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1 (Original article)

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4 **Comparison of endogenous cytokinins, ABA and metabolites during female cone bud**
5 **differentiation in low and high cone-producing genotypes of lodgepole pine**

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24 **Running title:** Endogenous hormones and cone yield in lodgepole pine

25

26

Abstract

27 In lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* Dougl. ex Loud. var. *latifolia* Engelm.), cone bud initiation
28 within long-shoot buds varies according to genotype. We chose to study hormone profiles of
29 two genotypes that differed significantly in cone yield. Phytohormone profiles were
30 established by high performance liquid chromatography-electrospray ionization tandem mass
31 spectrometry (HPLC-ESI-MS/MS) in multiple reaction monitoring (MRM) mode with samples
32 collected from genotypes 299 and 233, the typically high and low cone producers. Generally,
33 concentrations of *trans*-zeatin-*O*-glucoside were higher in genotype 299, whereas
34 dihydrozeatin concentrations were higher in genotype 233. Both isopentenyl adenine and
35 isopentenyl adenosine were present at higher concentrations in genotype 233. The ratio of total
36 quantifiable zeatin (Z)-type cytokinins to isopentenyl (iP)-type cytokinins was approximate
37 three-fold higher in genotype 299 during female cone bud differentiation. In genotype 299,
38 ABA concentration was significantly lower than in genotype 233 on the first sampling date,
39 while the phaseic acid concentration was lower consistently throughout the period investigated.
40 Dihydrophaseic acid was present in low concentrations in most samples of genotype 233, but
41 was not quantifiable in genotype 299. Our study reveals that long-shoot buds of the high cone-
42 producing genotype had higher ratios of Z-type cytokinins to iP-type cytokinins than were
43 found in the low cone-producing genotype. High cone-producing buds also contained less
44 ABA, phaseic acid and dihydrophaseic acid during female cone bud differentiation.

45

46 **Keywords:** ABA, cytokinins, female cone yield, genotype, hormone metabolites, lodgepole
47 pine.

48

49 **Abbreviations:** high performance liquid chromatography-electrospray ionization tandem mass
50 spectrometry, HPLC-ESI-MS/MS; multiple reaction monitoring, MRM; gibberellin, GA;
51 abscisic acid, ABA; phaseic acid, PA; dihydrophaseic acid, DPA; 7'-hydroxy ABA, 7'-OH
52 ABA; *neophaseic acid*, *neoPA*; abscisic acid glucose ester, ABA-GE; *trans*-zeatin, *t-Z*; *trans*-
53 zeatin riboside, *t-ZR*; *trans*-zeatin-*O*-glucoside, *t-Z-O-Glu*; dihydrozeatin, *dhZ*; dihydrozeatin
54 riboside, *dhZR*; isopentenyl, *iP*; isopentenyl adenine, *2iP*; isopentenyl adenosine, *iPA*.

55

56

Introduction

57

58 In pines, both reproductive buds and vegetative buds are initiated along long shoots. In the
59 specific case of female cone bud differentiation in lodgepole pine, initiation is begun in
60 summer and is completed by fall. A further two years are required for these female cones to
61 mature and produce seed (O'Reilly and Owens 1987; 1988). Although many abiotic and biotic
62 factors affect cone productivity, genotypic effects are relatively strong (Longman 1983;
63 Philippe et al. 2006). This is noticeable in seed orchards. Certain genotypes consistently exhibit
64 extremes in productivity. This undermines the purpose of a seed orchard, which is to produce
65 as much seed as possible. Part of this inefficiency lies in the original selection of genotypes. It
66 was not on the basis of seed production, but for fast growth, high wood quality, pest or disease
67 resistance. Consequently, one reason for low seed productivity is low female bud initiation due
68 to genotype.

69 To overcome genotype-related limitations in cone production, intervention in bud
70 hormone physiology has proven useful. In both angiosperms (Fiehn et al. 2000) and
71 gymnosperms (Kong et al. 2009), different genotypes exhibit unique metabolic and hormone
72 profiles. In Douglas-fir, correlations between female cone yields and endogenous
73 phytohormone levels of shoot buds have been shown (Kong et al. 2009). Studies of
74 endogenous phytohormone levels during cone initiation can provide strategies to overcome
75 cone yield limitations. Most commonly, plant growth regulators (PGRs), such as gibberellins
76 (GAs), are directly applied. Occasionally, cytokinins and even indole-acetic acid have also
77 been used to improve productivity. These plant growth regulators alter concentrations of

78 endogenous phytohormones and boost cone productivity (McMullan 1980; Bonnet-Masimbert
79 and Zaerr 1987; Pilate et al. 1990; Kong et al. 2008).

80 Cytokinins have been shown to play an important role during the reproductive process
81 (Imbault et al. 1988; Morris et al. 1990; Corbesier et al. 2003; Wakushima 2004). Recent
82 studies with *Arabidopsis thaliana* indicate that cytokinin receptors may have different affinities
83 for particular cytokinins, such as zeatin (Z)-type and isopentenyl (iP)-type cytokinins (Spíchal
84 et al. 2004; Romanov et al. 2006). Furthermore, the differential compartmentalization of
85 cytokinins may play a role in long-distance signalling (Corbesier et al. 2003; Hirose et al.
86 2008). In conifers, attention has been paid to the ratio of Z-type to iP-type cytokinins, but this
87 has been mainly in the context of tree ageing or vigour (Valdés et al. 2002; 2003; 2007) and
88 not in reproduction.

89 Abscisic acid (ABA) is involved in the regulation of many physiological processes
90 including the response of plants to environmental stresses (Bravo et al. 1998; Kumar et al.
91 2008). Abscisic acid negatively modulates the effect of other plant hormones, such as GAs
92 (Tompsett 1977) and auxin (Weiss and Ori 2007). This is of interest in conifers, because
93 exogenously applied GA has been proven to be an effective stimulant of cone formation (Ross
94 1983; Pharis and King 1985; Smith and Greenwood 1995; Kong et al. 2008). The main ABA
95 catabolic pathway in many higher plants is ABA oxidation with its end products of phaseic
96 acid (PA) and dihydrophaseic acid (DPA), but in conifers such as Douglas-fir, the dominant
97 product of ABA catabolism in long-shoots is ABA glucose ester (ABA-GE) (Kong et al. 2008;
98 2009).

99 The purpose of this research was to investigate changes, during female cone bud
100 differentiation, in endogenous cytokinins and ABA as well as some of their metabolites with
101 two genotypes that differed in cone yield. Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* Dougl. ex Loud. var.
102 *latifolia* Engelm.), an important forest species in western North America, was used. Seed
103 improvement programs have been created in this species consequently. Many of these trees are
104 genetically well-characterized. Hormone analyses of samples were completed by high
105 performance liquid chromatography-electrospray ionization tandem mass spectrometry
106 (HPLC-ESI-MS/MS) in multiple reaction monitoring (MRM) mode (Chiwocha et al. 2003;
107 2005). This method has a number of advantages: multiple compounds can be quantified from
108 the same sample and the need to process separate samples for each class of compounds is
109 eliminated.

110

111

Material and Methods

Genotype selection

113 Genotypes 233 and 299 were selected from an established seed orchard of 15-year-old trees
114 owned by Vernon Seed Orchard Company, located in Vernon, British Columbia (50°13'N,
115 119°19'W). The selection procedure was based on a ranking according to productivity. Cone
116 yields for the three previous years were pooled for six ramets of each genotype. Significantly
117 different ($P < 0.05$) genotypes were chosen.

118

Sample collection, processing and storage

120 Samples were collected five times during female cone bud differentiation between the end of
121 July and mid-October, 2006. Depending on the size of the bud, ten to 20 long-shoot buds were
122 collected from each ramet per sampling time. After collection, the buds were kept frozen at -
123 20 °C for 2 to 3 d before they were lyophilized in a freeze-drier for 48 hrs. The resulting dry
124 samples were sealed in plastic bags and stored at - 20 °C.

125

126 *Measurement of moisture content*

127 Fresh weight and dry weight of the samples were used to derive moisture content according to
128 the following formula:

129

$$130 \text{ Moisture content (\%)} = \frac{\text{Fresh weight} - \text{Dry weight}}{\text{Fresh weight}} \times 100$$

131
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135

136

137 *Analysis of hormones and their metabolites*

138

139 Chemicals: Pure hormone standards, used in calibration curve and quality control solutions,
140 were obtained as follows: dihydrophaseic acid (DPA), abscisic acid glucose ester (ABA-GE),
141 phaseic acid (PA), 7'-hydroxy ABA (7'-OH ABA) and *neophaseic acid* (*neoPA*) from the Plant
142 Biotechnology Institute of the National Research Council of Canada (PBI-NRC, Saskatoon, SK,
143 Canada); IAA, indole-3-acetic acid aspartate (IAA-Asp), indole-3-acetic acid glutamate (IAA-
144 Glu), ABA, *trans*-zeatin (*t-Z*), *trans*-zeatin riboside (*t-ZR*), isopentenyl adenosine (iPA), and
145 isopentenyl adenine (2iP) from Sigma-Aldrich (Oakville, ON, Canada); dihydrozeatin (dhZ),

146 dihydrozeatin riboside (dhZR), and *trans*-zeatin-*O*-glucoside (*t*-Z-*O*-Glu) from Olchemim Ltd.
147 (Olomouc, Czech Republic); GA₁, GA₃, GA₄, and GA₇ from Prof. Lewis Mander (Australian
148 National University, Canberra, Australia). Bulk amounts of the deuterated forms of the
149 hormones, used as internal standards, were obtained as follows: d₃-DPA, d₅-ABA-GE, d₃-PA,
150 d₄-7'-OH ABA, d₃- *neo*PA, d₄-ABA, d₃-IAA-Asp, and d₃-IAA-Glu from PBI-NRC (Saskatoon,
151 SK, Canada); d₅-IAA, d₃-dhZ, d₃-dhZR, d₅-*t*-Z-*O*-Glu, d₆-iPA, and d₆-2iP from Olchemim Ltd.
152 (Olomouc, Czech Republic); d₂-GA₁, and d₂-GA₄ from Prof. Lewis Mander (Australian
153 National University, Canberra, Australia). Bulk amounts of the deuterated forms of selected
154 hormones which were used as recovery standards, namely d₆-ABA and d₂-ABA-GE, were
155 obtained from PBI-NRC. Preparations of ABA and ABA metabolite standards were described
156 by Abrams et al. (2003) and Zaharia et al. (2005).

157

158 *Extraction, purification and quantification by HPLC-ESI-MS/MS:*

159 Extraction and purification steps were carried out as in Kong et al. (2008). The procedure used
160 for quantification of multiple hormones, including abscisic acid and its metabolites, was a
161 modification of Chiwocha et al. (2003; 2005). To the spectrum of 18 hormones originally
162 quantified in these papers, including IAA, IAA-Asp, ABA, 7'-OH ABA, PA, DPA, ABA-GE,
163 GA₁ (*m/z* 347>259), GA₃, GA₄ (*m/z* 331>243), GA₇, *t*-Z, *t*-ZR, dhZ, dhZR, *t*-Z-*O*-Glu, 2iP, and
164 iPA, were added an additional two; namely IAA-Glu (*m/z* 303>146) and *neo*PA (*m/z* 279>205).
165 Samples were injected onto a Genesis C18 HPLC column (100 × 2.1 mm, 4 μm,
166 Chromatographic Specialties, Brockville, ON, Canada) and separated by a gradient elution of

167 water against an increasing percentage of acetonitrile and methanol plus 0.04% acetic acid.
168 Calibration curves were generated from the MRM signals obtained from standard solutions
169 using the ratio of the chromatographic peak area for each analyte to that of the corresponding
170 internal standard, as described by Ross et al. (2004). Quality control samples, internal standard
171 blanks, and solvent blanks were also prepared and analyzed along with each batch of tissue
172 samples. The concentrations of IAA, IAA-Asp and IAA-Glu were generally below quantifiable
173 limits of <61 ng g⁻¹ DW, <58 ng g⁻¹ DW, and <58 ng g⁻¹ DW, respectively. All GAs analyzed
174 in this study were also below quantifiable levels of <473 ng g⁻¹ DW for GA₁, <238 ng g⁻¹ DW
175 for GA₃, <116 ng g⁻¹ DW for GA₄, and <116 ng g⁻¹ DW for GA₇. As a consequence IAA, IAA
176 metabolites and GAs are not included in the results.

177

178 *Experimental design and statistical analysis*

179 Six ramets were used as replicates for female cone yield evaluation in each genotype, whereas
180 3 ramets per genotype were used as replicates for hormone analysis. Data were subjected to
181 one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) using Minitab statistical software (Minitab, State
182 College, Pennsylvania, USA). The variance was analyzed by Tukey's significant difference
183 with the level of significance set to $P < 0.05$. For analysis purposes, concentrations below
184 quantifiable levels were treated as zeros. Significance differences in overall patterns or at each
185 sampling date have been indicated in the text.

186

187

188

Results

189 *Genotype performance in cone production*

190 Cone yield was significantly different ($P < 0.05$) between the genotypes. The mean value of
191 female cone yield per tree of genotype 299 was 3.5 times higher than that of genotype 233
192 (Table 1).

193

194 *Dry weight and moisture content*

195 The dry weight of long-shoot buds increased as the season advanced (Fig. 1). Overall, no
196 difference in dry weight existed between these two genotypes ($F = 1.79$, $P = 0.16$). Moisture
197 content of the bud decreased consistently in both of the genotypes over the growth period (Fig.
198 2). No significant difference ($F = 0$, $P = 0.951$) was found between genotypes 299 and 233.
199 Although the dry weight per bud in genotype 299 was slightly higher than that of genotype 233
200 at weeks 4 and 10, these differences were not significant ($F = 4.15$, $P = 0.069$ and $F = 3.76$, $P =$
201 0.081).

202

203 *Cytokinins and metabolites*

204 *Zeatin (Z)-type cytokinins:* The concentration of *t*-ZR was highest at the beginning of August
205 (week 0), reaching $109 \text{ ng g}^{-1} \text{ DW}$ and $90 \text{ ng g}^{-1} \text{ DW}$ in genotypes 299 and 233, respectively
206 (Fig. 3). Concentrations then declined as the season advanced. The average concentration of *t*-
207 ZR in genotype 299 samples was slightly higher than that in genotype 233 until week 6.
208 Concentrations of *t*-ZR in genotype 299 samples then dropped below quantifiable levels. There

209 was no significant difference ($F = 0.04$, $P = 0.836$) between genotypes 299 and 233 in the
210 overall pattern of *t*-ZR concentration changes. In genotype 233, the concentration of dhZ
211 remained fairly steady until week 4 when it dropped below quantifiable levels (Table 2). In
212 contrast, dhZ levels were below quantifiable levels in all genotype 299 samples at all sampling
213 dates. In genotype 299, the concentration of *t*-Z-*O*-Glu peaked at week 4 before progressively
214 declining. At week 10, its concentration dropped below quantifiable levels (Table 2). Genotype
215 233's *t*-Z-*O*-Glu levels were below quantifiable levels throughout. In both genotypes,
216 concentrations of dhZR and *t*-Z were generally below quantifiable levels.

217

218 *Isopentenyl (iP)-type cytokinins*: A significant difference ($F = 10.94$, $P = 0.003$) existed in the
219 overall pattern of iPA concentration changes between the two genotypes. The concentration of
220 2iP in genotype 233 peaked at week 2, declined at week 4 and remained unchanged throughout
221 the subsequent sampling dates (Table 2). In genotype 299 samples, 2iP was only quantifiable at
222 week 10. The concentration of iPA in genotype 233 stayed relatively constant throughout the
223 time period studied, varying between 11 and 14 ng g⁻¹ DW (Fig. 4). The concentrations of iPA
224 were significantly ($P < 0.05$) lower in the samples of genotype 299 than in genotype 233 at
225 weeks 0, 6 and 10 (Fig. 4). In genotype 299, the highest concentration of iPA (13 ng g⁻¹ DW)
226 was observed at week 4.

227

228 *The ratio of Z-type to iP-type cytokinins*: Significant difference ($P < 0.05$) existed between
229 these two genotypes in the ratios of Z-type cytokinins (dhZ, *t*-Z-*O*-Glu, *t*-ZR, dhZR) to iP-type

230 cytokinins (2iP, iPA). This ratio was approximately 3-fold higher in genotype 299 than in
231 genotype 233 during the first four weeks (Fig. 5). It then decreased as the season advanced.

232

233 *Abscisic acid*

234 Concentrations of ABA were significantly lower in genotype 299 than in genotype 233 only at
235 the first sampling date ($F = 14.49$, $P = 0.019$) (Fig. 6). Afterwards, no significant differences
236 were noted between these genotypes. The overall pattern of a continuous increase in ABA
237 concentration was observed for both genotypes ($F = 2.22$, $P = 0.147$).

238

239 *ABA metabolites*

240 Concentrations of ABA-GE were initially 343 ng g⁻¹ DW and 408 ng g⁻¹ DW in long-shoot
241 samples of genotypes 299 and 233, respectively. As with ABA, the concentration of ABA-GE
242 in both genotypes continued to increase as the season progressed (Fig. 7). The overall pattern
243 of ABA-GE concentration change showed little difference ($F = 0.36$, $P = 0.551$) between the
244 two genotypes. Generally, the PA concentration was higher in genotype 233 than in genotype
245 299 (Fig. 8). The initial concentration of PA was 84 ng g⁻¹ DW in genotype 233, and it
246 remained fairly consistent thereafter. Phaseic acid was only quantifiable at low concentrations
247 in genotype 299 during the first four weeks, ranging from 21 to 46 ng g⁻¹ DW. The overall
248 pattern of PA concentration changes between these two genotypes was significantly different
249 ($F = 49.03$, $P < 0.001$). Dihydrophaseic acid was only quantifiable in the samples of genotype
250 233, with concentrations ranging from 9 ng g⁻¹ DW to 21 ng g⁻¹ DW at all time points except

251 that of week 6, where the level was below the limit of quantification (data not shown).
252 Dihydrophaseic acid was below quantifiable levels in all genotype 299 samples. Neither 7'-OH
253 ABA nor *neo*PA was quantifiable in either of the genotypes.

254

255

Discussion

256 The ratio of Z-type to iP-type cytokinins in lodgepole pine long-shoot buds differed
257 between genotypes of high and low cone yield. This supports previous studies in which
258 cytokinins were shown to regulate bud differentiation and shoot development in Norway
259 spruce (Bollmark et al. 1995; Chen et al. 1996) and radiata pine (Zhang et al. 2001; 2003). In
260 angiosperms, cytokinin receptors have different affinities for Z-type and iP-type cytokinins
261 (Spíchal et al. 2004; Romanov et al. 2006). Both cell fate and organ formation have been
262 associated with local concentration gradients of Z-type and iP-type cytokinins (Frugis et al.
263 2001). These hormones may also act as long-distance signals since Z-type cytokinins exist
264 predominantly in xylem sap whereas phloem sap mainly contains iP-type cytokinins (Corbesier
265 et al. 2003; Hirose et al. 2008).

266 There is some evidence that Z-type cytokinins may favour female cone bud
267 differentiation. The largest differences in the ratio of Z-type to iP-type cytokinins were seen
268 from the middle of summer to early September. In terms of development, this is no longer the
269 bud initiation stage, but corresponds to the early stages of differentiation. These ratio
270 differences disappeared by late in the growing season. In our study, the absolute amounts of Z-
271 type cytokinins were higher than iP-type cytokinins in the higher cone producer. Our results for

272 lodgepole pine accord with those of Morris et al. (1990) for Douglas-fir, in which
273 concentrations of Z-type cytokinins were also higher than iP-type cytokinins in female cone
274 buds and vegetative buds, but not male cone buds. Z-type cytokinins are derived from iP-type
275 compounds and not vice versa (Kakimoto 2003; Sakakibara 2006). Thus, the lower
276 concentrations of 2iP and iPA in the genotype with better cone production indicates a higher
277 capability for Z-type cytokinin synthesis. *Trans*-zeatin riboside and iPA were the major
278 cytokinins in both of the genotypes, whereas *t-Z-O-Glu* was only quantifiable in genotype 299,
279 a good cone producer. These three compounds were also found in Douglas-fir shoots with
280 differentiating cone buds (Kong et al. 2008; 2009).

281 Abscisic acid metabolism differed between the two genotypes. The ABA oxidation
282 pathway, which leads to DPA and PA, was more active in the low cone-producing genotype.
283 Kong and von Aderkas (2007) reported ABA utilization was genotype-dependent during
284 conifer somatic embryogenesis; genotypes that responded to ABA supplementation during
285 maturation converted more ABA into PA and DPA. Concentrations of ABA in developing
286 buds are also sensitive to physiological intervention. When trees are subjected to cone
287 induction treatments, such as GA injection, ABA concentration decreases (Kong et al. 2008).
288 Abscisic acid metabolism may also vary by the type of bud. In *Pinus tabulaeformis*, Bao and
289 Zheng (2005) found much higher ABA concentrations in female-sterile trees than in fertile
290 trees.

291 Cytokinins and ABA may play a role in regulating female cone differentiation but, to
292 date, studies are few and evidence is scant and mixed. In Douglas-fir, the lowest ABA

293 concentration was observed when bud primordia began to form (Kong et al. 2008; 2009). In
294 *Pinus tabulaeformis*, high levels of ABA have been correlated with female gametophyte
295 abortion in a female-sterile genotype (Bao and Zheng 2005). In other higher plants, cytokinin
296 levels increased during flowering induction (Lejeune et al. 1994; Corbesier et al. 2003). Higher
297 cytokinin concentrations were found in female gametophytes than in male gametophytes in
298 *Blechnum spicant* (Menéndez et al. 2009).

299 We have shown that a genotype that characteristically had high cone yield also had
300 much higher ratios of Z-type to iP-type cytokinins compared with a low cone yield genotype.
301 Most of the pronounced changes occurred before week 6. This period corresponds to female
302 cone bud differentiation on the basis of our previous structural study of lodgepole pine long-
303 shoot buds (von Aderkas et al. 2007). In addition, the dramatic increases of bud dry weight
304 between weeks 2 and 6 also indicate fast growth during cone bud differentiation and
305 development. Comparison of bud dry weight and moisture content between the high and low
306 yielding genotypes does not indicate a difference in the health of these trees. The buds in both
307 types grew equally well. The difference in cytokinin metabolism should be further investigated,
308 as this pathway may provide opportunities in developing new strategies for cone induction. For
309 example, cone bud gender in pines is known to be developmentally sensitive to exogenously
310 applied cytokinins (Wakushima 2004, Kong et al. 2011). To date, only adenine type cytokinins
311 have been used, e.g. 6-benzylaminopurine, with other more stable phenylurea types (e.g.
312 thidiazuron) untried. Cytokinins would appear to offer some yet unexplored possibilities in
313 female cone induction (Kong et al. 2011).

314

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325

326

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447 **Figure legends**

448

449 **Figure 1** Changes in dry weight of long-shoot buds during female cone differentiation in
450 genotype 299 (open circle) and genotype 233 (solid circle). Sample collection started on
451 August 1, Mean \pm SE, n > 30.

452 **Figure 2** Changes in moisture content of long-shoot buds during female cone differentiation in
453 genotype 299 (open circle) and genotype 233 (solid circle). Sample collection started on
454 August 1, Mean \pm SE, n > 30.

455 **Figure 3** Concentration of *t*-ZR in long-shoot buds during female cone differentiation in
456 genotypes 299 (open circle) and 233 (solid circle). Sample collection started on August 1,
457 Mean \pm SE, n=3.

458 **Figure 4** Concentration of iPA in long-shoot buds during female cone differentiation in
459 genotypes 299 (open circle) and 233 (solid circle). Sample collection started on August 1,
460 Mean \pm SE, n=3. Asterisk (*) indicates a significant difference ($P < 0.05$) between genotypes
461 at the individual time point.

462 **Figure 5** Ratio of Z-type cytokinins to iP-type cytokinins in long-shoot buds during female
463 cone differentiation in genotypes 299 (open circle) and 233 (solid circle). Sample collection
464 started on August 1, Mean, n=3. Asterisk (*) indicates a significant difference ($P < 0.05$)
465 between genotypes at the individual time point.

466 **Figure 6** Concentration of ABA in long-shoot buds during female cone differentiation in
467 genotypes 299 (open circle) and 233 (solid circle). Sample collection started on August 1,
468 Mean \pm SE, n=3. Asterisk (*) indicates a significant difference ($P < 0.05$) between genotypes
469 at the individual time point.

470 **Figure 7** Concentration of ABA-GE in long-shoot buds during female cone differentiation in
471 genotypes 299 (open circle) and 233 (solid circle). Sample collection started on August 1,
472 Mean \pm SE, n=3.

473 **Figure 8** Concentration of PA in long-shoot buds during female cone differentiation in
474 genotypes 299 (open circle) and 233 (solid circle). Sample collection started on August 1,
475 Mean \pm SE, n=3. Asterisk (*) indicates a significant difference ($P < 0.05$) between genotypes
476 at the individual time point.

Table 1 Female cone production per ramet in lodgepole pine genotypes 299 and 233. Cone yield data was collected by Vernon seed orchard company (VSOC) during a three-year period before sampling. Mean \pm SE, n = 6.

Genotype 299		Genotype 233	
Ramet	Cone yield	Ramet	Cone yield
BB91	267 \pm 22	AA89	83 \pm 8
P91	267 \pm 44	BB63	38 \pm 7
T67	208 \pm 22	O93	60 \pm 21
U103	300 \pm 52	S66	108 \pm 33
Y99	217 \pm 22	S79	58 \pm 8
O100	142 \pm 22	V64	47 \pm 3
Total	233 \pm 17	Total	66 \pm 8

Table 2 Concentrations (ng g⁻¹ DW) of cytokinins in long-shoot buds during female cone differentiation in genotypes 233 and 299. Sample collection started on August 1, Mean \pm SE, n=3. NQ stands for not quantifiable.

Week	dhZ		<i>t-Z-O-Glu</i>		2iP	
	233	299	233	299	233	299
0	12 \pm 2	NQ	NQ	7 \pm 3	15.3 \pm 0.1	NQ
2	10 \pm 2	NQ	NQ	7 \pm 4	18 \pm 2	NQ
4	10 \pm 1	NQ	NQ	10.1 \pm 0.4	14 \pm 2	NQ
6	NQ	NQ	NQ	7 \pm 34	14 \pm 1	NQ
10	NQ	NQ	NQ	NQ	13 \pm 1	6 \pm 3

Figures

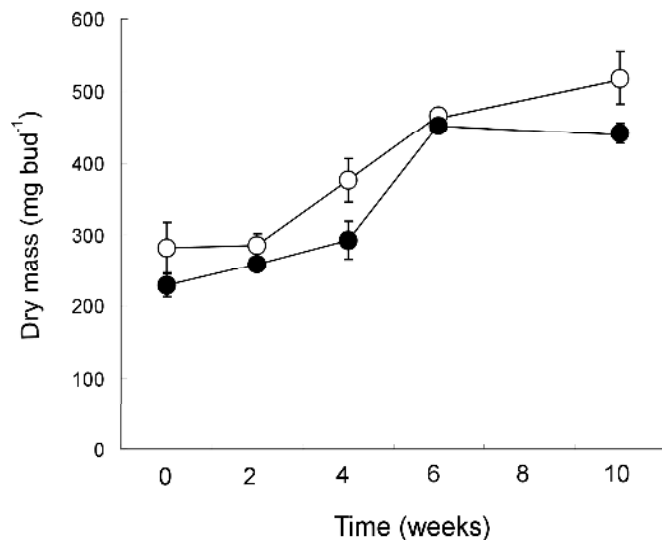


Figure 1

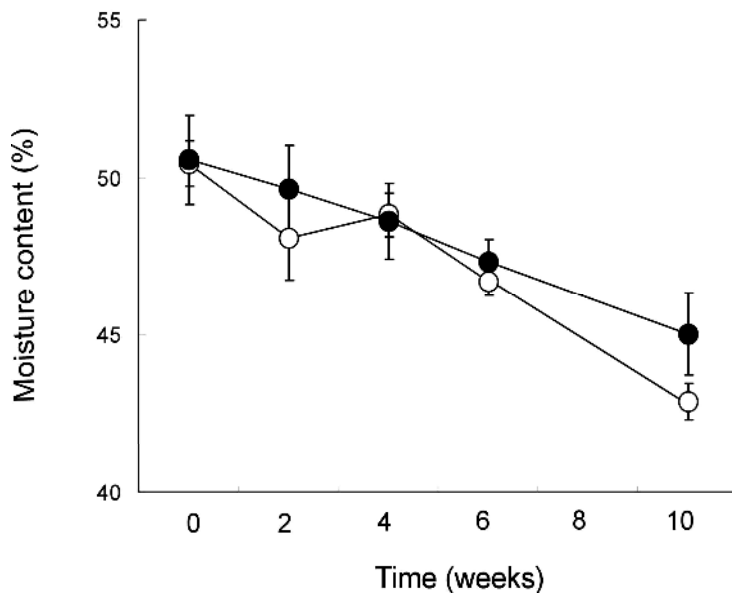


Figure 2

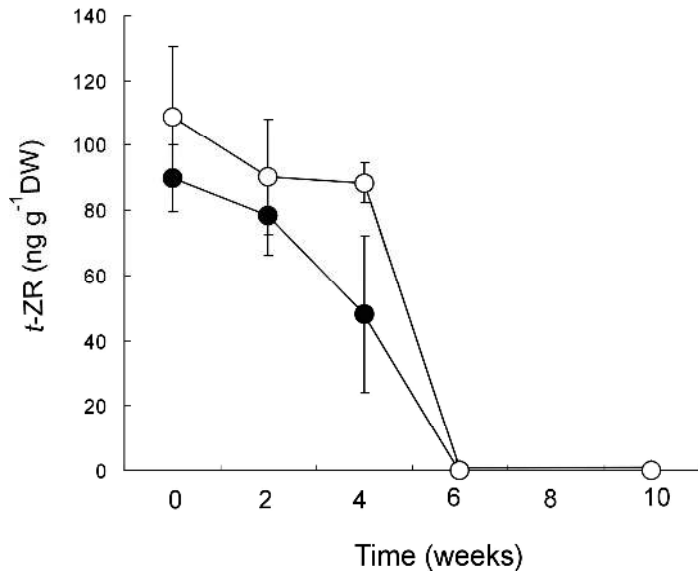


Figure 3

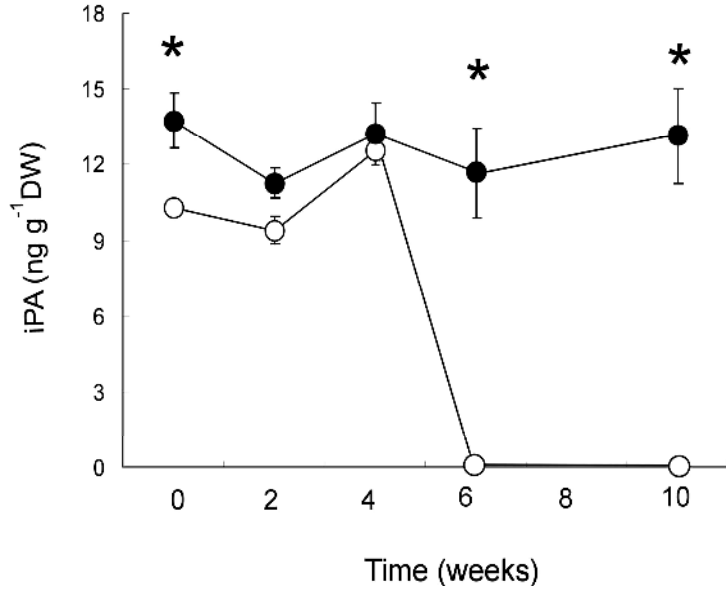


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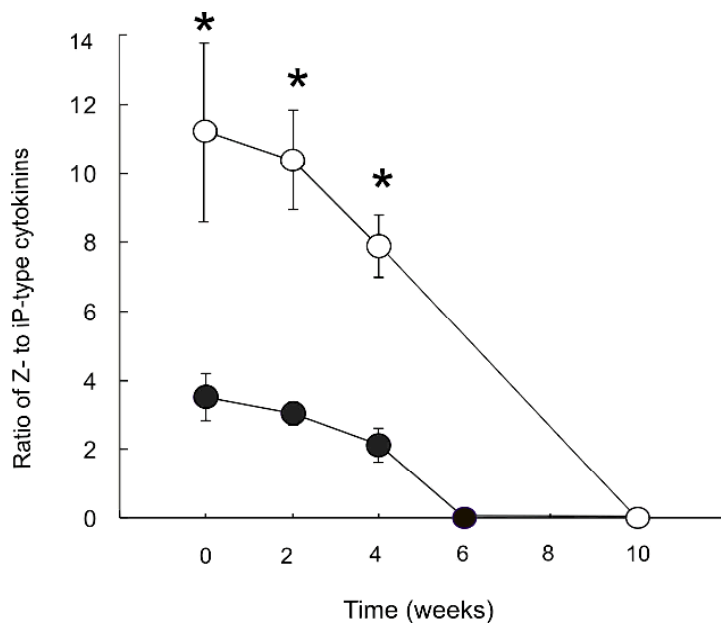


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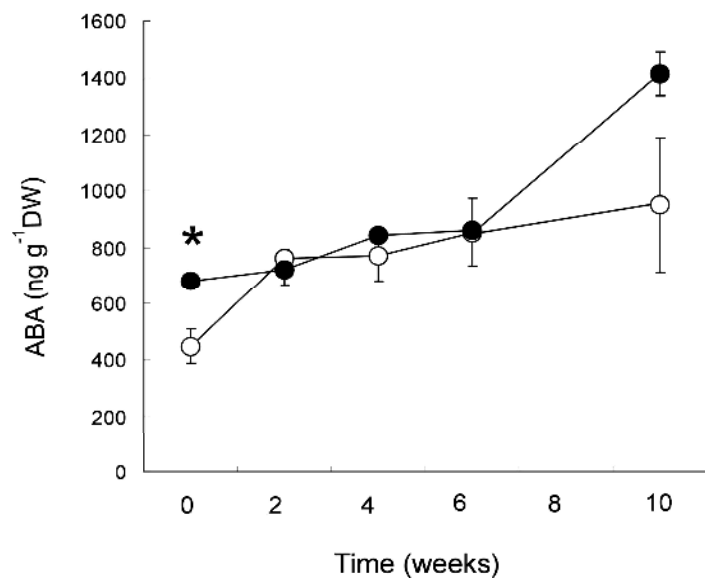


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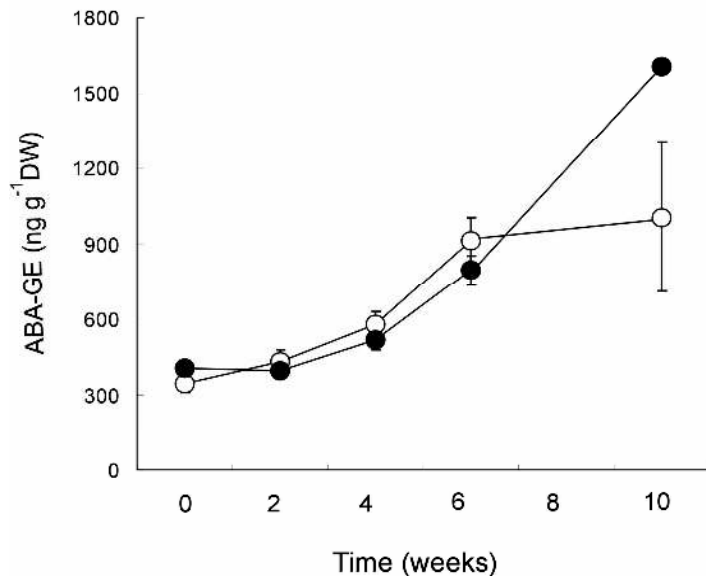


Figure 7

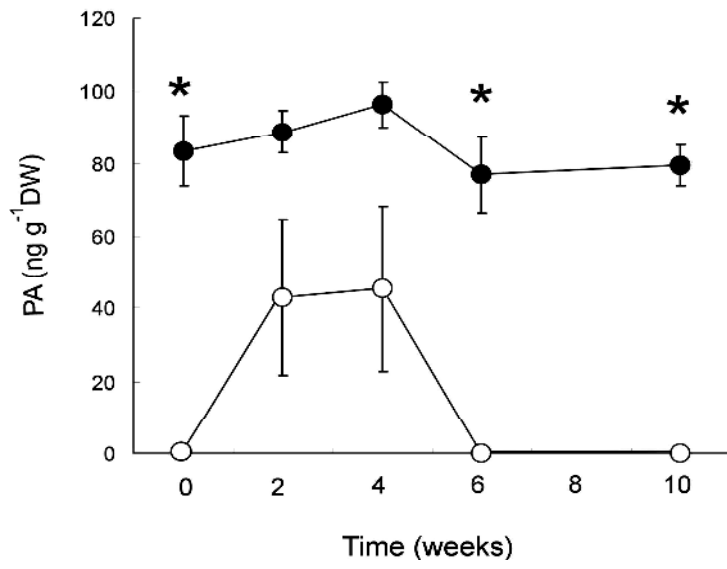


Figure 8