Discovering and prioritizing candidate resistance genes 1 against soybean pests by integrating GWAS and gene 2 coexpression networks 3

Fabricio Almeida-Silva^{1*†} and Thiago M. Venancio^{1*} 4

5

¹Laboratório de Química e Função de Proteínas e Peptídeos, Centro de Biociências e 6 Biotecnologia, Universidade Estadual do Norte Fluminense Darcy Ribeiro, Campos dos 7 8 Goytacazes, RJ, Brazil.

9

*TMV: Laboratório de Química e Função de Proteínas e Peptídeos, Centro de Biociências 10 e Biotecnologia, Universidade Estadual do Norte Fluminense Darcy Ribeiro. Av. Alberto 11 Lamego 2000, P5, sala 217, Campos dos Goytacazes, RJ, Brazil. Email: 12 13 thiago.venancio@gmail.com.

14

- *[†]FA-S: Present address: VIB Center for Plant Systems Biology, Department of Plant 15
- Biotechnology and Bioinformatics, Ghent University, 9052 Ghent, Belgium. Email: 16 fabricio.almeidasilva@psb.vib-ugent.be. 17

2

ABSTRACT

Soybean is one of the most important legume crops worldwide. Soybean pests have considerable impact on crop yield. Here, we integrated publicly available genome-wide association studies and transcriptomic data to prioritize candidate resistance genes against the insects Aphis glycines and Spodoptera litura, and the nematode Heterodera glycines. We identified 171, 7, and 228 high-confidence candidate resistance genes against A. glycines, S. *litura*, and *H. glycines*, respectively. We found some overlap of candidate genes between insect species, but not between insects and *H. glycines*. Although 15% of the prioritized candidate genes encode proteins of unknown function, the vast majority of the candidates are related to plant immunity processes, such as transcriptional regulation, signaling, oxidative stress, recognition, and physical defense. Based on the number of resistance alleles, we selected the ten most promising accessions against each pest species in the soybean USDA germplasm. The most resistant accessions do not reach the maximum theoretical resistance potential, indicating that they might be further improved to increase resistance in breeding programs or through genetic engineering. Finally, the coexpression networks generated here are available in a user-friendly web application (<u>https://soypestgcn.venanciogroup.uenf.br/</u>) and an R/Shiny package (<u>https://github.com/almeidasilvaf/SoyPestGCN</u>) that serve as a public resource to explore soybean-pest interactions at the transcriptional level.

Keywords: plant immunity, QTL, gene discovery, population genomics.

3

1 Introduction

Soybean (*Glycine max* (L.) Merr.) is the world's main legume crop, with a primary impact in human and animal nutrition, and in industrial applications. However, soybean fields are significantly affected by pests (insects and nematodes) that lead to dramatic yield losses. The major pests in soybean fields are the soybean aphid (*Aphis glycines* Matsumura) and the soybean cyst nematode (*Heterodera glycines* Ichinohe), which are responsible for annual losses of US\$4 billion and US\$4.5 billion in the US, respectively (Bandara et al., 2020; Koenning and Wrather, 2010). In Brazil, the world's leading soybean producer, insect pests reduce yield by 7.7%, which corresponds to an economic loss of US\$ 21.78 billion (April 2022 exchange rate) (Oliveira et al., 2014).

Over the past few years, many genome-wide associations studies (GWAS) have been performed to identify single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) associated with soybean resistance to insect and nematode pests (Liu et al., 2019; Hanson et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2017; Bao et al., 2014; Natukunda et al., 2019). However, as GWAS typically cannot accurately pinpoint causative genes, multi-omics data integration has helped predict high-confidence candidate genes associated with traits of interest (Baxter, 2020; Michno et al., 2020). Recently, we identified high-confidence candidate genes against fungal diseases using cageminer, a graph-based algorithm recently developed by our group to integrate GWAS and transcriptomic data to prioritize candidate genes (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b, 2022a). Thus, we hypothesize that our algorithm can also reveal high-confidence candidate genes that can be used to engineer soybean lines with increased resistance to pests.

Here, we integrated multiple publicly available RNA-seq and GWAS datasets to identify high-confidence candidate genes associated with resistance to pests. We found a high overlap of resistance genes between insects, but not between insects and nematodes, suggesting that these classes trigger different defense responses. The candidate resistance genes against each species are involved in several immunity-related processes, such as transcriptional regulation, signaling, oxidative stress, recognition, and phytohormone metabolism. Strikingly, 15% of the candidates encode proteins of unknown function, revealing a novel catalog of potential resistance genes. Finally, we highlighted the ten most resistant accessions against each pest species in the USDA germplasm, uncovering important information for breeding programs and genetic engineering initiatives. The coexpression networks resulting from this available work were also made as а web application (https://soypestgcn.venanciogroup.uenf.br/) R/Shiny and package (https://github.com/almeidasilvaf/SoyPestGCN).

2 Materials and Methods

2.1 Curation of resistance-associated SNPs and pan-genome data

SNPs with significant association to resistance against soybean pests were manually curated from published GWAS data (Table 1; Supplementary Table S1). SNPs that were present in the SoySNP50k database were identified with their standard nomenclature, and the VCF file for the SoySNP50k was downloaded from Soybase (Brown et al., 2020). Additionally, a matrix of gene presence/absence variation (PAV) in the pan-genome of cultivated soybeans (n = 204 genomes from 24 countries and 5 continents) (Torkamaneh et al., 2021) was also used.

2.2 Prediction of variant effects on genes

Variant effect prediction was performed with the function *predictCoding()* from the R package VariantAnnotation (Obenchain et al., 2014). Genome sequences and transcript coordinates were downloaded from PLAZA 4.0 (Van Bel et al., 2018). Reference and alternate alleles were manually extracted from each GWAS publication. Variants with no information on reference and alternate alleles in the original publication were discarded from this analysis.

2.3 Transcriptome data and selection of guide genes

Gene expression estimates in transcripts per million mapped reads (TPM, Kallisto estimation) were retrieved from the Soybean Expression Atlas (Machado et al., 2020). Additional RNA-seq samples comprising soybean tissues infested with pests were retrieved from NCBI's SRA in a recent publication from our group (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2022b). We filtered the GWAS and transcriptome datasets to keep only insect and nematode species that were represented by both data sources. We selected a total of 102 and 36 RNA-seq samples from soybean tissues infested with insects and nematodes, respectively (Supplementary Table S2). Finally, genes with median expression values lower than 5 were excluded to attenuate noise, resulting in a 15684 x 102 gene expression matrix for insects, and a 10240 \times 36 matrix for nematodes. Guide genes were obtained from the Supplementary Data in (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b).

2.4 Candidate gene mining and functional analyses

Gene expression data were adjusted for confounding artifacts and quantile normalized with the R package BioNERO (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2022a). An unsigned coexpression network was inferred with BioNERO using Pearson's r as correlation. Candidate genes were

5

identified and prioritized using the R package cageminer (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021a) with default parameters. Module enrichment analyses were performed with BioNERO, using functional annotations from the PLAZA 4.0 database (Van Bel et al., 2018). Finally, prioritized candidates were given scores and ranks using the function *score_genes()* from cageminer.

2.5 Selection of candidate resistant accessions from the USDA germplasm

The VCF file with genotypic information for all accessions in the USDA germplasm was downloaded from Soybase (Brown et al., 2020). For each locus *i*, scores $S_i 0$, 1, or 2 were given based on the number of SNPs associated with resistance. Total resistance scores for each accession were calculated as the sum of scores S_i for all *n* loci as follows:

$$S_{total} = \sum_{i=1}^{n} S_i$$
, where $S_i = \{0, 1, 2\}$

Total resistance scores were ranked from highest to lowest, and ranks were used to select the most resistant accessions. The resistance potential of the best accessions was calculated as a ratio of the attributed scores to the theoretical maximum score (*2n*, which corresponds to all loci having scores 2).

3 Results and discussion

3.1 Data summary and genomic distribution of SNPs

After removing pest species that were not represented by both soybean RNA-seq and GWAS, our list of target species included the insects *A. glycines* (soybean aphid) and *S. litura* (armyworm caterpillar), and the soybean cyst nematode *H. glycines* (Figure 1A). SNPs associated with resistance to all pest species were located in gene-rich regions of the soybean genome (Figure 1B), and their distributions were biased towards particular chromosomes (Figure 1C). Resistance SNPs against *A. glycines* were mostly located on chromosome 13, and resistance SNPs against *H. glycines* were mostly located on chromosomes 18, 8 and 7 (Figure 1C). Resistance SNPs against *S. litura* only occurred on chromosomes 12, 7, 6 and 5, but it is important to mention the small number of resistance SNPs against this species.

Interestingly, although most resistance SNPs against all species were located in intergenic regions, a considerable fraction of them was located in exons, except for *S. litura* (Figure 1D). This is a dramatic difference from what we observed in our previous study on fungi resistance-related genes, where almost all SNPs were located in intergenic regions (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b). Thus, we predicted SNP effects on coding sequences to better understand the functional consequences of these SNPs. From all resistance SNPs

6

against *A. glycines* in coding regions, 31% (n=5) led to nonsynonymous substitutions, while 69% (n=11) led to synonymous substitutions (Supplementary Table S3). Conversely, from all resistance SNPs against *H. glycines* in coding regions, nonsynonymous substitutions prevailed as expected (63%, n=10), followed by synonymous (31%, n=5) and nonsense substitutions (6%, n=1).

Additionally, we explored the distribution of SNPs in introns to understand their functional impact. SNPs in splice sites (*i.e.*, ± 2 nucleotides relative to the exon-intron junction), as they can influence exon configuration and alternative splicing (Woolfe et al., 2010). None of the SNPs in introns were located in splice sites, indicating that they do not affect splicing patterns directly. As introns can contain regulatory elements, such as enhancers and silencers (Cooper, 2010), these SNPs might contribute to increased resistance by affecting intron-associated transcriptional regulation.

3.2 High candidate gene overlap between insects, but not between insects and nematodes

Using defense-related genes as guides, we identified 171, 7, and 228 high-confidence genes against A. glycines, S. litura, and H. glycines, respectively (Figure 2A). Interestingly, 57% (4/7) of the candidates against S. litura were also candidates against A. glycines. However, none of the candidate resistance genes against insects were shared with *H. glycines*, revealing a high intraclass (*i.e.*, among insects), but no interclass overlap (*i.e.*, among insects and The Glyma.07G034400, nematodes). shared genes are Glyma.12G059900, Glyma.07G033100, Glyma.07G036400, whose protein products are associated with phytohormone metabolism (KMD protein, Kelch repeat), transport (glucose and ATP transporters), and signaling (phospholipid:diacylglycerol acyltransferase), respectively. We also analyzed the overlap of pest resistance-related candidates with fungi resistance-related candidates from (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b) and found that a small number ($n \le 5$) of candidates against H. glycines and A. glycines are shared with Fusarium species (Figure 2B).

The observed overlap of candidate gene sets for different insect species is desirable, because it suggests that shared candidates can be used in biotechnological applications to equip soybean accessions with broad-spectrum resistance (BSR) against insects. In our recent study on candidate resistance genes against fungi, we reported a highly species-specific response (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b), which seems to be a trend for filamentous pathogens (Ning and Wang, 2018; Kourelis and Van Der Hoorn, 2018). Conversely, BSR to insects has been reported more often and can be achieved with genes associated with the

7

synthesis of volatile organic compounds and secondary metabolites, for instance (Dixit et al., 2013; Vosman et al., 2018). Altogether, these findings suggest that achieving BSR is a feasible approach to control pests in soybean fields.

3.3 Signaling, oxidative stress and transcriptional regulation shape soybean resistance to pests

We manually curated the high-confidence candidate resistance genes to predict the putative role of their products in plant immunity (Supplementary Table S4). Most of the prioritized candidates encode proteins involved in immune signaling (23%), oxidative stress (21%), and transcriptional regulation (16%) (Figure 3). Other candidates encode proteins that play a role in transport, translational regulation, physical defense, phytohormone and secondary metabolism, apoptosis, recognition, and direct function against pests (Figure 3).

Interestingly, 55 (15%) candidate genes lack functional description and, hence, we could not infer their roles in resistance (n=28, 25, and 2 for *A. glycines, H. glycines,* and *S. litura*, respectively). This finding demonstrates that our algorithm can also serve as a network-based approach to predict functions of unannotated genes, similarly to previous approaches (Almeida-Silva et al., 2020; Depuydt and Vandepoele, 2021). Genes encoding proteins of unknown function were in the top 4 most abundant categories for all species, revealing a potentially rich source of targets for biotechnological applications that would not have been identified if traditional SNP-to-gene mapping approaches were used.

We also developed a scheme that was used to rank high-confidence candidate genes (Table 2). As there are several candidate resistance genes against *A. glycines* and *H. glycines*, ranking candidates can help prioritize genes for experimental validation. Here, we suggest using the top 10 candidate resistance genes against each pathogen for experimental validation in future studies, which will likely reveal the most suitable candidates to develop soybean lines with increased resistance to each pest.

3.4 Pangenome presence/absence variation analysis demonstrates that most prioritized genes are core genes

We analyzed PAV patterns for our prioritized candidate genes in the recently published pangenome of cultivated soybeans to unveil which soybean genotypes contain prioritized candidate genes and explore gene presence/absence variation patterns across genomes (Torkamaneh et al., 2021). We found that most candidates (98%) are present in all 204 accessions (Supplementary Figure 1A), similarly to what we observed for fungi resistance-related genes (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b). This unsurprising trend is likely due to

8

the high level of gene content conservation in this pangenome, which has 91% of the genes shared by >99% of the genomes.

Further, we investigated if gene PAV patterns could be explained by the geographical origins of the accessions (Supplementary Figure 1B). As we observed in our previous study (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b), PAV patterns did not cluster by geographical origin, suggesting that gene PAV is not affected by population structure. As this pangenome comprises improved soybean accessions (Torkamaneh et al., 2021), the lack of population structure effect can be due to breeding programs targeting optimal adaptation to different environmental conditions (*e.g.*, latitude and climate), even if they are in the same country.

3.5 Screening of the USDA germplasm reveals a room for genetic improvement

We inspected the USDA germplasm to find the top 10 most resistant genotypes against each pest species (see Materials and Methods for details). Strikingly, the most resistant genotypes do not contain all resistance alleles, revealing that, theoretically, they could be further improved to increase resistance (Table 3). None of the reported SNPs for resistance against *S. litura* have been identified in the SoySNP50k collection. Hence, we could not predict the most resistant accessions to this pest species.

Our findings are in line with what we observed for resistance to fungi in the USDA germplasm (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b). Importantly, insect resistance potentials were lower than fungi resistance potentials (Wilcoxon rank-sum test, P = 7.7e-04), suggesting that pest resistance could be further improved. A feasible approach to increase pest resistance involves pyramiding quantitative trait loci (QTL) that confer partial resistance to each pest (Li et al., 2020). To accomplish this, the most resistant genotypes identified here can be used in breeding programs using marker-assisted selection or inspire CRISPR/Cas editing strategies to introduce beneficial alleles, leading to increased resistance. It is important to mention, however, that our model does not account for epistasis and different effect sizes of each variant. Hence, there might be accessions with a smaller number of SNPs with large effects that are more resistant than accessions with a greater number of SNPs with moderate effects.

3.6 Development of a user-friendly web application for network exploration

To facilitate network exploration and data reuse, we developed a user-friendly web application named SoyPestGCN (<u>https://soypestgcn.venanciogroup.uenf.br/</u>). Users can choose either the insect or the nematode GCN and input a soybean gene of interest (Wm82.a2.v1 assembly) to visualize the gene's module, scaled intramodular degree, and hub status (Figure 4A). Additionally, users can explore enriched GO terms, Mapman bins and/or Interpro domains

associated with the input gene's module (Figure 4). This resource can be particularly useful for researchers studying soybean response to other pest species, as they can check if their genes of interest are located in defense-related coexpression modules. Also, researchers studying other species can verify if the soybean ortholog of their genes of interest is located in a defense-related module. The application is also available as an R package named SoyPestGCN (<u>https://github.com/almeidasilvaf/SoyPestGCN</u>). This package lets users run the application locally as a Shiny app, ensuring the application will always be available, even in case of server downtime.

4 Conclusions

By integrating publicly available GWAS and RNA-seq data, we found promising candidate genes in soybean associated with resistance to three pest species, namely *A. glycines, S. litura*, and *H. glycines*. The prioritized candidates encode proteins involved in immunity-related processes such as in recognition, signaling, transcriptional regulation, oxidative stress, specialized metabolism, and physical defense. We have also found the top 10 most resistant soybean accessions against each pest species and hypothesize that they can be used in soybean improvement programs, either via breeding with marker-assisted selection or through genome editing. The coexpression network generated here was also made available in a web resource and R package to help in future studies on soybean-pest interactions.

Data availability

All data and code used in this study are available in our GitHub repository (<u>https://github.com/almeidasilvaf/SoyPestGCN_paper</u>) to ensure full reproducibility.

Acknowledgements

This work was supported by Fundação Carlos Chagas Filho de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (FAPERJ; grants E-26/203.309/2016 and E-26/203.014/2018), Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior - Brasil (CAPES; Finance Code 001), and Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico. The funding agencies had no role in the design of the study and collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and in writing.

Author contributions

Conceived the study: FA-S and TMV. Data analysis: FA-S. Funding, project coordination and infrastructure: TMV. Manuscript writing: FA-S and TMV.

Conflicts of interest: none.

11

REFERENCES

- Almeida-Silva, F., Moharana, K.C., Machado, F.B., and Venancio, T.M. (2020). Exploring the complexity of soybean (Glycine max) transcriptional regulation using global gene co-expression networks. Planta **252**: 1–12.
- Almeida-Silva, F. and Venancio, T.M. (2022a). BioNERO: an all-in-one R/Bioconductor package for comprehensive and easy biological network reconstruction. Functional & Integrative Genomics 22: 131–136.
- Almeida-Silva, F. and Venancio, T.M. (2021a). cageminer: an R/Bioconductor package to prioritize candidate genes by integrating GWAS and gene coexpression networks. bioRxiv: 1–9.
- Almeida-Silva, F. and Venancio, T.M. (2021b). Integration of genome-wide association studies and gene coexpression networks unveils promising soybean resistance genes against five common fungal pathogens. Scientific Reports **11**.
- Almeida-Silva, F. and Venancio, T.M. (2022b). Pathogenesis-related protein 1 (PR-1) genes in soybean: Genome-wide identification, structural analysis and expression profiling under multiple biotic and abiotic stresses. Gene 809: 146013.
- Bandara, A.Y., Weerasooriya, D.K., Bradley, C.A., Allen, T.W., and Esker, P.D. (2020). Dissecting the economic impact of soybean diseases in the United States over two decades. PLoS ONE 15: 1–28.
- Bao, Y., Vuong, T., Meinhardt, C., Tiffin, P., Denny, R., Chen, S., Nguyen, H.T., Orf, J.H., and Young, N.D. (2014). Potential of Association Mapping and Genomic Selection to Explore PI 88788 Derived Soybean Cyst Nematode Resistance. The Plant Genome 7: plantgenome2013.11.0039.
- **Baxter, I.** (2020). We aren't good at picking candidate genes, and it's slowing us down. Current Opinion in Plant Biology **54**: 57–60.
- Van Bel, M., Diels, T., Vancaester, E., Kreft, L., Botzki, A., Van De Peer, Y., Coppens, F., and Vandepoele, K. (2018). PLAZA 4.0: An integrative resource for functional, evolutionary and comparative plant genomics. Nucleic Acids Research 46: D1190– D1196.
- Brown, A. V, Conners, S.I., Huang, W., Wilkey, A.P., Grant, D., Weeks, N.T., Cannon, S.B., Graham, M.A., and Nelson, R.T. (2020). A new decade and new data at SoyBase, the USDA-ARS soybean genetics and genomics database. Nucleic Acids Research 13: 1–6.
- **Chang, H.X. and Hartman, G.L.** (2017). Characterization of insect resistance loci in the USDA soybean germplasm collection using genome-wide association studies. Frontiers in Plant Science **8**: 1–12.
- Chang, H.X., Lipka, A.E., Domier, L.L., and Hartman, G.L. (2016). Characterization of disease resistance loci in the USDA soybean germplasm collection using genome-wide association studies. Phytopathology **106**: 1139–1151.
- **Cooper, D.N.** (2010). Functional intronic polymorphisms: Buried treasure awaiting discovery within our genes. Hum Genomics **4**: 284–288.
- **Depuydt, T. and Vandepoele, K.** (2021). Multi-omics network-based functional annotation of unknown Arabidopsis genes. The Plant Journal **n/a**.
- Dixit, S., Upadhyay, S.K., Singh, H., Sidhu, O.P., Verma, P.C., and Chandrashekar, K. (2013). Enhanced methanol production in plants provides broad spectrum insect resistance. PLoS ONE 8: 1–13.
- Hanson, A.A., Lorenz, A.J., Hesler, L.S., Bhusal, S.J., Bansal, R., Michel, A.P., Jiang, G., and Koch, R.L. (2018). Genome-Wide Association Mapping of Host-Plant Resistance to Soybean Aphid. The Plant Genome 11: 1–12.

- Koenning, S.R. and Wrather, J.A. (2010). Suppression of Soybean Yield Potential in the Continental United States by Plant Diseases from 2006 to 2009. Plant Health Progress 11: 5.
- **Kourelis, J. and Van Der Hoorn, R.A.L.** (2018). Defended to the Nines: 25 years of Resistance Gene Cloning Identifies Nine Mechanisms for R Protein Function. Plant Cell.
- Li, W., Deng, Y., Ning, Y., He, Z., and Wang, G.L. (2020). Exploiting Broad-Spectrum Disease Resistance in Crops: From Molecular Dissection to Breeding. Annual Review of Plant Biology 71: 575–603.
- Liu, H., Che, Z., Zeng, X., Zhang, G., Wang, H., and Yu, D. (2016). Identification of single nucleotide polymorphisms in soybean associated with resistance to common cutworm (Spodoptera litura Fabricius). Euphytica 209: 49–62.
- Liu, S., Ge, F., Huang, W., Lightfoot, D.A., and Peng, D. (2019). Effective identification of soybean candidate genes involved in resistance to soybean cyst nematode via direct whole genome re-sequencing of two segregating mutants. Theoretical and Applied Genetics **132**: 2677–2687.
- Machado, F.B., Moharana, K.C., Almeida-Silva, F., Gazara, R.K., Pedrosa-Silva, F., Coelho, F.S., Grativol, C., and Venancio, T.M. (2020). Systematic analysis of 1,298 RNA-Seq samples and construction of a comprehensive soybean (Glycine max) expression atlas. The Plant Journal: 0–2.
- **Michno, J.M., Liu, J., Jeffers, J.R., Stupar, R.M., and Myers, C.L.** (2020). Identification of nodulation-related genes in Medicago truncatula using genome-wide association studies and co-expression networks. Plant Direct **4**: 1–10.
- Natukunda, M.I., Parmley, K.A., Hohenstein, J.D., Assefa, T., Zhang, J., Macintosh, G.C., and Singh, A.K. (2019). Identification and Genetic Characterization of Soybean Accessions Exhibiting Antibiosis and Antixenosis Resistance to Aphis glycines (Hemiptera: Aphididae). Journal of Economic Entomology **112**: 1428–1438.
- Ning, Y. and Wang, G.L. (2018). Breeding plant broad-spectrum resistance without yield penalties. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A **115**: 2859–2861.
- **Obenchain, V., Lawrence, M., Carey, V., Gogarten, S., Shannon, P., and Morgan, M.** (2014). VariantAnnotation: A Bioconductor package for exploration and annotation of genetic variants. Bioinformatics **30**: 2076–2078.
- Oliveira, C.M., Auad, A.M., Mendes, S.M., and Frizzas, M.R. (2014). Crop losses and the economic impact of insect pests on Brazilian agriculture. Crop Protection **56**: 50–54.
- **Torkamaneh, D., Lemay, M.-A., and Belzile, F.** (2021). The Pan-genome of the Cultivated Soybean (PanSoy) Reveals an Extraordinarily Conserved Gene Content. Plant Biotechnology Journal **n/a**.
- Tran, D.T., Steketee, C.J., Boehm, J.D., Noe, J., and Li, Z. (2019). Genome-wide association analysis pinpoints additional major genomic regions conferring resistance to soybean cyst nematode (Heterodera glycines ichinohe). Frontiers in Plant Science 10: 1–13.
- Vosman, B., van't Westende, W.P.C., Henken, B., van Eekelen, H.D.L.M., de Vos, R.C.H., and Voorrips, R.E. (2018). Broad spectrum insect resistance and metabolites in close relatives of the cultivated tomato. Euphytica 214.
- Vuong, T.D., Sonah, H., Meinhardt, C.G., Deshmukh, R., Kadam, S., Nelson, R.L., Shannon, J.G., and Nguyen, H.T. (2015). Genetic architecture of cyst nematode resistance revealed by genome-wide association study in soybean. BMC Genomics **16**: 1–13.
- Woolfe, A., Mullikin, J.C., and Elnitski, L. (2010). Genomic features defining exonic variants that modulate splicing. Genome Biology 11.
- Zhang, J., Wen, Z., Li, W., Zhang, Y., Zhang, L., Dai, H., Wang, D., and Xu, R. (2017). Genome-wide association study for soybean cyst nematode resistance in Chinese elite soybean cultivars. Molecular Breeding 37.

13



Zhao, X., Teng, W., Li, Y., Liu, D., Cao, G., Li, D., Qiu, L., Zheng, H., Han, Y., and Li,



Figure 1. Data summary and genomic distribution of SNPs. A. Frequency of SNPs and RNA-seq samples

included in this study. B. Genomic coordinates of resistance SNPs against each pest species. The outer track represents gene density, whereas inner tracks represent the SNP positions for each species. C. SNP distribution across chromosomes. Overall, there is an uneven distribution of SNPs across chromosomes. D. Genomic location of SNPs. Most SNPs are located in intergenic regions.



Figure 2. Upset plot with overlaps of candidate gene sets across fungal and pest species. Most candidate genes against *S. litura* are shared with *A. glycines*, suggesting a core defense against insects. However, insect resistance-related genes are not shared with nematode resistance-related genes. This suggests that insects and nematodes trigger different players of plant immunity. A small number of candidate resistance genes against pests are shared with *Fusarium sp.* resistance-related gene sets. Candidate resistance genes against fungi were retrieved from (Almeida-Silva and Venancio, 2021b).

16



Figure 3. Prioritized candidate resistance genes and their putative role in plant immunity. Numbers in circles represent absolute frequencies of resistance genes against *Aphis glycines* (gold), *Heterodera glycines* (gray), and *Spodoptera litura* (green). PRR, pattern recognition receptor. PAMP, pathogen-associated molecular pattern. MAPKKK, mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase. MAPKK, mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase. SAR, systemic acquired resistance. RBOH, respiratory burst oxidase homolog. ROS, reactive oxygen species. RLK, receptor-like kinase. Figure designed with Biorender (biorender.com).

SoyPestGCN	≡				
Choose network: Insect GCN	blueviolet	0.53 Scaled degree	<u>[.11</u>	Yes Hub status	*
Enter gene ID: Glyma.01G000400 -	Module enrichment			Search:	-
The input gene IDs must be based on the Wm82.a2.v1 assembly. Your	Term	11	P_adj ↓↑	Category	ţţ.
input gene will not be present in the network if its median expression	All	All		All	
across samples is lower than 5 TPM.	cytosol		3.66539753667883e-53	GO	
	ribonucleoprotein complex		6.26463877089055e-50	GO	
	protein-containing complex		1.9978520158676e-47	GO	
	intracellular non-membrane-bounded organelle		7.25567826045797e-46	GO	
SoyPestGCN	non-membrane-bounded organelle		7.25567826045797e-46	GO	
	cytosolic ribosome		3.03460599810713e-45	GO	
	ribosomal subunit		1.53893708826385e-44	GO	
	structural molecule activity		7.59238205914296e-41	GO	
	structural constituent of ribosome		1.53574432255274e-40	GO	
	ribosome		4.83307605202881e-38	GO	

Figure 4. Functionalities in the SoyPestGCN web application. Screenshot of the page users see when they access the application. In the sidebar, users can specify either the insect GCN or the nematode GCN followed by the ID of a gene of interest (Wm82.a2.v1 assembly). For each gene, users can see the gene's module (orange box), scaled degree (red box), hub gene status (green box), and an interactive table with enrichment results for MapMan bins, Interpro domains and Gene Ontology terms associated the gene's module. P-values from enrichment results are adjusted for multiple testing with Benjamini-Hochberg correction.

18

Tables

Table 1. GWAS included in this work. N, number of significant resistance-related SNPs in each study.

Reference	Organism	Ν
(Liu et al., 2019)	H. glycines	11
(Liu et al., 2016)	S. litura	6
(Zhang et al., 2017)	H. glycines	13
(Natukunda et al., 2019)	A. glycines	5
(Chang et al., 2016)	H. glycines	25
(Vuong et al., 2015)	H. glycines	16
(Zhao et al., 2017)	H. glycines	13
(Chang and Hartman, 2017)	A. glycines	1
(Tran et al., 2019)	H. glycines	12
(Bao et al., 2014)	H. glycines	6
(Hanson et al., 2018)	A. glycines	45

Table 2. Top 10 candidate resistance genes against each pest species and their putative roles in plant immunity. The predicted function for each gene was manually curated from the description of the best ortholog in *Arabidopsis thaliana*, using functional annotations from Soybase and TAIR.

Gene	Predicted function	Resistance to	Role
Glyma.07G021800	Chaperone, DnaJ domain	A. glycines	Translational regulation
Glyma.19G187200	UDP-glycosyltransferase	A. glycines	Signaling
Glyma.10G002200	Calmodulin	A. glycines	Signaling
Glyma.11G194500	Acyl-CoA synthetase	A. glycines	Phytohormone metabolism
Glyma.01G210200	Autophagy protein	A. glycines	Apoptosis
Glyma.04G085500	Lysophospholipase	A. glycines	Signaling
Glyma.01G238800	Sugar transporter	A. glycines	Transport
Glyma.19G018600	AAA-ATPase	A. glycines	Oxidative stress
Glyma.13G326800	Galactose oxidase	A. glycines	Physical barrier
Glyma.04G085600	Unknown orphan gene	A. glycines	Unknown
Glyma.06G195300	Protein of unknown function	S. litura	Unknown
Glyma.07G033100	ATP transporter	S. litura	Transport
Glyma.07G034400	KMD protein - Kelch repeat	S. litura	Phytohormone metabolism
Glyma.06G175400	RNA-binding protein	S. litura	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.05G194700	Protein of unknown function	S. litura	Unknown
Glyma.07G036400	Phospholipid:diacylglycerol acyltransferase	S. litura	Signaling
Glyma.12G059900	Glucose transporter	S. litura	Transport
Glyma.18G077500	Y-box transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.19G122700	MYB transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.13G169900	HD-Zip transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.09G245300	MYB transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.01G179900	Homeobox transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.16G053900	TCP transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.01G207300	HD-Zip transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.10G081700	HOX transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.16G051800	NAC transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation
Glyma.09G060200	bHLH transcription factor	H. glycines	Transcriptional regulation

Accession	Score	Potential	Species
PI468399A	57	0.582	A. glycines
PI532451	57	0.582	A. glycines
PI468916	56	0.571	A. glycines
PI468918	56	0.571	A. glycines
PI479750	56	0.571	A. glycines
PI479752	56	0.571	A. glycines
PI468400B	55	0.561	A. glycines
PI468399B	54	0.551	A. glycines
PI507793	54	0.551	A. glycines
PI479749	54	0.551	A. glycines
PI556949	66	0.673	H. glycines
PI84751	66	0.673	H. glycines
Peking	66	0.673	H. glycines
PI438497	66	0.673	H. glycines
PI548402	66	0.673	H. glycines
PI438342	64	0.653	H. glycines
PI549047	64	0.653	H. glycines
PI597461C	64	0.653	H. glycines
PI404166	64	0.653	H. glycines
PI437679	64	0.653	H. alycines

Table 3. Top 10 most resistant soybean accessions against each pest species. Overall, the best genotypes do not reach the maximum potential. None of the resistance SNPs for *S. litura* have been identified in the USDA SoySNP50k compendium and, hence, we could not predict resistance potential against this species.