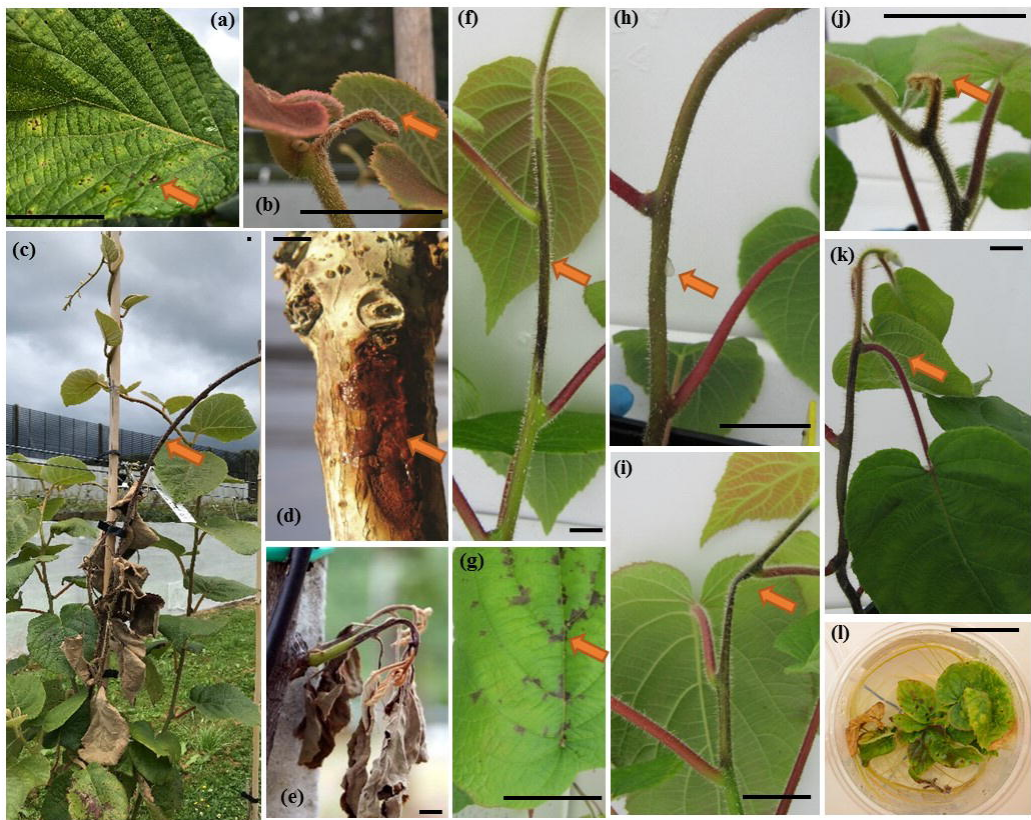


Figure 1

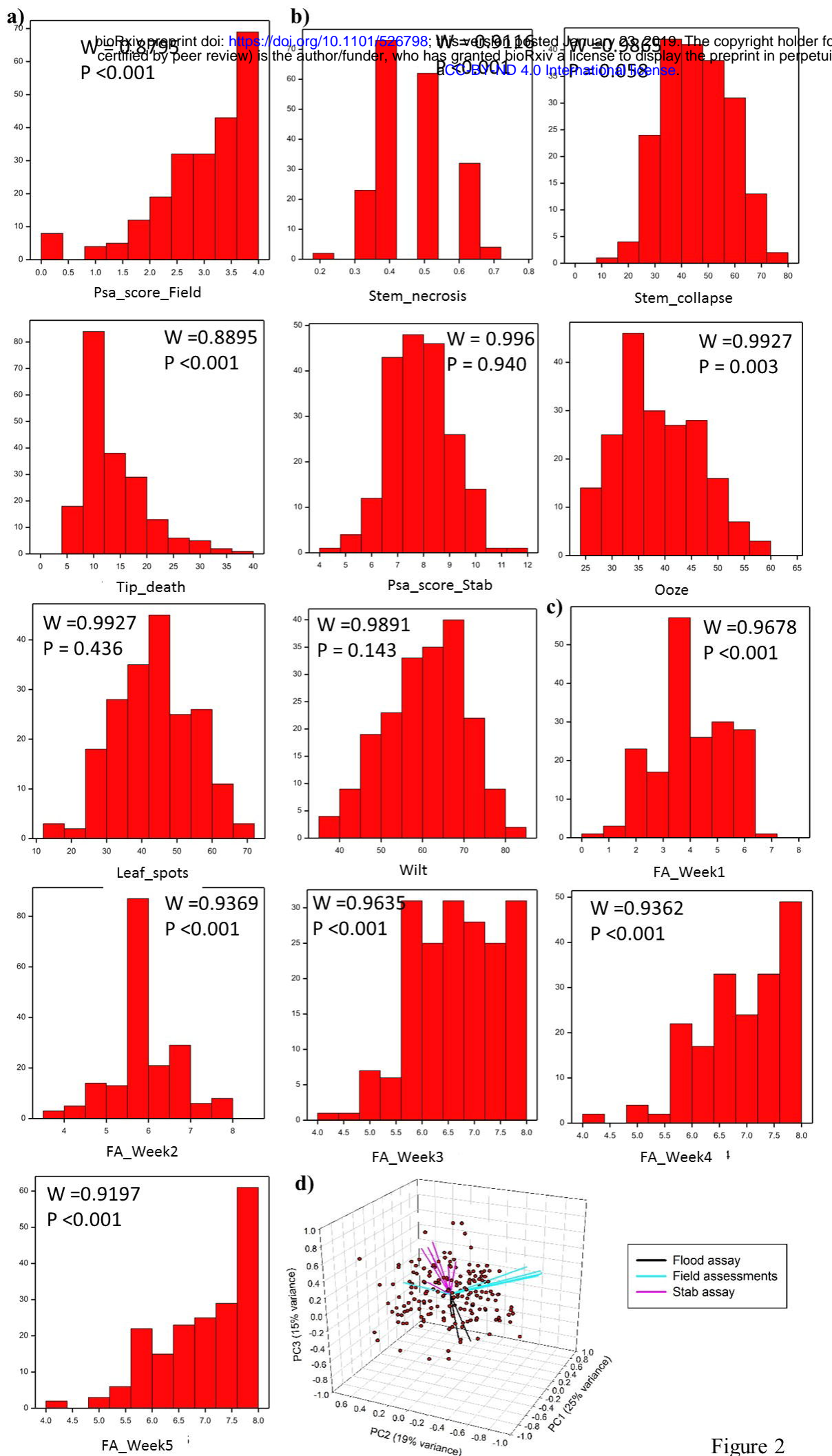


Figure 2

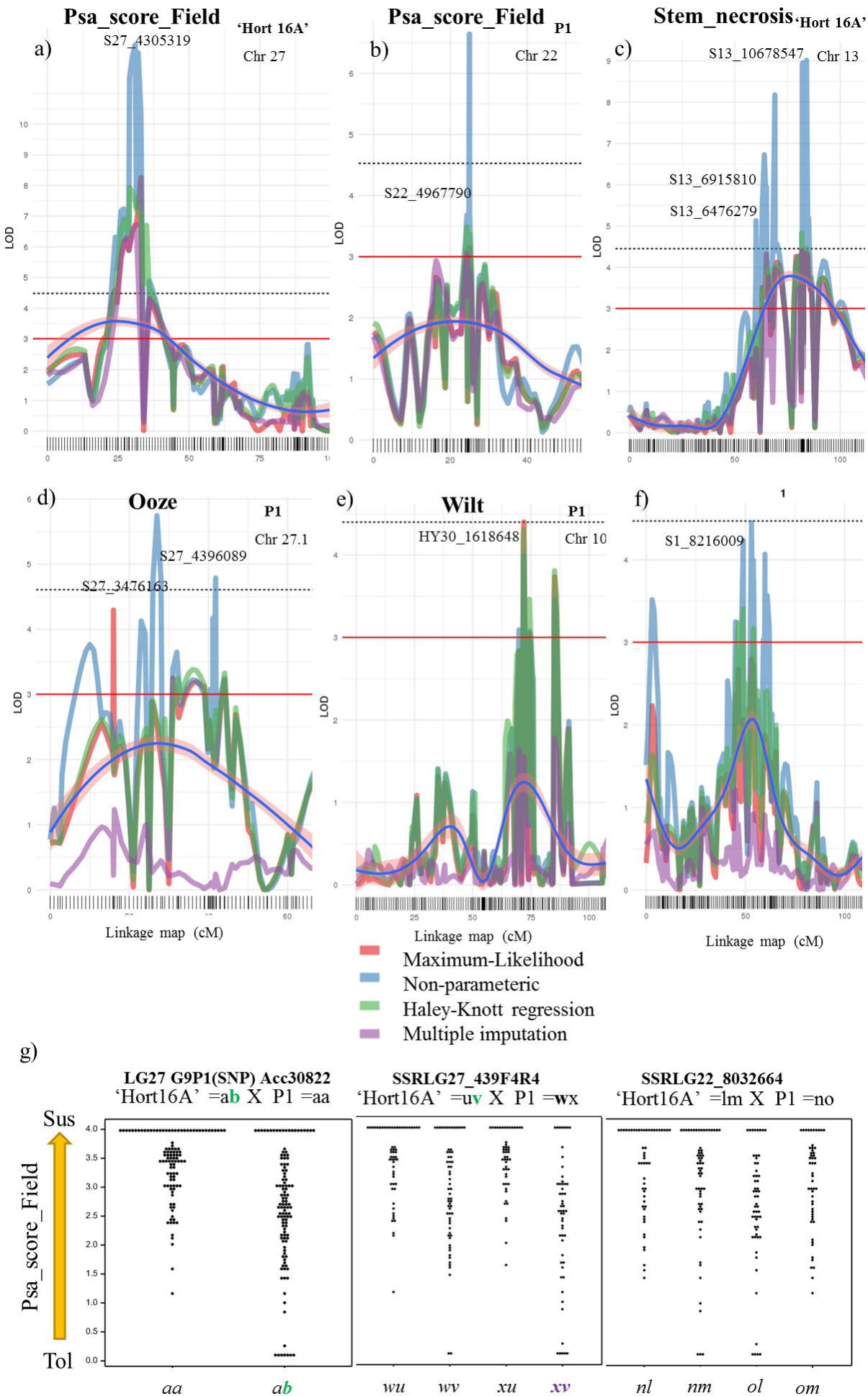


Figure 3

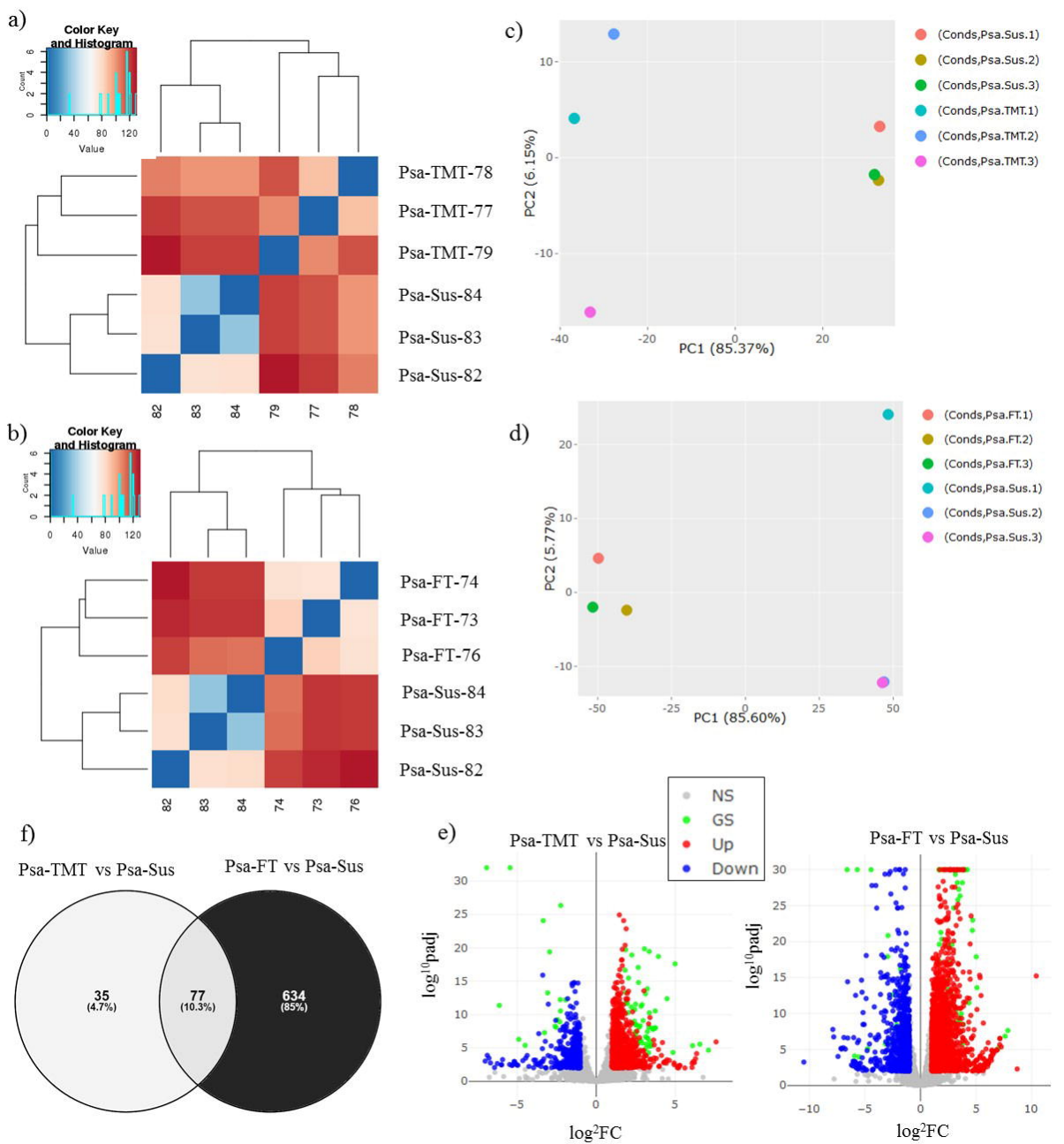


Figure 4

- QTL Key**
(tracks F, G, H):
- Leaf spots
 - Ooze
 - Psa score Field
 - Psa score Stab
 - Stem collapse
 - Stem necrosis
 - Tip death
 - Wilt
 - FA Week1
 - FA Week2
 - FA Week3
 - FA Week4
 - FA Week5

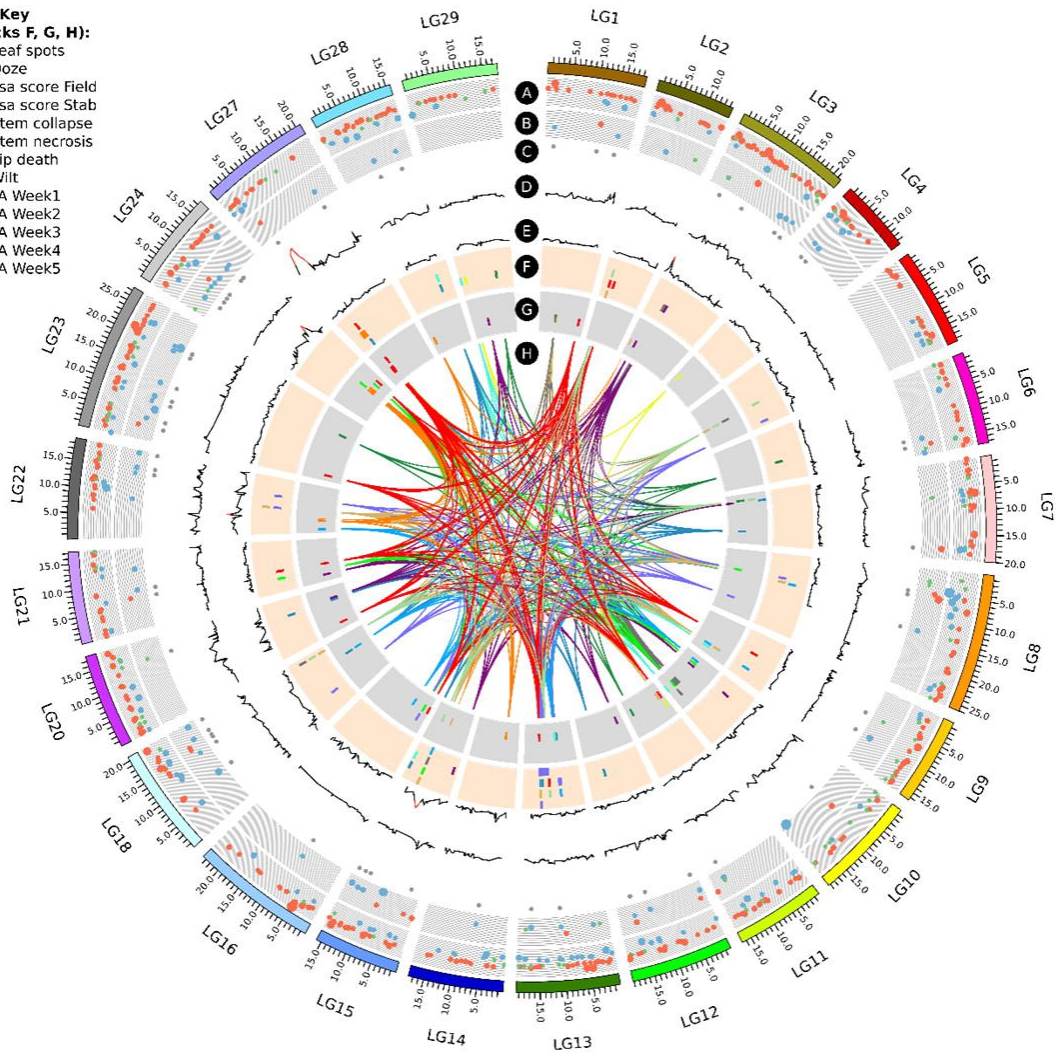


Figure 5

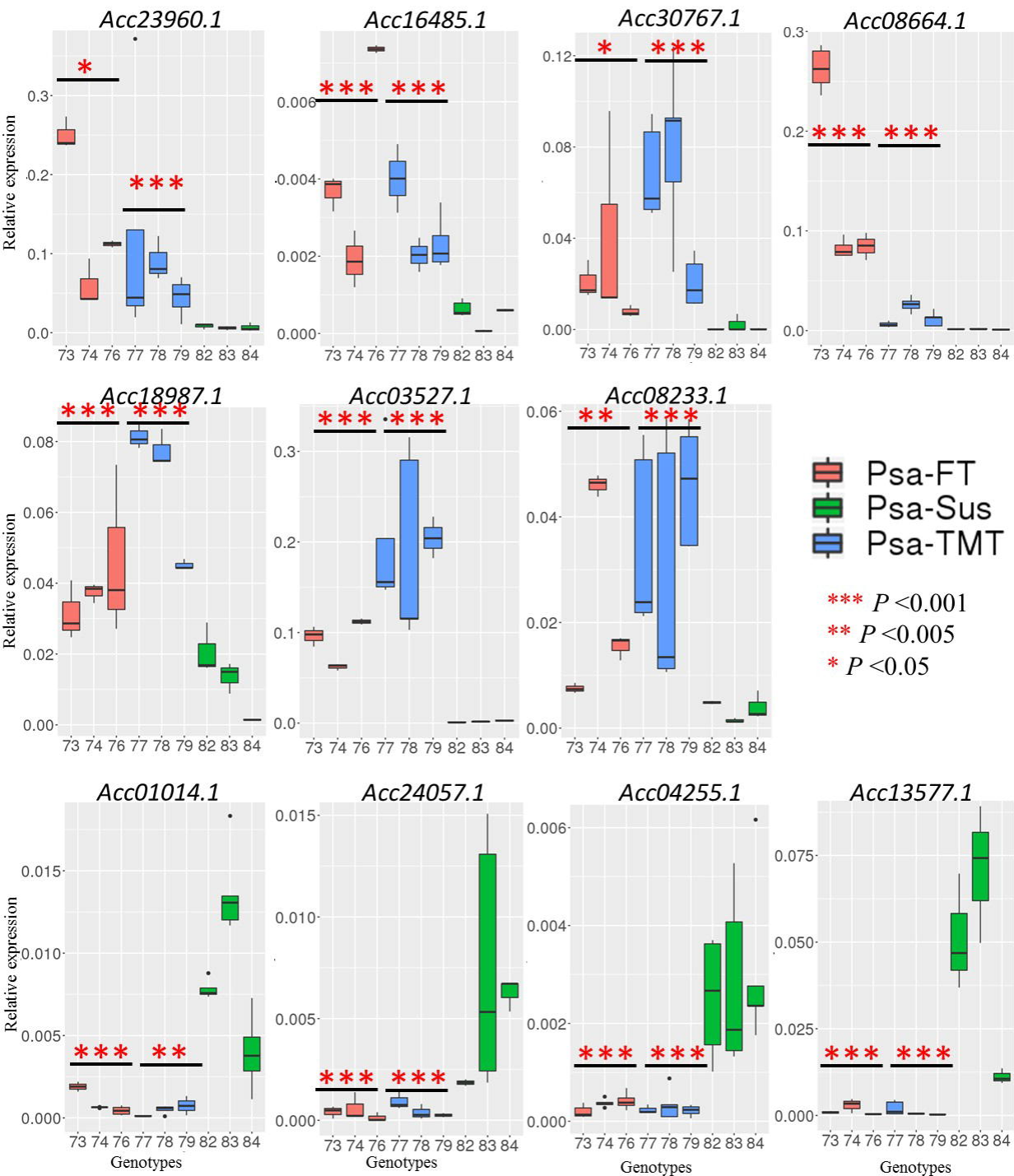


Figure 6