

1 Original Paper

2 Identification of new resistance QTL regions in loquat cultivar 'Champagne'

3 against *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *eribotryae* group C

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## 22 Abstract

23 Loquat canker, caused by *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *eribotryae*, is a bacterial disease that

24 infects loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica*) and has been reported in several countries. Three

25 pathotypes, A, B, and C, have been reported in Japan. The loquat cultivar 'Champagne' is

26 resistant to the loquat canker group C and possesses a qualitative trait governed by a recessive

27 homozygous *pse-c* gene located on Linkage Group 3 (LG3), and quantitative traits located at

28 unidentified loci. In this study, we identified novel quantitative trait loci (QTL) regions for

29 resistance to group C in this cultivar. A seedling population with 'Tanaka' (*Pse-c/Pse-c*) crossed

30 with 'Champagne' (*pse-c/pse-c*) was tested. The genetic map of 'Champagne' includes a total

31 of 1,016 SNP markers mapped across 17 LGs, covering a total distance of 1,301 cM and an

32 average marker density of 1.4 cM/locus. In addition to minor potential QTLs, the major QTL

33 for resistance to loquat canker group C was detected in the upper region of LG14, with the QTL

34 contributing 6.9% to the disease index. The results of this study open new possibilities for

35 resistance breeding against this disease.

36

37 *Keywords:*

38 genetic map, loquat canker, resistance, QTL

39

40 Highlights.

41 A total of 1,016 SNP markers were mapped on a linkage map consisting of 17 linkage groups

42 with a total distance of 1,301 cM.

43

44 QTL analysis revealed a novel resistance QTL region in ‘Champagne’ against loquat canker

45 group C in the upper part of the LG14.

46

47 The identified QTLs in this study provide new possibilities for resistance breeding in loquat.

## 48 1. Introduction

49 The loquat (*Eriobotrya japonica* (Thunb.) Lindl.) is an evergreen fruit tree belonging to the  
50 subtribe Malinae, tribe Maleae, subfamily Amygdaloideae of the family Rosaceae (Campbell  
51 et al., 2007; Potter et al., 2007; Liu et al., 2020). It is believed that its cultivation began in  
52 southern China (Ding et al., 1995; Wang et al., 2017). Indeed, the cultivars introduced from  
53 China to Japan have led to the various Japanese cultivars seen today (Ichinose, 1995), a fact  
54 supported by DNA analysis (Nagano et al., 2022). Cultivated loquat was reportedly introduced  
55 from China to European countries, then from Europe to Florida between 1867 and 1870, and  
56 from Japan to California (Morton, 1987). However, although no records remain, DNA analysis  
57 has suggested the possibility that cultivars genetically distinct from the current Asian cultivars,  
58 not favored by Asians but instead preferred by Westerners, were introduced to the West (Nagano  
59 et al., 2022). Thus, this species has been introduced to many countries worldwide and is  
60 cultivated in more than 30 countries (Lin et al., 1999). The major producing countries are China,  
61 followed by Spain, Pakistan, and Japan (Lin, 2007).

62 In commercial loquat cultivation, the tree often suffers from bacterial diseases. Among these,  
63 loquat canker caused by *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *eriobotryae* is a problematic disease that  
64 has been confirmed in many countries (Alippi and Alippi, 1990; Lai et al., 1971; Lin et al.,  
65 1999; McRae and Hale, 1986; Wimalajeewa et al., 1978). The disease affects all parts of the

66 loquat, including buds, leaves, fruit, trunks, and underground parts (Morita et al., 1988; Mukoo,  
67 1952; Suga et al., 2007). When the disease develops on the main trunk, it becomes a major issue  
68 in loquat cultivation because it leads to a decline in vigor and eventually a decrease in yield  
69 (Morita, 1978). Furthermore, the major Japanese cultivars ‘Mogi’, ‘Tanaka’, and  
70 ‘Nagasakiwase’ are susceptible to this disease (Morita, 1980; 1988), making complete control  
71 difficult. Therefore, the development of resistant cultivars against this disease is expected,  
72 which is promoting research on resistance genes.

73 Bacterial isolates from loquat production areas in Japan were classified into three groups: A  
74 (no pigment production and no leaf pathogenicity), B (no pigment production but with leaf  
75 pathogenicity), and C (pigment production but no leaf pathogenicity), based on the presence or  
76 absence of pigment production on the medium and leaf pathogenicity (halo formation) (Morita,  
77 1978). Phylogenetic analysis using genome sequences showed that groups A and C are  
78 genetically similar, whereas group B is slightly different from them (Tashiro et al., 2021).

79 Resistance to group A is controlled by a gene named *Pse-a* (Hiehata et al., 2002). This gene  
80 locus is located at the upper end of the linkage group 10 (LG10) in loquats (Fukuda et al., 2014).  
81 Moreover, many cultivars resistant to group A also show resistance to group B, suggesting that  
82 the resistance mechanism against group B may originate from the *Pse-a* gene (Hiehata et al.,  
83 2002). In contrast, the Japanese cultivar ‘Shiromogi’ exhibits a recessive form of resistance to

84 group C, governed by a different gene, *pse-c* (Hiehata et al., 2012), with this resistance locus  
85 located in the LG3 of loquats (Fukuda et al., 2019). Both the dominant *Pse-a* and the recessive  
86 *pse-c* contribute to strong resistance against the pathogen, and the trait characterized by *Pse-a*  
87 or *pse-c* is a qualitative trait, namely, a Mendelian trait.

88 Resistance to the pathogen might not be limited to the *Pse-a* and *pse-c* genes. The discovery  
89 of additional genes could significantly enhance resistance breeding efforts. Genetic resources  
90 showing resistance to group C are rare (Hiehata et al., 2014). Nonetheless, resistance to group  
91 C has been confirmed in a few varieties, including the American cultivar ‘Champagne’ in  
92 addition to ‘Shiromogi’. ‘Champagne’, which was bred in California around 1908 from  
93 unknown hybrid parents (Morton, 1987), was introduced to Japan in 1952. It possesses the  
94 resistance gene *Pse-a* against group A (Hiehata et al., 2002) and carries a recessive homozygous  
95 *pse-c* gene for resistance to group C (Hiehata et al., 2012). The extra resistance genes could  
96 potentially be identified through research on ‘Champagne’. Only ‘Champagne’ (*pse-c/pse-c*),  
97 when crossed with varieties susceptible to group C (*Pse-c/Pse-c*), exhibits resistance to group  
98 C (Hiehata et al., 2014). This resistance to group C was a quantitative trait (Hiehata et al., 2014),  
99 indicating that the resistance to group C is influenced by additional dominant genes in addition  
100 to the recessive gene *pse-c*. Pathogens are more likely to cause breakdowns against plant  
101 resistance genes for qualitative traits controlled by one or a few genes, through mutation. On

102 the other hand, for plant resistance genes associated with quantitative traits, which are under  
103 the control of multiple genes, the possibility of breakdown occurring is less. Therefore, studying  
104 QTLs (Quantitative Trait Loci) is important for plant breeding (Pilet-Nayel et al., 2017).

105 Recently, single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) have emerged as an invaluable tool in  
106 breeding programs for the identification of disease resistance genes (Laila et al., 2019).

107 Technological advances have made the acquisition of SNP markers through Restriction-site  
108 Associated DNA Sequencing (RAD-Seq) both more efficient and cost-effective (Andrews et  
109 al., 2016). In our research group, SNP markers generated by RAD-Seq have been successfully  
110 employed to construct high-density linkage maps for the bronze loquat *Eriobotrya deflexa*  
111 (Fukuda et al., 2019) and to analyze the genetic diversity of loquat (Nagano et al., 2022).

112 Additionally, in pear, a linkage map using SNP markers from RAD-Seq has facilitated QTL  
113 analysis of genes associated with sugar biosynthesis (Nishio et al., 2021).

114 This study aimed to identify the QTL regions associated with additional resistance genes that  
115 confer resistance to group C in ‘Champagne’. We conducted inoculation tests on individuals  
116 within the crossbred seedling population derived from ‘Tanaka’ (*Pse-c/Pse-c*) and ‘Champagne’  
117 (*pse-c/pse-c*) as the cross parents. Additionally, the genotype of SNP markers in each individual

118 was determined using the RAD-seq method, and linkage maps were constructed. Moreover, our  
119 QTL analysis identified novel gene regions conferring resistance to *Pseudomonas syringae* pv.

120 *eriolobryae* group C.

121 **2. Materials and methods**

122 *2.1. Plant material and DNA purification*

123 One hundred twenty-three individuals from the cross of ‘Tanaka’ (*Pse-c/Pse-c*) × ‘Champagne’

124 (*pse-c/pse-c*) were utilized for genetic mapping. Genomic DNA was extracted from young

125 leaves employing the cetyltrimethylammonium bromide (CTAB) method (Doyle and Doyle,

126 1987), followed by RNase treatment and phenol/chloroform extraction. The DNA concentration

127 was determined using the Qubit dsDNA BR Assay Kit (Invitrogen, MA, USA) and adjusted to

128 20 ng/μl for subsequent library preparation.

129

130 *2.2. Inoculation test and evaluation of resistance*

131 The group C strain CG001 (Hiehata et al., 2002) was cultured on potato sucrose agar (PSA)

132 medium at 25°C for one week. The bacteria were then suspended in sterile distilled water to a

133 concentration of 10<sup>8</sup> cfu/mL with 0.02% Tween 20 and needle-inoculated along the midrib on

134 the abaxial side of three leaves per individual, targeting six sites per leaf. After inoculation,

135 leaves were enclosed in vapor-deposited bags for approximately 24 hours to facilitate infection.

136 Post-inoculation, the seedlings were maintained in a greenhouse to prevent other infections.

137 Resistance was evaluated two months after inoculation. The absence of dark brown canker

138 disease symptoms was interpreted as resistance, while the presence of such symptoms indicated  
139 susceptibility. Resistance levels were scored as 0 (strong resistance) or 1 (weak resistance),  
140 based on the depth of the brown scab (Fig. 1A). Susceptibility levels were determined by the  
141 length of canker symptoms and categorized into three levels: 2 (up to 5.5 mm), 3 (5.6 mm to  
142 7.5 mm), and 4 (more than 7.6 mm). Eighty-five individuals in 2021 and 123 in 2022 were  
143 inoculated to resistance evaluation.

144

### 145 2.3. RAD-Seq analysis

146 The RAD-Seq library was prepared using the modified double-digest RAD-Seq method  
147 (Sakaguchi et al. 2015), which is an adaptation of the original methodology (Peterson et al.  
148 2012). The sequencing was carried out by Macrogen (Seoul, Korea) on the HiSeqX platform  
149 (Illumina, San Diego, CA, USA), generating 151 bp paired-end sequences.

150 Initially, the sequencing data underwent quality control with the fastp tool (version 0.23.2),  
151 setting the sequence length option to 151 bp. After quality filtering, the sequences were aligned  
152 to the 'Seventh Star' reference genome (Jiang et al., 2020) using BWA software (version 0.7.17).  
153 The alignment files (in SAM format) were processed with Samtools (version 1.15.1) to sort  
154 them and convert them into BAM format.

155 For SNP detection and genotype analysis, the BAM files were processed using the  
156 "ref\_map.pl" script from the Stacks software package (version 2.61) (Catchen et al., 2013). To  
157 accurately determine the genotype of each SNP marker across the population, the "populations"  
158 module of Stacks was utilized with specific parameters: a minimum allele frequency of 0.05 (-  
159 -min-maf 0.05), a requirement for data presence in 80% of the population (-R 0.8), and outputs  
160 formatted for compatibility with JoinMap (--ordered-export, --map-type cp, and --map-format  
161 joinmap).

162

#### 163 2.4. *linkage mapping*

164 JoinMap® 4.1 software (Kyazma B.V., the Netherlands; Van Ooijen, 2011) was employed for  
165 constructing the linkage map. SNP markers, observed in more than 50% of individuals and  
166 identified with the 'nn×np' and 'lm×ll' genotype, were analyzed using the cross-pollinated (CP)  
167 population option. With a LOD threshold of 10, markers were organized into 17 LGs. Linkage  
168 maps were then generated using the software's default maximum likelihood mapping algorithm.  
169 The Kosambi mapping function was applied to convert recombination units into genetic  
170 distances. A sequence similarity comparison was conducted between the SNP markers on the  
171 linkage map and the 'Seventh Star' reference sequence (Jiang et al., 2020). Additionally, these

172 sequences were compared to the apple draft genome (Zhang et al., 2019), which exhibits

173 synteny with loquat, to align the linkage group numbers.

174

175 *2.5. Statistical Analysis*

176 To evaluate the reproducibility of the inoculation test, correlations between the disease indexes

177 in 2021 and 2022 were calculated using Microsoft Excel spreadsheet software. The

178 distribution's normality of the disease index was assessed with the Shapiro-Wilk test, conducted

179 using JMP Pro® 16.1.0 predictive analysis software (SAS Institute Japan Inc., Tokyo, Japan).

180 Broad-sense heritability was estimated through an analysis of variance, which utilized variance

181 components with genotypes and year as factors (Moriya et al., 2019). The formula:

182  $X_{ij} = \mu + G_i + Y_j + E_{ij}$

183 represents the phenotypic value for the  $i$ -th genotype in the  $j$ -th year, where  $\mu$  is a constant,  $G_i$

184 is the effect of the  $i$ -th genotype,  $Y_j$  is the effect of the  $j$ -th year, and  $E_{ij}$  is the error term for the

185  $i$ -th genotype in the  $j$ -th year, with  $i$  ranging from 1 to 123, and  $j$  from 1 to 2. If the genetic

186 variance is  $\sigma_g^2$ , the annual variance is  $\sigma_y^2$ , and the error variance is  $\sigma^2$ , then the environmental

187 variance for the mean over  $n$  years,  $\sigma_e^2$  is calculated as  $(\sigma_y^2 + \sigma^2)/n$ , and the broad-sense

188 heritability,  $h_B^2$ , is defined as  $h_B^2 = \sigma_g^2 / (\sigma_g^2 + \sigma_e^2)$ .

189

190 *2.6. QTL Analysis*

191 QTL analysis was conducted using MapQTL® 6.0 software (Van Ooijen and Kyazma, 2009).

192 Due to the non-normal distribution of the evaluation traits, the Kruskal-Wallis (KW) test

193 module was selected for initial analysis. For further evaluation of the detected QTLs, the

194 restricted multiple QTL mapping (rMQM) module was employed to assess their contributions.

195 The significance threshold for QTL identification was established at  $P=0.005$ , in accordance

196 with the recommendation provided in the MapQTL manual for the KW test. A QTL was deemed

197 significant if it was found in proximity to a DNA marker with a value below this threshold. The

198 interval mapping (IM) method was used to ascertain the presence of QTLs within the 95%

199 confidence interval of peaks, with LOD values exceeding the 95% threshold as determined by

200 1,000 permutation tests.

201 The contribution of QTLs to the 2-year average disease index in the ‘Tanaka’ × ‘Champagne’

202 population was assessed through one-way ANOVA, considering the genotype of the SNP

203 marker closest to the identified QTL as a factor.

204 **3. Results**

205 *3.1. Inoculation tests and resistance evaluation*

206 We evaluated the resistance of 85 individuals in 2021 and 123 individuals in 2022. The results

207 from the inoculation tests for these two years showed significant differences in disease

208 resistance among the tested individuals (Fig. 1B). There was a strong positive correlation

209 between the disease resistance observed in 2021 and 2022, with a correlation coefficient of

210 0.758. This indicates a consistent pattern of either resistance or susceptibility to the disease

211 among the individuals over the two years.

212 The broad-sense heritability, calculated as 0.87 from the disease resistance data over the two

213 years, points to a strong genetic influence on this trait. This high heritability suggests that the

214 observed resistance has a substantial genetic basis.

215 Furthermore, the distribution of the disease resistance data from both years did not conform

216 to a normal distribution, as evidenced by the Shapiro-Wilk test ( $P<0.05$ ). This non-normal

217 distribution indicates the complexity of the resistance trait being studied.

218 Namely, our hybridization experiment has shown that resistance to group C is inherited in a

219 quantitative manner. This underscores the genetic diversity and complexity of resistance within

220 the crossbred population.

221

222 *3.2. SNP analysis by RAD-Seq*

223 For the purpose of genetic mapping, we analyzed 123 individuals. Using double-digest RAD-

224 Seq, we generated approximately 100 Gbp of data, averaging 814 Mbp per individual. The total

225 number of reads was about 663 million, with an average of 5.4 million reads per individual.

226 After processing the data with fastp and setting the read lengths to 151 bp, we retained 94 Gbp

227 of high-quality sequence data, which averaged 764 Mbp per individual. The total number of

228 reads after filtering was 622 million, with an average of 5.1 million reads per individual (Table

229 Supplementary S1).

230 We mapped the filtered reads to the ‘Seventh Star’ reference sequence using the BWA tool.

231 This mapping achieved an average coverage depth of 81.8 $\times$ , with a maximum depth of 143.6 $\times$

232 and a minimum of 31.6 $\times$  (Supplementary Table S2). In total, we identified 4,409 SNP markers

233 in loquat that were used for genetic mapping.

234

235 *3.3. Linkage Mapping*

236 We developed the genetic map of ‘Champagne’ using 1457 SNP markers. This map includes

237 1016 markers, covering a total length of 1300.9 centimorgan (cM) and achieving an average

238 marker density of 1.4 cM (Fig. 2; Table 1). The lengths of the LGs varied, with the shortest  
239 being 48.1 cM (LG4) and the longest 107.4 cM (LG15). The number of markers mapped to  
240 each LG also ranged widely, from 32 markers on LG1 to 93 markers on LG3. Furthermore, the  
241 genetic map of ‘Tanaka’ contained 989 SNP markers. Sixteen LGs were identified, which  
242 covered a genetic distance of 1190.4 cM with an average marker density of 1.4 cM (Table 1:  
243 Supplementary Fig. 1)

244

#### 245 3.4. *QTL analysis*

246 QTL analysis by the KW test in ‘Champagne’, revealed major QTLs in the same region of LG14  
247 for both the 2021 and 2022 analyses (Fig. 3; Table 2; Supplementary Fig. 2). In the 2022  
248 analysis and when averaging across the two years, the most notable QTL was found near the  
249 SNP marker SNPEjp207554, positioned 7.7 cM from the top of LG14 (Fig. 3; Table 2). In 2021,  
250 the highest K\* value—a statistic indicating the strength of association between a marker and a  
251 trait—was near SNPEjp226440, located 16.8 cM from the top of LG14. The presence of QTLs  
252 in the upper region of LG14 was consistent across all datasets, with significance levels below  
253  $P < 0.005$ .

254 Further analysis using IM and rMQM methods confirmed the presence of QTLs with peak

255 LOD scores surpassing the threshold in LG14 across three datasets. The SNP marker  
256 SNPEjp223455, located 11.6 cM from the top of LG14, showed the highest LOD score (Fig. 3;  
257 Table 2). This marker accounted for 6.9% of the variation in the disease index over a two-year  
258 average. We identified multiple minor potential QTLs across different linkage groups beyond  
259 LG14. Notably, the most significant of these was found in LG3, accounting for 3.7% of the  
260 variation in disease resistance over an average of two years (Table 2, Supplementary Fig. 2). In  
261 contrast, no stable QTL were observed in ‘Tanaka’.

## 262 4. Discussion

263 In this study, we identified new regions of resistance in the ‘Champagne’ cultivar against  
264 loquat canker, the most significant disease affecting loquat cultivation. This provides  
265 foundational knowledge for breeding resistant varieties. The resistance to group C studied this  
266 time is a quantitative trait, and as expected, we found that multiple genes were involved and the  
267 gene(s) with the most significant impact were situated on LG14.

268 *P. syringae*, a bacterium that infects various plants, causes significant diseases. In  
269 *Arabidopsis*, soybean, and tomato, qualitative resistance against *P. syringae* has been associated  
270 with specific genes known as *R* genes. These genes, including *RPM1* and *RPS2* in *Arabidopsis*,  
271 *Rpg1* in soybean, and *Pto* in tomato, feature nucleotide-binding sites (NB) and leucine-rich  
272 repeats (LRR), which are crucial for disease resistance (Mackey et al., 2002; Axtell and  
273 Staskawicz, 2003; Mackey et al., 2003; Ashfield et al., 1995; Selote and Kachroo, 2010; Martin  
274 et al., 1993). Additionally, research has shown quantitative resistance to *P. syringae* in other  
275 plants, such as kiwifruit, which implicates receptor-like serine/threonine protein kinases and  
276 other genes as potential resistance genes (Tahir et al., 2020). In tomato, while QTL regions have  
277 been identified using wild species, specific candidate genes have yet to be pinpointed (Thapa  
278 et al., 2015). The findings and related mechanisms from these studies on other plants may be  
279 relevant to the resistance of loquat against *P. syringae*.

280 Apples and loquats are part of the Malinae subtribe within the Maleae tribe, belonging to the

281 Amygdaloideae subfamily of the Rosaceae family (Campbell et al., 2007; Potter et al., 2007;

282 Liu et al., 2020). Reports have highlighted the presence of synteny, or conserved segments,

283 between their genome sequences (Fukuda et al., 2019). The LG14 of the apple genome, which

284 shares synteny with the linkage group where the identified QTL exists in this study, was

285 discovered to contain a gene that provides resistance to powdery mildew caused by

286 *Podosphaera leucotricha* (Calenge and Durel, 2006). Additionally, several resistance genes,

287 including CC-NBS-LRR, NBS-LRR, NBS, and TIR-NBS-LRR, have been identified on LG14

288 of the 'Golden Delicious' apple genome (Perazzolli et al., 2014). This suggests that loquat might

289 also carry similar resistance genes, potentially playing a role in defending against loquat canker.

290 By analyzing the above-mentioned results of other plants alongside the annotated loquat

291 genome data (Jiang et al., 2020), especially within the newly identified resistance region on

292 LG14, we can potentially uncover detailed mechanisms of resistance to *P. syringae*. Although

293 pinpointing specific genes linked to qualitative traits presents challenges, previous successes in

294 identifying genes for qualitative traits other than resistance to *P. syringae* in various plants

295 provide optimism for future breakthroughs.

296 In related research on tomato (Thapa et al., 2015), genome comparisons across different

297 strains of *P. syringae* revealed variations in effector proteins, which could be key to

298 understanding infection and resistance mechanisms. For *P. syringae* pv. *eribotryae*, which

299 infects loquat, draft genomes for groups A, B, and C have been outlined (Tashiro et al., 2021).

300 Investigating the unique effector proteins in the group C strain may provide further insights into

301 the specific resistance mechanisms in loquat varieties.

302 The LOD scores for the newly detected QTL regions were relatively low, and confidence

303 interval were broad. The power of QTL detection was influenced by several factors: the nature

304 of the analyzed population, population size, the number and density of markers, missing data

305 in RAD-Seq data, the number of genes involved in the QTL, the magnitude of the QTL effect,

306 and environmental factors (Jiang et al., 2022). Notably, the QTL detection might have been

307 affected by the low number of individuals in this study, for which resistance could be tested in

308 2021. However, a QTL was found in the upper 7.7 cM to 16.8 cM of LG14, marking an

309 important discovery. Future studies should consider QTL-Seq utilizing the bulk method (Takagi

310 et al., 2013) to further investigate the related genes.

311 In this study, we conducted a hybridization experiment with two cultivars, ‘Tanaka’ and

312 ‘Champagne’, and constructed a linkage map of ‘Champagne’ consisting of 1016 markers.

313 Previously, we developed a genetic linkage map of the bronze loquat (*Eriobotrya deflexa*) for

314 a three-way cross of loquat (*E. japonica*) × (loquat × bronze loquat) (Fukuda et al., 2019). In

315 the previous research, despite using RAD-Seq and simple sequence repeat (SSR) markers and

316 analyzing genetically distant species, the linkage map consisted of 960 markers. The  
317 improvement in this study can be attributed to the use of 151 bp pair-end reads, compared to  
318 the 51 bp single-end reads used in the previous study.

319 ‘Champagne’ shows resistance to multiple strains of *P. syringae* (Hiehata et al., 2002; Hiehata  
320 et al., 2012; Hiehata et al., 2014), making it an excellent source for resistance breeding.

321 However, when grown in Japan, its fruit quality is inferior to that of other cultivars. Recently,  
322 ‘Harutayori’ was bred (Hiehata et al., 2016), exhibiting superior fruit quality to its ancestor  
323 ‘Champagne’. This cultivar is resistant to groups A, B, and C. It is expected to become widely  
324 adopted as an excellent source of resistance, especially in warm and humid cultivation  
325 environments where diseases are more likely to occur.

326 ‘Champagne’ possesses the resistance genes *Pse-a* and *pse-c* against loquat canker, and these  
327 true resistance genes are being studied and utilized in resistance breeding. However, a limitation  
328 of these true resistance genes is that populations capable of overcoming the resistance emerge  
329 as the pathogen continuously evolves. To achieve stronger resistance, it is necessary to  
330 introduce QTLs that reduce disease infection rates in addition to resistance genes like *R* genes  
331 (Castro et al., 2003; Wulff et al., 2011). We believe the QTLs identified in this study will offer  
332 new avenues for resistance breeding against *P. syringae* pv. *eriobotryae*.

333

334 **CRediT author statement**

335 **Shogo Koga:** Formal analysis, Writing - Review & Editing, **Ryusei Kawaguchi:** Formal

336 analysis, **Tsunami Tanaka:** Formal analysis, **Shigeki Moriya:** Formal analysis, **Naofumi**

337 **Hiehata:** Resources & Formal analysis, **Kozi Kabashima:** Formal analysis, **Atushi J. Nagano:**

338 Formal analysis, **Yukio Nagano:** Formal analysis, Writing - Review & Editing, **Shinji Fukuda:**

339 Formal analysis, Writing - Review & Editing, Project administration, Supervision

340

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345 **Data archiving statement**

346 Sequences are available at the DDBJ Sequence Read Archive

347 (<https://ddbj.nig.ac.jp/resource/sra-submission/DRA015997>)

348

349

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521 **Figure legends**

522 Fig. 1. (A) Canker symptoms (disease index: 0 ~ 4) at two months after inoculation with loquat

523 canker. The absence of dark brown canker disease symptoms was interpreted as resistance

524 0 (strong resistance), 1 (weak resistance). Susceptibility levels were determined by the

525 length of canker symptoms and categorized into three levels, 2 (up to 5.5 mm), 3 (5.6mm

526 to 7.5 mm), 4 (more than 7.6 mm ).

527 (B) Frequency distribution of disease index with loquat canker.

528 In the inoculation tests of 2021 (black) and 2022 (gray).

529

530 **Fig. 2.** Genetic linkage map of ‘Champagne’. The vertical axis represents genetic distance (cM),

531 and the horizontal axis represents linkage group numbers. Black lines indicate SNP markers.

532

533 **Fig. 3.** QTL for resistance against loquat canker identified in the genetic linkage group 14 in

534 the Kruskal-Wallis test and interval mapping analyses. K values and LOD scores peaked

535 on LG14 in 2021 (blue), 2022 (orange), and the two-year average (gray), confirming QTLs.

536

537 **Supplementary Fig.1.** Genetic linkage map of 'Tanaka'. The vertical axis represents genetic  
538 distance (cM), and the horizontal axis represents linkage group numbers. Black lines  
539 indicate SNP markers.

540

541 **Supplementary Fig.2.** QTL analyses for loquat canker disease index. Panel (A) indicate results  
542 obtained by Kruskal-Wallis analyses. Horizontal dotted lines indicate showing significant  
543  $K^*(P = 0.001)$ . Panel (B) indicate results obtained by interval mapping analyses.  
544 Horizontal dotted lines indicate threshold scores ( $P = 0.05$ ) obtained by permutation test.

545

546

Fig. 1.

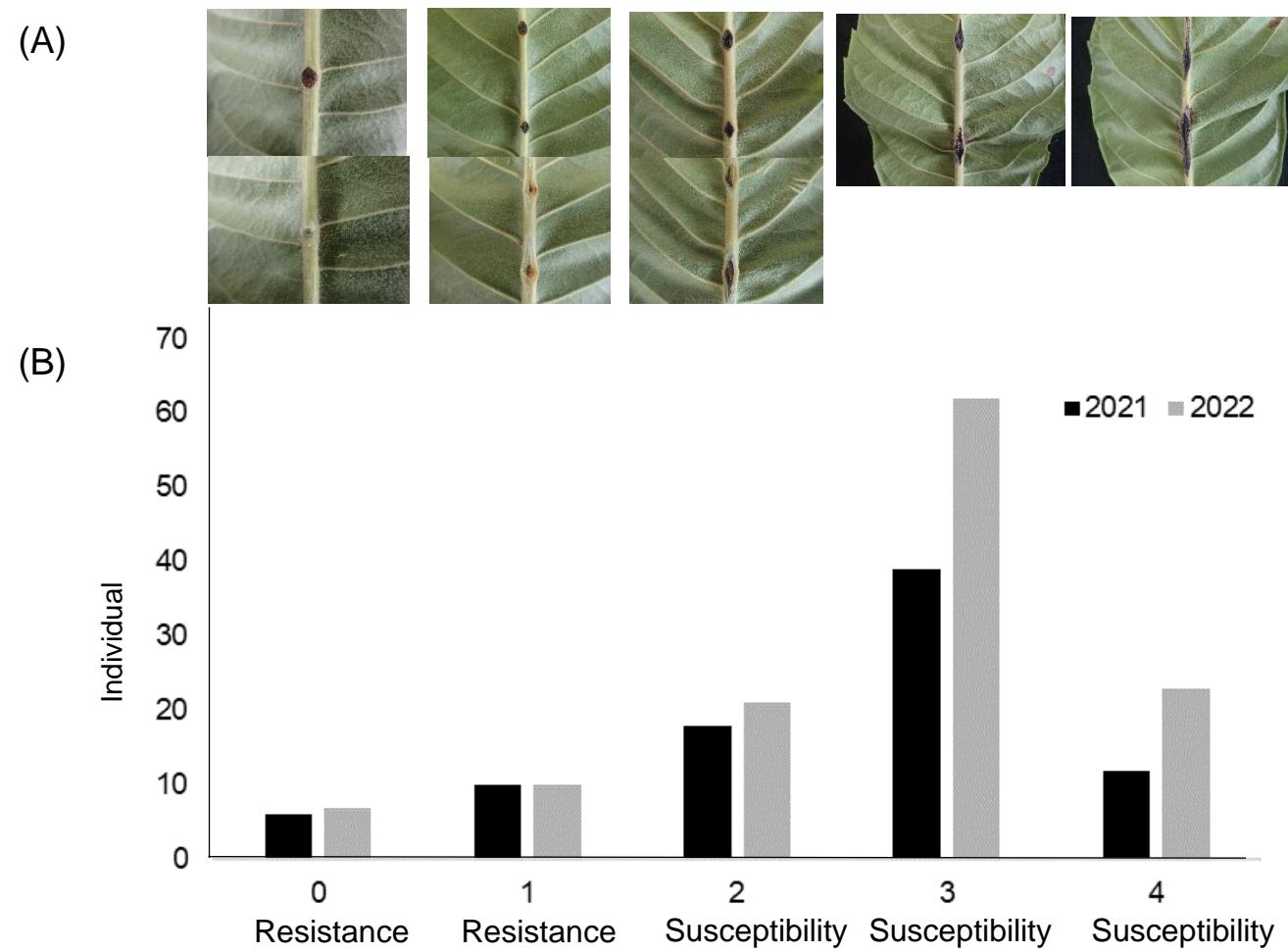


Fig. 2.

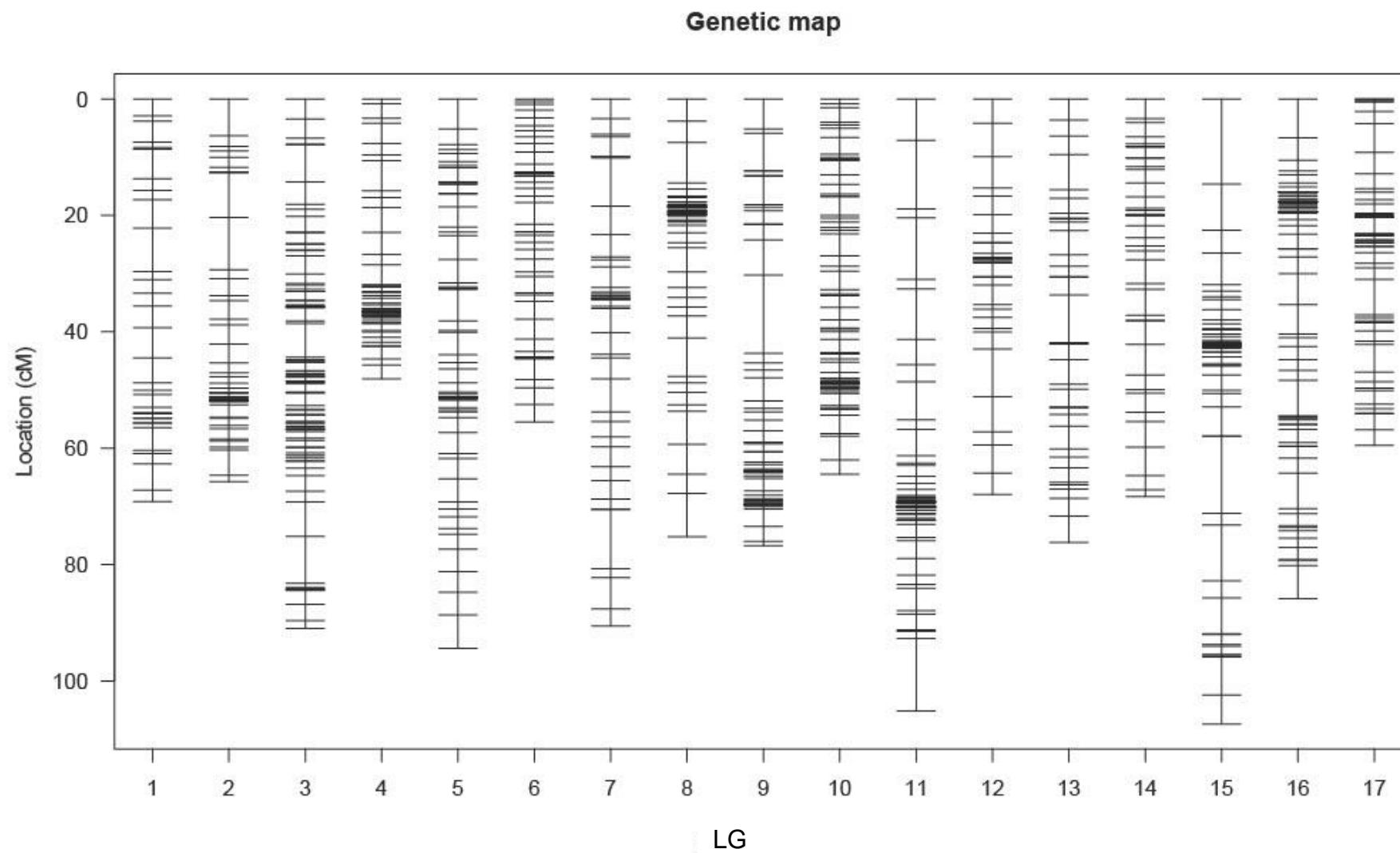
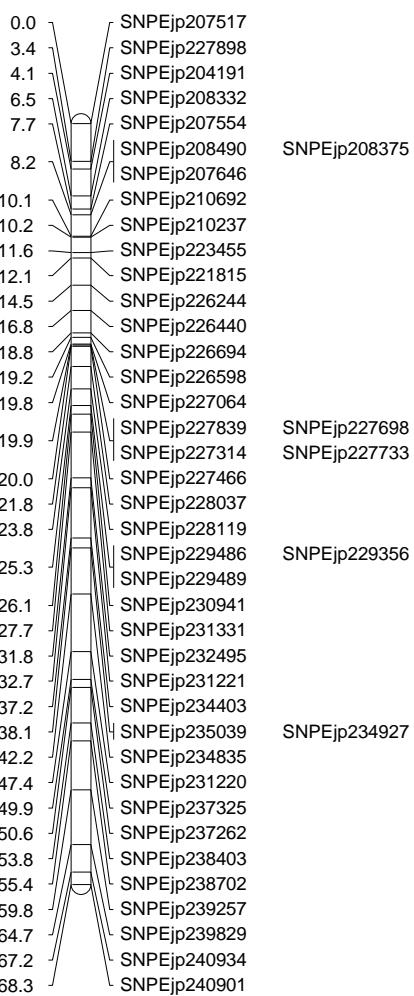
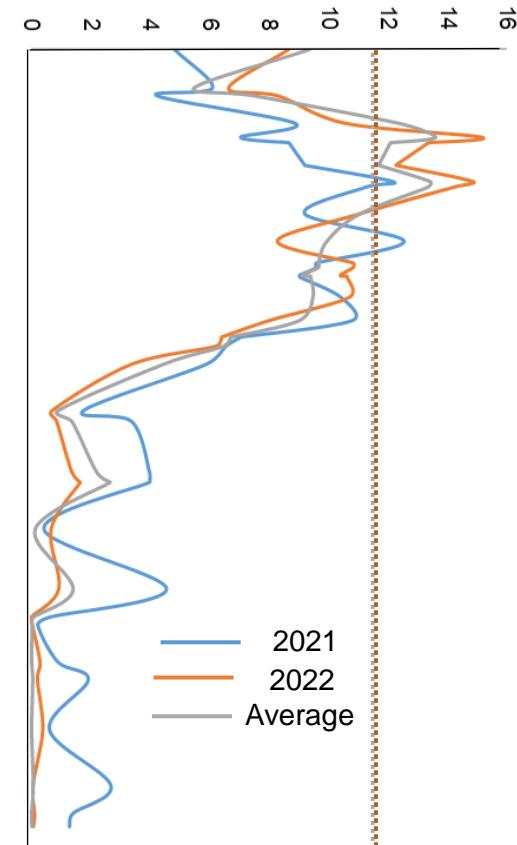


Fig. 3.

LG14



$K^*$  value



LOD score

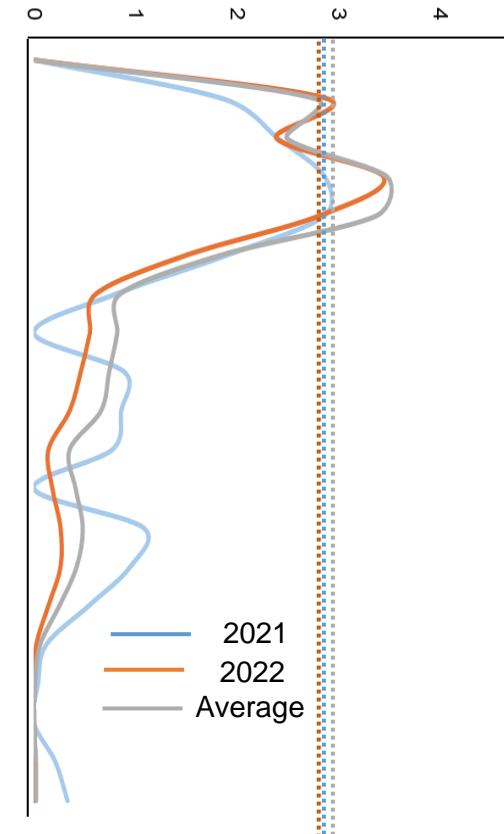


Table 1 . Summary of the linkage map of 'Champagne' and 'Tanaka'

	Linkage group																Total		
	LG1	LG2	LG3	LG4	LG5	LG6	LG7	LG8	LG9	LG10	LG11	LG12	LG13	LG14	LG15	LG16	LG17		
No. of mapped loci	32	48	93	59	69	47	44	68	58	87	80	34	36	44	75	86	56	1016	
'Champagne'	Length of linkage groups (cM)	69.2	65.7	90.9	48.1	94.4	55.5	90.5	75.2	76.7	64.5	105	67.9	76.2	68.3	107.4	85.8	59.5	1300.9
	Marker density (cM/loci)	2.2	1.4	1.0	0.8	1.4	1.2	2.1	1.1	1.3	0.7	1.3	2.0	2.1	1.6	1.4	1.0	1.1	1.4
'Tanaka'	No. of mapped loci	106	75	16	47	111	64	49		68	64	60	56	75	82	47	17	52	989
	Length of linkage groups (cM)	84.1	76.4	60.8	63.1	80.7	64.9	77.1		59.2	79.9	73.7	71.0	89.3	108.0	93.9	37.7	70.6	1190.4
	Marker density (cM/loci)	0.8	1.0	3.8	1.3	0.7	1.0	1.6		0.9	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.3	2.0	2.2	1.4	1.4

Table 2 QTLs identified by the Kruskal-Wallis and rMQM methods for 'Champagne'

Traits	Linkage group	Kruskal-Wallis				rMQM				
		Position (cM)	K* value	Significance <sup>a</sup>	Locus	Position (cM)	LOD	Significance <sup>b</sup>	% var.	Nearest marker
2021	14	16.8	12.5	*****	SNPEjp226440	11.6	2.87	#	14.4	SNPEjp223455
2022	14	7.7	15.1	*****	SNPEjp207554	11.6	3.45	#	12.1	SNPEjp223455
Average	14	7.7	15.4	*****	SNPEjp207554	11.6	3.48	#	12.1	SNPEjp223455
	3	30.0	8.1	****	SNPEjp140250	30.0	2.70		9.6	SNPEjp140250

<sup>a</sup>Asterisks (\*\*\*\*\* and \*\*\*\*) represent significance level of  $P<0.0005$  and  $P<0.005$ , respectively

<sup>b</sup>Number sign (#) represent significance level of  $P<0.05$ .