

Table of contents

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	I
ABSTRACT	V
RESUMEN	VII
RESUM.....	IX
GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. <i>Prunus armeniaca</i>	1
1.1. Botanical and taxonomic description	1
1.2. Origin and domestication.....	2
1.3. Economic importance.....	4
1.4. Pests and diseases	5
2. <i>Plum Pox Virus</i>	6
2.1. Virus description.....	6
2.2. Geographical distribution.....	7
2.3. Strains.....	7
2.4. Host range.....	8
2.5. Disease symptoms	9
2.6. Viral transmission and control measurements	10
3. Breeding programs for PPV resistance in apricot	11
3.1. Apricot germplasm collections.....	11
3.1.1. Natural sources for PPV-resistance	12
3.2. PPV resistance evaluation - Phenotyping	12
3.3. International breeding efforts	14
4. Study of the mechanism underlying PPV resistance in apricot.....	17
4.1. From genetic mapping to marker assisted selection.....	17
4.2. Genomic analysis and candidate gene discovery	21
4.3. <i>ParPMC</i> : Putative PPV susceptibility genes	22
4.4. Other genes potentially involved in PPV resistance.....	24

5. Strategies for gene characterization	25
5.1. Genetic transformation in <i>Prunus</i>	26
5.1.1. Stable genetic transformation	26
5.1.2. Virus-induced gene silencing: a promising tool for functional studies	27
5.2. Assays for protein-protein interaction analysis.....	30
5.2.1. Yeast two-hybrid (Y2H) system	32
5.2.2. Bimolecular fluorescence complementation (BiFC) assay	33
5.2.3. Analysis of protein-protein interaction networks (PPINs).....	35
5.3. Analysis of gene co-expression networks	36

JUSTIFICATION AND OBJECTIVES..... 41

Chapter I. *ParPMC*-mediated susceptibility to Plum Pox Virus: vascular expression in *Prunus armeniaca* and functional validation through ortholog silencing in *Nicotiana benthamiana* 45

Abstract	47
1. Introduction	47
2. Materials and Methods	51
3. Results.....	55
4. Discussion	67
Supplementary materials	72

Chapter II. Targeting *ParPMC* hubs: *EEF1A* as a key mediator of PPV susceptibility..... 77

Abstract	79
1. Introduction	79
2. Materials and Methods	82
3. Results.....	87
4. Discussion	97
Supplementary materials	105

Chapter III. Dissecting the *ParPMC* interactome in apricot: integrative analysis using RT-qPCR, co-expression, and PPIN 109

Abstract.....	111
1. Introduction	112
2. Materials and Methods	114

3. Results.....	117
4. Discussion	128
5. Conclusion.....	132
Supplementary materials	133
Chapter IV. Cost-Effective and Time-Efficient Molecular Assisted Selection for PPV Resistance in Apricot Based on <i>ParPMC2</i> Allele-Specific PCR ..	137
Abstract.....	139
1. Introduction	139
2. Materials and Methods	143
3. Results and Discussion.....	144
4. Conclusions	164
Supplementary materials	165
Chapter V. The <i>PPVres</i> susceptibility haplotype <i>Sh3</i> negatively modulates Plum pox virus resistance in apricot	169
Abstract.....	171
1. Introduction	172
2. Materials and methods	173
3. Results.....	176
4. Discussion	183
Supplementary materials	187
Chapter VI. Minor QTLs besides the major QTL <i>PPVres</i> contribute to PPV resistance in the ‘Goldrich x Canino’ segregating population	191
Abstract.....	193
1. Introduction	193
2. Materials and Methods	195
3. Results.....	198
4. Discussion	207
Supplementary materials	209
GENERAL DISCUSSION	213
CONCLUSIONS.....	227
REFERENCES.....	231