

|                        |         |         |         |              |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|
| Phyton (Horn, Austria) | Vol. 32 | Fasc. 2 | 255-261 | 29. 12. 1992 |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|

## Proline Metabolism During Water Stress in Sweet Pepper (*Capsicum annuum* L.) Plant

By

Hameda EL SAYED\*)

With 2 Figures

Received September 10, 1991

Accepted March 9, 1992

Key words: Water stress, proline dehydrogenase, proline oxidase, sweet pepper, *Capsicum annuum* L.

### Summary

EL SAYED H. 1992. Proline metabolism during water stress in sweet pepper (*Capsicum annuum* L.) plant. – *Phyton* (Horn, Austria) 32 (2): 255–261, 2 figures. – English with German Summary.

The influence of water stress on proline metabolism was studied in 3-month-old sweet pepper plants at four levels of water stress. Leaf water potential was drastically decreased in all treatments. Though leaf area and relative water content were decreased, this was marked only in very severe stress conditions. In stress treatments proline accumulation was observed both in leaves and roots, particularly the latter. The enzymes, proline dehydrogenase and proline oxidase, were inhibited under stress conditions; proline oxidase was more inhibited in roots than in leaves. The significance of the relative activities of these two enzymes is discussed.

### Zusammenfassung

EL SAYED H. 1992. Prolinstoffwechsel bei Paprika (*Capsicum annuum* L.) unter Wasserstreß – *Phyton* (Horn, Austria) 32 (2): 255–261, 2 Abbildungen. – Englisch mit deutscher Zusammenfassung.

Der Einfluß von Wasserstreß auf den Prolinstoffwechsel wurde an 3 Monate alten Paprikapflanzen untersucht, wobei 4 Grade von Wasserstreß angewandt wurden. Das Wasserpotential der Blätter war bei allen Versuchsanordnungen sehr stark reduziert. Obwohl die Blattfläche und der relative Wassergehalt abnahmen, war dies nur unter sehr starken Streßbedingungen ausgeprägt. Unter Streßbedingungen wurde eine

---

\*) Dr. Hameda EL SAYED, Department of Biology, Faculty of Education, University of Tanta, Kafr El Sheikh, Egypt.

Prolinanreicherung in den Blättern, besonders aber in der Wurzel beobachtet. Die Enzyme Prolin-Dehydrogenase und Prolin-Oxidase waren unter Streßbedingungen inhibiert, wobei dies bei Prolin-Oxidase mehr für die Wurzel als für die Blätter zutrif. Die Signifikanz der relativen Aktivitäten dieser zwei Enzyme wird diskutiert.

### Introduction

A wide range of mechanisms for maintaining turgor by osmotic adjustment occurs in plants under water stress. One of these may be the accumulation of amino acids (JONES & al. 1980, MUNNS & WEIR 1981, TURNER & STEWART 1986), including higher concentrations of proline (BOGGESE & STEWART 1980, STEWART & VOETBERG 1985, HANDA & al. 1986). A higher level of proline during water stress, due to enhanced synthesis, is well established (BARNETT & NAYLOR 1966). There are also reports indicating the inhibition of proline oxidation in stressed plants (STEWART & al. 1977). Both proline oxidase and proline dehydrogenase are reported to catalyse proline oxidation and proline oxidase inhibition in water stressed spinach plants (HUANG & CAVALIERI 1979). Little information is available however, on the levels of DNA proline dehydrogenase in water stressed plants, although its occurrence in leaves of higher plants is well established (MAZELIS & FOWDEN 1971, MAZELIS & CREVELING 1974, McNAMER & STEWART 1974, STEWART & LAI 1974).

In the present study, the occurrence and relative activities of both proline oxidase and proline dehydrogenase in sweet pepper (*Capsicum annuum* L.) was investigated under different regimes of water stress.

### Materials and Methods

Cuttings of sweet pepper (*Capsicum annuum* L.) length 12–15 cm; diameter 0.8–1.2 cm, with 3 to 4 active buds were maintained in earthen pots (12" × 15") containing 4.0 kg of clay soil and farmyard manure (32:21). Three month old plants were subjected to water stress by daily adding the required volume of water in the morning to give 75%, 50%, 25%, 12.5% of field capacity or by withholding water and stress treatments were denoted as mild, moderate, severe and very severe respectively. Soil moisture content was determined by taking soil samples between 11 h and 12 h, and drying them in an oven at 120° C. Values are expressed as percentages on a wet weight basis. Leaf area and physiological variables were studied in the third, fourth, and fifth leaves from the apex and are given as mean values. The leaf area was measured by plotting the margins of the leaf on graph paper. The leaf relative water content was determined by the method of TURNER (1981). The leaf water potentials were measured by a dye method (KNIPLING 1967).

Free proline from roots and leaves was extracted in aqueous sulphosalicylic acid and estimated using ninhydrin according to the method of BATES & al. (1973). Proline dehydrogenase was extracted in 100 mol m<sup>-3</sup> phosphate buffer (pH 8.0) containing 1.0 mol m<sup>-3</sup> cysteine and 0.1 mol m<sup>-3</sup> EDTA and assayed by following NAD reduction in 3.0 cm<sup>3</sup> of reaction medium containing 100 mol m<sup>-3</sup> Na<sub>2</sub>CO<sub>3</sub> – NaHCO<sub>3</sub> buffer (pH 10.3), 20 mol m<sup>-3</sup> L-proline and 10 mol m<sup>-3</sup> NAD<sup>+</sup>, according to the method of RENA &

SPLITTSTOESSER (1975). Proline oxidase was assayed by following DCPIP reduction in mitochondrial preparations in 3.0 cm<sup>3</sup> reaction medium containing 50 mol m<sup>-3</sup> Tris – HCl (pH 8.5), %5.0 mol m<sup>-3</sup> MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 0.5 mol m<sup>-3</sup> FAD, 1.0 mol m<sup>-3</sup> KCN, 1.0 mol m<sup>-3</sup> phenazine methosulphate, 0.06 mol m<sup>-3</sup> DCPIP, and 100 mol m<sup>-3</sup> proline according to the method of HUANG & CAVALIERI (1979).

## Results and Discussion

The shoots of 3 month old plants possessed 3 to 4 branches with 10 fully expanded leaves. The root system was about 23 cm long with 8 branch roots. The plants began to wilt on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> day under very severe stress conditions, respectively. Hence, in the present study, observations were made on plants after 5 d of stress.

The soil moisture content ranged from 12.9% to 2.5% in very severe stress treatments. Leaf area and relative water contents decreased in all stress treatments, but a drastic reduction was observed only with the very severe stress treatment. Leaf water potential was drastically decreased in all stress treatments (from -19.9 bars under mild stress to -27.7 bars under very severe stress treatments) (Fig. 1).

The levels of free proline, proline oxidase, and proline dehydrogenase are presented in Fig. 2. The proline content increased in roots and leaves with increase in intensity of the water stress. It increased steadily from mild to very severe stress in both roots and leaves. The proline accumulation in response to stress was greater in roots than in leaves.

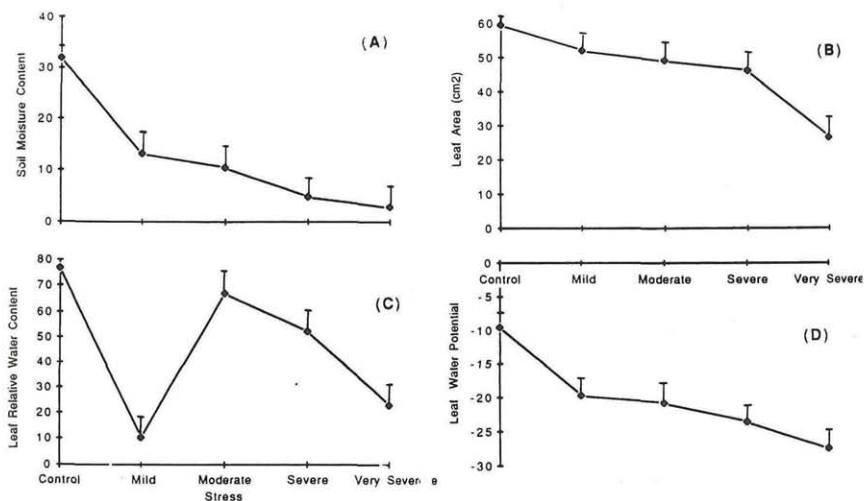


Fig 1. Percentage soil moisture content (A), leaf area (cm<sup>2</sup>) (B) relative water content (C), and water potential (bars) (D) in control and 5-days stress plants of *Capsicum annum* L. Values are means of five replicates  $\pm$  S.E.

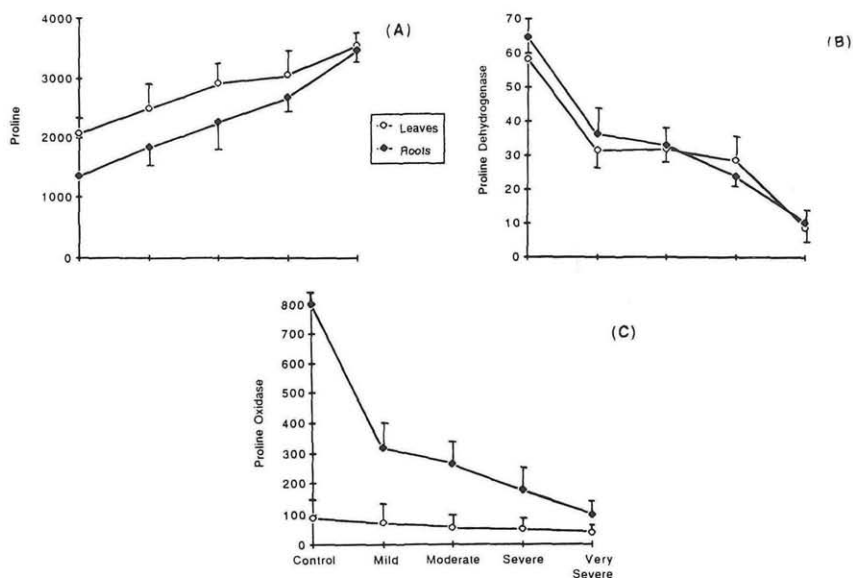


Fig 2. The levels of proline (mol Kg<sup>-1</sup> dry weight) (A) and activity of enzymes proline dehydrogenase (B) and oxidase (C) (nano katal g<sup>-1</sup> dry weight) in control and 5-d stressed leaves and roots of *Capsicum annuum* L. plants. Values are means of three replicates  $\pm$  S.E.

The activities of proline dehydrogenase and proline oxidase decreased as the intensity of stress increased. There was an almost 85% inhibition of proline dehydrogenase activity in very severely stressed roots and leaves. In control plants proline oxidase activity was higher in roots than in leaves, and under stress conditions the inhibition was greater in roots than in leaves. In stressed leaves, proline dehydrogenase was inhibited to a greater extent than proline oxidase.

The moderate decrease in leaf area and relative water content under mild to severe stress treatments in contrast to the dramatic decrease under very severe stress treatments indicates partial turgor maintenance in these leaves, since leaf expansion and area depend on the turgor of the cells. Furthermore, despite a drastic reduction in leaf water potential, the turgor maintenance, may be due to osmotic adjustment as a result of accumulation of solutes, including higher levels of proline under stress conditions (JONES 1978, JONES & TURNER 1980, TURNER & STEWART 1986).

Proline accumulation in water stressed plants (BANSAL & NAGARAJAN 1986, NEWTON & al. 1986, BINZEL & al. 1987, REDDY 1987) is due to enhanced synthesis (HANDA & al. 1986), and decreased oxidation (STEWART & al. 1977). Furthermore, this proline accumulation was found to be independent of the



levels of ABA, which accumulates more rapidly in stressed leaves (STEWART & VOETBERG 1987). The oxidation of proline was catalysed by two enzymes, proline oxidase (HUANG & CAVALIERI 1979) and proline dehydrogenase (RENA & SPLITTSTOESSER 1975). The former is localized in the inner mitochondrial membrane and requires oxygen as the electron acceptor, while the latter is localized in the cytosol and occurs as an active site on a protein which also functions as pyrroline 5 carboxylate (P5C) reductase. P5C reductase and proline dehydrogenase catalyse reactions with the same reactions and co enzymes, but working in opposite directions (RENA & SPLITTSTOESSER 1975). In the present study, inhibition of both proline oxidizing enzymes was observed in leaves and roots of water stressed plants. Proline dehydrogenase activity was inhibited to a greater extent than proline oxidase. More proline accumulation in response to stress was observed in roots than in leaves, in contrast to earlier observations (BARNETT & NAYLOR 1966, SINGH & PALEG 1972). ROGOZINSKA & FLASINSKE (1987) have also observed higher proline levels in leaves than in roots of oil seed rape plants. The higher proline accumulation in roots may be explained by the higher inhibitory rates of both proline dehydrogenase and proline oxidase.

Several investigators have proposed the beneficial effects of proline accumulation as a compatible osmotic solute (HANDA & al. 1986), as a protein stabilizing or solubilizing factor under limiting cell water conditions (BOGGESE & STEWART 1980), and as a source of reduced nitrogen and carbon (TAYLOR & al. 1982). The precise physiological significance of proline in stressed plants however, has yet to be fully elucidated.

#### Acknowledgements

The author wishes to express appreciation to Dr. Ralp C. KIRKWOOD, Todd Center, Department of Bioscience and Biotechnology, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, G4 0NR, Scotland, U.K. for his help in editing this paper.

#### References

- BANSAL K. C. & NAGARAJAN S. 1986. Leaf water content, stomatal conductance and proline accumulation in leaves of potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) in response to water stress (drought resistance). – Ind. J. Plant Physiol. 29: 397–404.
- BARNETT N. M. & NAYLOR A. W. 1966. Amino acid and protein metabolism in *Bermuda* grass during water stress. – Plant Physiol. 41: 1222–1230.
- BATES L. S., WALDREN R. P. & TEARE I. D. 1973. Rapid determination of free proline for water stress studies. – Plant Soil 39: 205–208.
- BINZEL M. L., PAUL M. H., RHODES D., HANDA S., AVTAR K. H. & RAY A. B. 1987. Solute accumulation in tobacco cells adapted to NaCl cells of *Nicotiana tabacum* L. – Plant Physiol. 84: 10408–10415.
- BOGGESE S. F. & STEWART C. R. 1980. The relationship between water stress induced proline accumulation and inhibition of protein synthesis in tobacco leaves. – Plant. Sci. Lett. 17: 245–252.

- HANDA S., HANDA A. K., PAUL M. H. & RAY A. B. 1986. Proline accumulation and the adaptation of cultured plant cells to water stress. – *Plant Physiol.* 80: 938–945.
- HUANG A. H. C. & CAVALIERI A. J. 1979. Proline oxidase and water stress induced proline accumulation in spinach leaves. – *Plant Physiol.* 63: 531–535.
- JONES M. M. 1978. Osmotic adjustment in leaves of Sorghum in response to water deficits. – *Plant Physiol.* 61: 122–126.
- OSMOND L. B. & TURNER N. C. 1980. Accumulation of solutes in leaves of sorghum and sunflower with respect to water deficit. – *Aust. J. Plant Physiol.* 7: 193–205.
  - & TURNER N. C. 1980. Osmotic adjustment in expanding and fully expanded leaves of sunflower in response to water deficits. – *Aust. J. Plant Physiol.* 7: 181–192.
- KNIPLING E. B. 1967. Measurement of leaf water potential by dye method. – *Ecology* 48: 1038–1041.
- MAZELIS M. & CREVELING R. K. 1974. L-Proline dehydrogenase of *Triticum vulgare* germ: Purification properties and co-factors interaction. – *Phytochem.* 13: 559–565.
- & FOWDEN L. 1971. The metabolism of proline in higher plants. II L-proline dehydrogenase from cotyledons of germinating peanut (*Arachis hypogaea* L.) seedlings. – *J. Exp. Bot.* 22: 137–145.
- McNAMER A. D. & STEWART C. R. 1974. Nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide dependent proline dehydrogenase in *Chlorella*. – *Plant Physiol.* 53: 440–444.
- MUNNS R. & WEIR R. 1981. Contribution of sugars to osmotic adjustment in elongation and expanded zone of wheat leaves during moderate water deficit at two light levels. – *Aust. J. Plant Physiol.* 8: 93–105.
- NEWTON R. J., SEN S. & PURYEAR J. D. 1986. Tree proline changes in *pinus taeda* L. callus in response to drought stress (growth, water potential, desiccation tolerance). – *Tree Physiol.* 1: 325–332.
- REDDY P. S. 1987. Studies on the influence of water stress during germination and early seedling growth of some pulse crops. – Ph. D. Thesis, Sri Krishnadevaray University, Anantapur, India.
- RENA A. B. & SPLITTSTOESSER W. E. 1975. Proline dehydrogenase and pyrroline-5-carboxylate reductase from pumpkin cotyledons. – *Phytochem* 14: 657–661.
- ROGOZINSKA J. & FLASINSKE S. 1987. The effect of nutrient salt and osmotic stress on proline accumulation on oil seed rape plants. – *Acta Physiol. Plant.* 9: 61–68.
- SINGH T. N. A. D. & PALEG L. G. 1972. Proline accumulation and varietal adaptability to drought in barley: a potential metabolic measure of drought resistance. – *Nature New Biology* 236: 188–190.
- STEWART C. R. & LAI E. Y. 1974. Pyrroline -5- carboxylic acid dehydrogenase in mitochondrial preparation from plant seedlings. – *Plant Sci. Lett.* 3: 173–181.
- & VOETBERG G. 1985. Relationship between stress induced ABA and proline accumulation and ABA induced proline accumulation in excised barley leaves. – *Plant Physiol.* 79: 24–27.
  - & — 1987. Absciscic acid accumulation is not required for proline accumulation in wilted leaves. – *Plant Physiol.* 83: 747–749.
  - BOGGESS S. F., ASPINALL D. & PALEG L. G. 1977. Inhibition of proline oxidase by water stress. – *Plant Physiol.* 59: 930–932.

- TAYLOR A. A., FELICE J. D. E. & HAVILL D. C. 1982. Nitrogen metabolism in *Poterium sanguisorva*. 90: 19-25.
- TURNER C. N. 1981. Techniques and experimental for the measurement of plant water stress. – *Plant Soil*, 58: 339-366.
- & STEWART C. R. 1986. The effect of water stress upon polyamine levels in barley (*Hordeum vulgare* L.) leaves. – *J. Exp. Bot.* 37: 170-177.

Phyton (Horn, Austria) 32 (2): 261-262 (1992)

## Recensio

LOVETT DOUST Jon & LOVETT DOUST Lesley (Eds.) 1990. **Plant Reproductive Ecology**. Patterns and Strategies. – Gr. 8°, XIII + 344 Seiten, 25 Abb.; brosch. – Oxford University Press New York, London. – £ 19,50. – ISBN 0-19-506394-5.

Der vorliegende Band ist die Paperback-Ausgabe eines 1988 erschienenen Buches. Die 15 von Spezialisten im jeweiligen Fach geschriebenen Kapitel sind zu drei Abschnitten gruppiert. Da es nicht möglich ist, hier alle Beiträge zu besprechen, seien als Hinweise auf den Inhalt die Titel angeführt.

1. Conceptual issues in plant breeding systems: J. & L. LOVETT DOUST, sociobiology of plants: an emerging synthesis (p. 5). R. I. BERTIN, paternity in plants (p. 30). D. HAIG & M. WESTOBY, inclusive fitness, seed resources, and maternal care (p. 60). P. A. COX, monomorphic and dimorphic sexual strategies: a modular approach (p. 80). S. C. H. BARRETT, the evolution, maintenance, and loss of self-incompatibility systems (p. 98). Th. R. MEAGHER, sex determination in plants (p. 125). M. A. SCHLESSMAN, gender diphasy ("sex choice") (p. 139).

2. Ecological forces: M. ZIMMERMAN, nectar production, flowering phenology, and strategies for pollination (p. 157). Th. D. LEE, patterns of fruit and seed production

# ZOBODAT - [www.zobodat.at](http://www.zobodat.at)

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

Zeitschrift/Journal: [Phyton, Annales Rei Botanicae, Horn](#)

Jahr/Year: 1992

Band/Volume: [32\\_2](#)

Autor(en)/Author(s): El Sayed Hamed, Kirkwood Ralph C.

Artikel/Article: [Proline Metabolism During Water Stress in Sweet Pepper \(\*Capsicum annuum\* L.\) Plant. 255-261](#)