

## **Detection of the Trp-2027-Cys Mutation in Fluazifop-P-Butyl–Resistant Itchgrass (*Rottboellia cochinchinensis*) Using High-Resolution Melting Analysis (HRMA)**

Authors: Barrantes-Santamaría, Walter, Castillo-Matamoras, Rolbin, Herrera-Murillo, Franklin, Brenes-Angulo, Arturo, and Gómez-Alpízar, Luis

Source: Weed Science, 66(3) : 286-292

Published By: Weed Science Society of America

URL: <https://doi.org/10.1017/wsc.2018.3>

---

BioOne Complete ([complete.BioOne.org](https://complete.BioOne.org)) is a full-text database of 200 subscribed and open-access titles in the biological, ecological, and environmental sciences published by nonprofit societies, associations, museums, institutions, and presses.

Your use of this PDF, the BioOne Complete website, and all posted and associated content indicates your acceptance of BioOne's Terms of Use, available at [www.bioone.org/terms-of-use](https://www.bioone.org/terms-of-use).

Usage of BioOne Complete content is strictly limited to personal, educational, and non - commercial use. Commercial inquiries or rights and permissions requests should be directed to the individual publisher as copyright holder.

---

BioOne sees sustainable scholarly publishing as an inherently collaborative enterprise connecting authors, nonprofit publishers, academic institutions, research libraries, and research funders in the common goal of maximizing access to critical research.

## Special Topics

**Cite this article:** Barrantes-Santamaría W, Castillo-Matamoras R, Herrera-Murillo F, Brenes-Angulo A, Gómez-Alpizar L (2018) Detection of the Trp-2027-Cys Mutation in Fluazifop-P-butyl-resistant Itchgrass (*Rottboellia cochinchinensis*) using High-Resolution Melting Analysis (HRMA). Weed Sci 66:286–292. doi: 10.1017/wsc.2018.3

Received: 18 August 2017

Accepted: 16 December 2017

## Associate Editor:

Franck E. Dayan, Colorado State University

## Key words:

ACCase inhibitors; genotyping; grass weeds; resistance; SNPs

## Author for correspondence:

Walter Barrantes-Santamaría, Estación Experimental Agrícola Fabio Baudrit, Universidad de Costa Rica, Alajuela, 11501-2060, Costa Rica.  
(Email: walter.barrantes@ucr.ac.cr)

# Detection of the Trp-2027-Cys Mutation in Fluazifop-P-butyl-resistant Itchgrass (*Rottboellia cochinchinensis*) using High-Resolution Melting Analysis (HRMA)

Walter Barrantes-Santamaría<sup>1</sup>, Rolbin Castillo-Matamoras<sup>2</sup>, Franklin Herrera-Murillo<sup>1</sup>, Arturo Brenes-Angulo<sup>2</sup> and Luis Gómez-Alpizar<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Researcher, Estación Experimental Agrícola Fabio Baudrit, Universidad de Costa Rica, Alajuela, Costa Rica and <sup>2</sup>Researcher, Laboratorio de Biotecnología de Plantas, Centro de Investigaciones Agronómicas, Universidad de Costa Rica, Costa Rica

## Abstract

Itchgrass [*Rottboellia cochinchinensis* (Lour.) Clayton] is recognized as one of the most noxious and troublesome annual weeds in tropical and subtropical regions. Acetyl-coenzyme A carboxylase (ACCase)-inhibiting herbicides have been frequently used for managing *R. cochinchinensis* POST in a variety of crops, resulting in evolved resistance to these herbicides. Recently, resistance to fluazifop-P-butyl has been demonstrated for this weed, as the result of a G-to-C single-nucleotide polymorphism (SNP) that leads to the Trp-2027-Cys substitution in the ACCase enzyme. This study was conducted to develop a high-resolution melting analysis (HRMA) for the detection of the mutation underlying the Trp-2027-Cys substitution. The HRMA assay allowed differentiating between fluazifop-P-butyl-resistant (C mutant) and susceptible (G wild type) *R. cochinchinensis* plants. HRMA accuracy was confirmed with DNA sequencing of the target-site mutation, and no false positives or negatives were observed. Our results illustrated how HRMA is effective detecting the Trp-2027-Cys substitution in an *R. cochinchinensis* resistance, and how this technique can be of great value for developing high-throughput programs for monitoring evolution and dispersion of target site-based herbicide resistance at large scales.

## Introduction

Itchgrass [*Rottboellia cochinchinensis* (Lour.) Clayton] is recognized as one of the most noxious and troublesome annual weeds in tropical and subtropical regions (Bolfrey-Arku et al. 2011; Leon et al. 2015). In the Americas, it is frequently found from the Gulf of Mexico to the Caribbean regions of Central and South America (Leon et al. 2015), where it causes serious problems, including yield reduction, in several annual crops such as beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.), cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz.), cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum* L.), maize (*Zea mays* L.), peanut (*Arachis hypogaea* L.), pineapple [*Ananas comosus* (L.) Merr.], sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum* L.), and rice (*Oryza sativa* L.), and in perennial crops such as banana (*Musa* sp.), citrus (*Citrus* spp.), mango (*Mangifera indica* L.), and oil palm (*Elaeis guineensis* Jacq.) at early growth stages (Bolfrey-Arku et al. 2011).

Over the last decade, acetyl-coenzyme A carboxylase (ACCase)-inhibiting herbicides, which selectively inhibit the homomeric plastidic form of ACCase (EC.6.4.1.2) (Kaundun 2014), have been extensively used for managing *R. cochinchinensis* POST in a variety of crops (Avila et al. 2007; Heap 2014, 2017). However, populations of *R. cochinchinensis* in Bolivia (Avila et al. 2007), Costa Rica (Castillo-Matamoras et al. 2016), and the United States (Heap 2017) have evolved resistance to ACCase inhibitors, including fluazifop-P-butyl, haloxyfop-R-methyl, fenoxaprop, and cyhalofop-butyl from the APP group, and clethodim and sethoxydim from the cyclohexanedione (CHDs/DIMs) chemistry. Resistance to these herbicides has made the management of this important weed more difficult and expensive. Therefore, a reliable, rapid, and simple diagnosis of resistance is necessary to maintain herbicide efficacy by preventing further spread of herbicide-resistant plants and improving the implementation of integrated resistance management strategies (Beffa et al. 2012; Burgos et al. 2013).

Resistance to ACCase herbicides, as with other herbicide modes of action, is widely divided into target-site (TSR) and non-target site (NTSR) resistance mechanisms. TSR is due to target-gene mutations, while NTSR is due to enhanced rates of herbicide metabolism (metabolic resistance) (Kaundun 2014).

Different approaches have been used to determine resistance to ACCase herbicides, including conventional whole-plant pot assay and molecular methods (Burgos 2015; Burgos et al. 2013;

© Weed Science Society of America, 2018.  
This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.



Délye et al. 2013; Singh et al. 2015). The former method is the most widely used and reliable test to assess herbicide resistance (Burgos 2015; Burgos et al. 2013). However, it presents several disadvantages, such as being labor-intensive, time- and space-consuming, and it takes at least 30 d to provide results and can show variation depending on application conditions and genotype by environment interactions. In addition, it cannot definitively identify the type of resistance (i.e., whether it is due to mutations or a physiological mechanism) (Beffa et al. 2012). Molecular methods, on the other hand, could overcome most of these drawbacks, allowing for quick and precise detection of novel and known mutations associated with TSR, enabling the development of high-throughput herbicide-resistance diagnostics (Beffa et al. 2012; Burgos et al. 2013; Délye et al. 2013; Singh et al. 2015). Non-target site metabolic resistance is more difficult to determine.

TSR to ACCase-inhibiting herbicides is based on point mutations (single-nucleotide polymorphisms [SNPs]) occurring at seven codon positions in the carboxyl-transferase (CT) domain of plastid-localized ACCase that prevent or reduce herbicide binding (Jang et al. 2013; Kaundun 2014; Liu et al. 2007). To date, 14 nonsynonymous mutations, (Ile-1781 to Leu/Val/Arg/Thr, Trp-1999 to Cys/Leu/Ser, Trp-2027 to Cys, Ile-2041 to Asn/Val, Asn-2078 to Gly, Cys-2088 to Arg, and Gly-2096 to Ala/Ser) within the CT domain have been reported as conferring resistance (Beckie and Tardif 2012; Kaundun 2014). Recently, resistance to fluzifop-P-butyl in *R. cochinchinensis* has been demonstrated to be due to a Trp-to-Cys substitution at position 2027 of the plastidic ACCase. This mutation arises from a change of a guanine (G) residue to a cytosine (C) at the third position in the cognate tryptophan codon (Castillo-Matamoros et al. 2016).

Currently, the most common molecular method used for detection of SNPs associated with resistance to ACCase-inhibiting herbicides is the amplification of the CT domain by polymerase chain reaction (PCR), followed by sequencing for confirmation (Burgos et al. 2013; Kaundun 2014). However, both the labor and costs involved in PCR-DNA sequencing are limiting factors for routine application of this method for herbicide-resistance detection (Burgos et al. 2013). Several alternative methods, including cleaved amplified polymorphic sequence (Kaundun et al. 2012; Scarabel et al. 2014) and derived cleaved amplified polymorphic sequence (Délye et al. 2011; Kaundun and Windass 2006), both forms of PCR-restriction fragment-length polymorphism and PCR of specific alleles (PASA) (Délye et al. 2002; Raghav et al. 2016), PCR-single-strand conformation polymorphism (Singh et al. 2015), and real-time PCR (RT-PCR) (Kaundun et al. 2006), have been developed for allele-specific detection enabling the discrimination of resistant and susceptible individuals. Further methods like loop-mediated isothermal amplification (Pan et al. 2015), pyrosequencing (Hess et al. 2012; Petersen et al. 2010), and SNaPshot assay (Alarcón-Reverte et al. 2013) have also been developed; however, most of these methods require post-PCR handling (separation of PCR products in a gel or other matrix to detect sequence variation), making these less suitable for high-throughput analysis, in addition to being costly and able to only a few specific mutations (Burgos 2015; Burgos et al. 2013).

High-resolution melting analysis (HRMA) is a method that detects SNPs in target regions without the need for sequencing (Reed et al. 2007). It is simple, rapid, sensitive, effective, cost-effective, and closed-tube (no post-PCR handling needed) (Reed et al. 2007; Simko 2016; Tong and Giffard 2012); thus it might be suitable as a quick diagnostic method for herbicide resistance.

Furthermore, HRMA is a nondestructive method, which means that subsequent analysis of the sample by other methods like DNA sequencing or gel electrophoresis is possible (Liu et al. 2014). The method involves PCR amplification of the mutation-containing region in the presence of a saturating double-stranded DNA (dsDNA)-binding dye followed by a melting (denaturation/dissociation into single-stranded DNA [ssDNA]) step. The dye shows high levels of fluorescence when bound (dsDNA), but has minimal fluorescence in the unbound (ssDNA) state. Therefore, the addition of the dye to the PCR reaction results in the generation of fluorescence proportional to the amount of the dsDNA amplicon present in the reaction tube. After PCR is completed, the amplicon (typically 50- to 200-bp long) is gradually denaturated by increasing the temperature in small increments (ca. 0.01 to 0.2 °C). The temperature increase causes a progressive decrease in the fluorescence signal as the two strands of dsDNA melt apart, which is monitored in real time and plotted (fluorescence intensity vs. temperature) to produce a characteristic melting profile (melting analysis) for the amplicon. The melting profile is dependent on GC content, length, sequence and complementary of DNA strands (Reed et al. 2007; Simko 2016; Tong and Giffard 2012) and the melting temperature at which 50% of the DNA is in the double-stranded state can be approximated by taking the derivative of the melting curve (Liu et al. 2014).

HRMA has been successfully applied for screening of SNPs in genes associated with antibiotic (mainly in human pathogens) (Nagai et al. 2013; Tong and Giffard 2012), fungicide (Chatzidimopoulos et al. 2015; Curvers et al. 2015; Samaras et al. 2016), and insecticide (Pasay et al. 2008) resistance. To the best of our knowledge, no prior study has evaluated HRMA for diagnosis and screening mutations involved in ACCase-inhibitor resistance. Therefore, the objective of this study was to develop an HRMA assay that effectively and consistently detected the Trp-2027-Cys mutation associated with ACCase-inhibitor resistance in *R. cochinchinensis*.

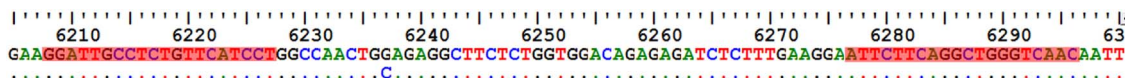
## Materials and Methods

### Primer Design

A pair of primers was designed using Primer3Plus program (<http://www.bioinformatics.nl/cgi-bin/primer3plus/primer3plus.cgi>) based on a 292-bp CT domain of the ACCase gene sequence alignment from fluzifop-P-butyl-susceptible and fluzifop-P-butyl-resistant *R. cochinchinensis* plants (GenBank accession numbers: KM592092 and KM592093; Castillo-Matamoros et al. 2016): RottF: 5'-GTTGACCCAGCCTGAAGAAT-3' and RottR: 5'-GGATTGCCTCTGTTTCATCCT-3'. Primers amplify an 89-bp fragment containing the target polymorphic site TGG (Trp)/TGC (Cys), codon 2027 (according to blackgrass [*Alopecurus myosuroides* Huds.] numbering, GenBank accession no. AJ310767); responsible for the mutation Trp-2027-Cys, associated with resistance to ACCase-inhibiting herbicides (Figure 1). Primers were synthesized by Macrogen (Seoul, South Korea).

### DNA Extraction

Total genomic DNA was extracted from fresh leaf tissue of 3-wk-old herbicide-resistant and herbicide-susceptible seedlings, as described in Castillo-Matamoros et al. (2016). The DNA samples were then diluted to 1:5 (10 ng  $\mu\text{L}^{-1}$  working concentration) and stored at  $-20^\circ\text{C}$  until further use.



**Figure 1.** Sequence alignment showing the single-nucleotide change (G/C) within the chloroplastic acetyl-coenzyme A carboxylase gene carboxyl-transferase domain fragments from *Rottboellia cochinchinensis* susceptible (G) and resistant (C) biotypes. The sequences of the HRMA primers are colored in red. Position numbers (*Alopecurus myosuroides* full ACCase sequence, GenBank AJ310767, numbering) are given above the nucleotide sequences. Conserved nucleotides are indicated by dots.

### RT-PCR HRMA

The RT-PCR reaction mixture (10 µl total volume) contained 5 µl of 2X HRM PCR master mix, including the ds-DNA-binding fluorescent EvaGreen dye (Type-it HRM PCR Kit, Qiagen, Hilden, Germany), forward (RottF) and reverse (RottR) primers (0.7 µl each of 10 µM working stocks), 2 µl genomic DNA, and 2.3 µl RNase-free water. The reactions were set up in a Rotor-Gene Q RT-PCR system (Qiagen) under the following conditions: 95 °C for 5 min, followed by 40 cycles of 10 s at 95 °C, and then 30 s at 55 to 60 °C. HRMA was performed immediately following the completion of PCR amplification. The temperature was raised from 65 to 85 °C at 0.1 °C increments with a 2-s hold time for each acquisition step. Rotor Gene Q software (Qiagen) was used to set up the sample arrangement, to define PCR conditions, for monitoring the amplification in real time, and for viewing and analyzing the melting curves.

To study the ability of the HRMA assay to detect heterozygous variants present in an *R. cochinchinensis* population, artificial heterozygotes (heteroduplex) were created by mixing PCR products (post-PCR mixing) of wild-type and mutant homozygotes using a mixing ratio of 1:1 (Cheng et al. 2011) to simulate heterozygous genotype. All three genotypes were subjected to HRMA as described earlier.

### Sequencing of PCR Products

To verify the HRMA results, DNA samples were PCR amplified using the same HRMA primers. PCR amplification was performed in a final volume of 25 µl including 2 µl of crude DNA extract, 2.5 µl 10X DreamTaq PCR reaction buffer (Thermo Fisher Scientific, Waltham, MA), 1 µl of each primer (10 µM), 2 µl of nucleotide mix (2 mM), 1.7 µl of MgCl<sub>2</sub> (25 mM), 1.0 µl of bovine serum albumin (20 mg ml<sup>-1</sup>), and 0.25 µl of DreamTaq polymerase (5 U/µl) (Thermo Fisher Scientific), with ddH<sub>2</sub>O added to a final volume of 25 µl. The cycling conditions were DNA denaturation for 30 s at 95 °C, 37 cycles of 10 s at 95 °C, 15 s at 60 °C (first set of primers) or 61 °C (second set of primers), and 45 s at 72 °C; and finally, a 10-min extension time at 72 °C. The amplification was checked in a 1.6% agarose gel containing GelRed and visualized under UV light. PCR products were sequenced according to the Sanger method by MacroGen in two directions using the PCR primers. Sequences were aligned and compared using BioEdit Sequence Alignment Editor Software (Hall 1999).

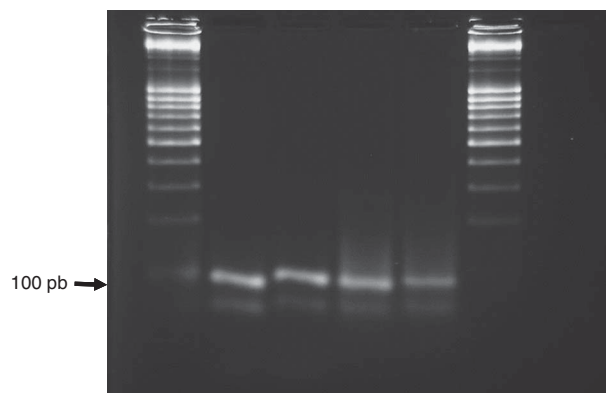
### Quantification of HRMA Accuracy

DNA extraction and analysis was done from 10 susceptible and 10 resistant *R. cochinchinensis* individuals based on the fluzifop-P-butyl-resistance characterization previously done by Castillo-Matamoros et al. (2016). After DNA extraction and sequencing as described earlier, DNA samples were blindly analyzed to identify fluzifop-P-butyl-resistant and fluzifop-P-butyl-susceptible plants using HRMA. Sequencing and HRMA results were compared to quantify HRMA accuracy.

### Results and Discussion

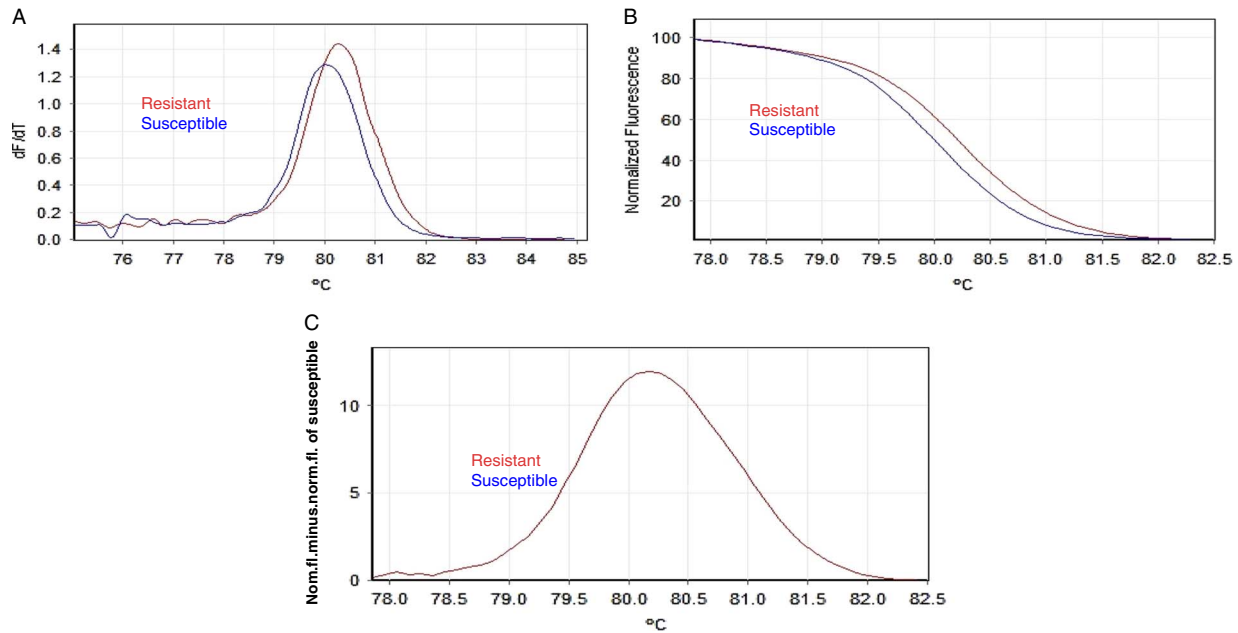
The primers used successfully amplified all samples tested with conventional PCR (Figure 2) and produced a single band of 89 bp. No nonspecific bands were observed. Robust, specific PCR is one of the main determinants for a successful application of HRMA for SNP detection (Reed et al. 2007). PCR products were kept short (89 bp), because the size of the amplicon and GC content have a significant impact on the accurate discrimination and identification of alleles. PCR amplicons of relatively small length increased the melting temperature (T<sub>m</sub>) shift between two sequences that differed at only one nucleotide position, thereby making them easier to differentiate (Curvers et al. 2015; Gundry et al. 2008). Although there are multiple primers available in the literature to amplify domains with mutations known to confer herbicide resistance (Délye et al. 2002, 2011), it is likely that those primers will not be appropriate to conduct HRMA, because they amplify relatively long DNA sequences (Liew et al. 2004; Reed et al. 2007). Therefore, to apply this method to other species and genes, specific primers for sequences close to the mutation of interest, such as those used in the present study, should be designed to increase the ability of the HRMA to distinguish between resistant and susceptible individuals.

With HRMA, a combination of differences in T<sub>m</sub>, normalized curve shape, and difference plots were used to discriminate sequence variation. The amplicons with a saturating fluorescent dye were melted to generate melting curves (Figures 3a and 4a), normalized plots (Figures 3b, 4b, and 5a), and difference plots (Figures 3c, 4c, and 5b). The latter shows the relative melting curves with reference to the susceptible (wild-type, TGG) biotype (Figures 3c, 4c, and 5b, horizontal blue line). The fluzifop-P-butyl-resistant *R. cochinchinensis* biotype (mutant with the C sequence) was clearly differentiated from the susceptible biotype (wild type with the G sequence). Both homozygous biotypes (susceptible and resistant) produced melt curves that were similar in shape, but the PCR amplicon from resistant biotype melted at a higher temperature than the susceptible biotype



**Figure 2.** Agarose gel (1,8%) showing polymerase chain reaction products (89 bp) of the chloroplastic acetyl-coenzyme A carboxylase gene carboxyl-transferase domain targeted by HRMA primers RottF and RottR.

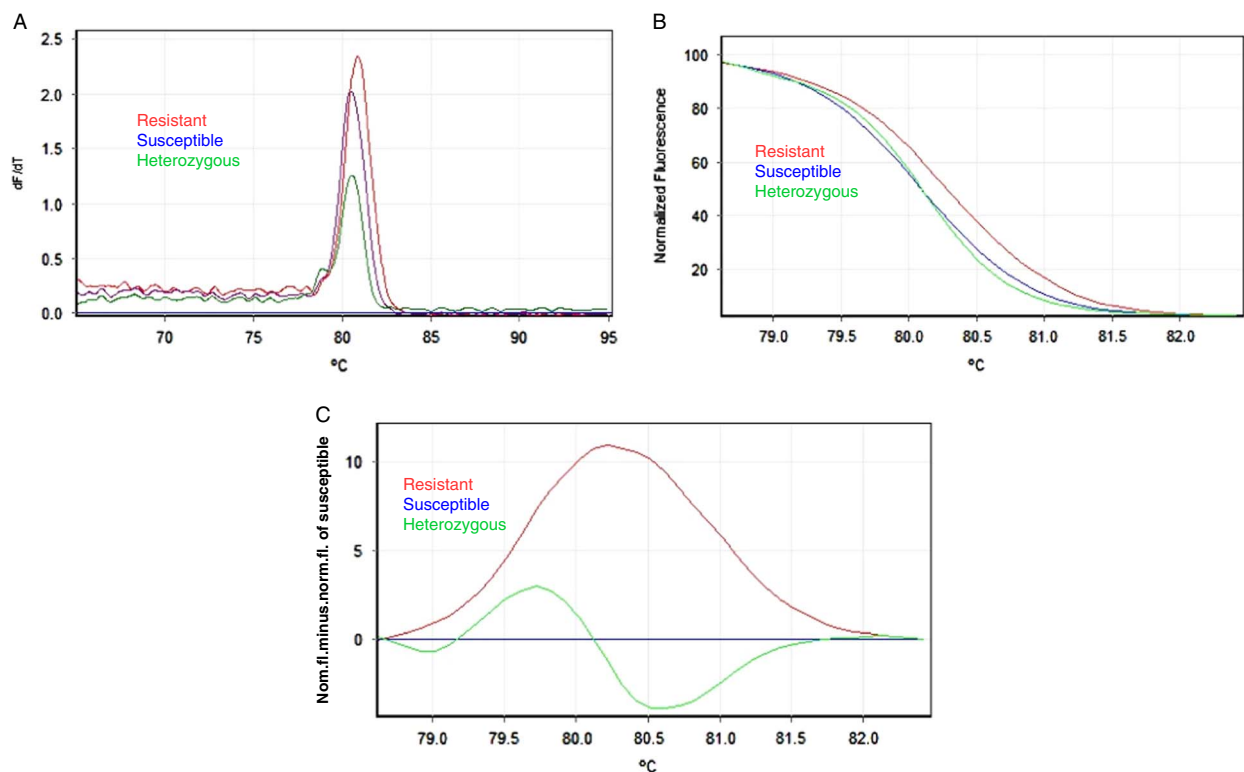




**Figure 3.** High-resolution melting analysis (HRMA) for detection of mutation Trp-2027-Cys in the *Rottboellia cochinchinensis* carboxyl-transferase domain of the acetyl-coenzyme A carboxylase gene conferring resistance to fluzifop-P-butyl. Representative profiles of the melting curves (derivative melt curves) (A), normalized melt curves (B) and differential curves using susceptible (wild type) as reference genotype (C) for resistant (TGC, in red) and susceptible plants (wild type, TGG in blue at x-axis level).

(80.78 vs. 80.37 °C). This  $T_m$  difference (0.41 °C) is considered significant, because it lies in the range of 0.2 to 0.5 °C expected for a G-to-C transversion (class III SNP) (Curvers et al. 2015).

On the other hand, the artificial heterozygote was distinguished by a change in melting curve shape and slope (Figure 4b). The differential plot enhances visualization of the curve shape in an



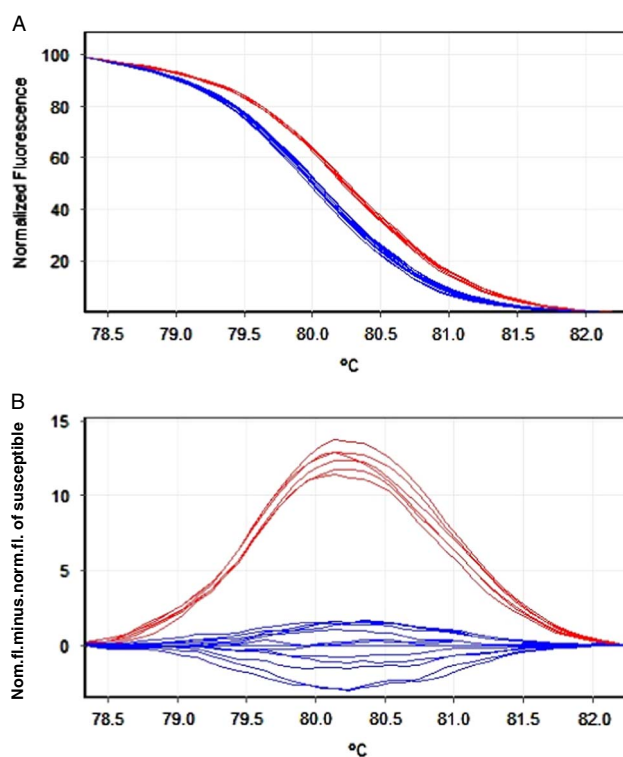
**Figure 4.** High-resolution melting analysis (HRMA) for detection of mutation Trp-2027-Cys in the *Rottboellia cochinchinensis* carboxyl-transferase domain of the acetyl-coenzyme A carboxylase gene conferring resistance to fluzifop-P-butyl. Three genotypes are included: wild type (homozygous TGG, susceptible), mutant homozygous (TGC, resistant), and artificial mutant heterozygous (TGG/TGC, possibly resistant). (A) Representative profiles of the melting curves (derivative melt curves), (B) normalized plot, and (C) difference plot using susceptible (wild type) as the reference genotype.

easier way, and the three genotypes were easily distinguished (Figure 4c). To date, point mutations occurring at seven codon positions in the CT domain of chloroplastic ACCase lead to ACCase-inhibitor resistance. Resistant plants may carry one or several of these mutations in the homozygous or heterozygous states (Kaundun 2014); however, to date, only homozygous 2027-Cys fluazifop-P-methyl-resistant *R. cochinchinensis* plants have been detected (Castillo-Matamoros et al. 2016). Furthermore, this does not preclude the presence of heterozygous resistant plants with the 2027 allele in the population, as has been shown for this mutation in other resistant grass weeds (Délye et al. 2008).

Our findings were in agreement with the detection sensitivity of HRMA regarding heterozygous variants (Cheng et al. 2011). Therefore, the HRMA we developed should discriminate between homozygous and heterozygous *R. cochinchinensis* plants for the mutant 2027 allele. Although a validation with real heterozygous samples is needed, previous research has demonstrated that identification of heterozygotes is easy and consistent with HRMA, but depending on the sequence of the amplicon, the presence of heterozygotes could create an apparent homozygote signal (Liew et al. 2004). However, because most target-site mutations for herbicide resistance are dominant, this potential error does not prevent the detection of the resistant allele. Discrimination between homozygous and heterozygous resistant individuals is an advantage over other methods, such as PASA or the loop-mediated isothermal amplification method currently in use for detection of ACCase-inhibitor resistance (Burgos et al. 2013). Also, this characteristic should allow for the analysis of composite samples composed of multiple individuals or even multiple populations, reducing the number of samples needed to identify localities or regions where the resistance mutation is present.

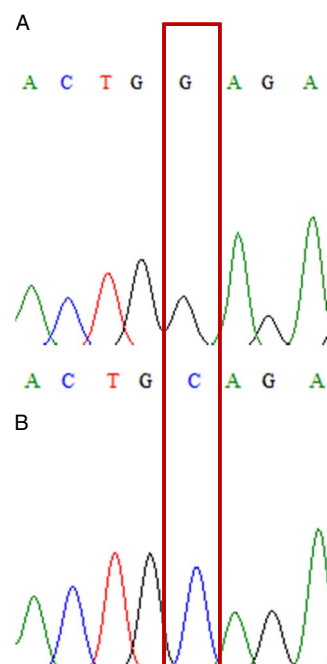
Normalized (Figure 5a) and difference plots (Figure 5b) showed a clear clustering of resistant and susceptible alleles in the samples. Additionally, DNA sequences of the target region (Figure 6) perfectly matched those obtained using HRMA, and no false-positive or false-negative signals were detected. These results showed that HRMA is a suitable alternative method to sequencing for detection of mutations conferring resistance to ACCase-inhibiting herbicides, which is also advantageous for possible use in geographical regions where access to sequencing is limited. Nonetheless, equipment cost is rather high, meaning that there is a substantial initial investment required and the method is likely to be applied by laboratories with good financial support (Chatzidimopoulos et al. 2014).

While HRMA has many advantages over other methods for detection of ACCase mutations, there are some limitations similar to those stated for fungicide-resistance detection by Samaras et al. (2016). The most important limitation is the need for reference controls. Reference and unknown samples should be analyzed at the same time to allow for direct comparison of the melting curves to control variations between sample runs. Nonetheless, once a standard curve for the reference is defined, unknown samples may be analyzed by comparing the unknown sample curve with the reference curve, which will allow for the comparison of results from different laboratories (Ganopoulos et al. 2013; Samaras et al. 2016). Nevertheless, this procedure should be adopted with caution, as results may be influenced by several factors, such as DNA extraction procedure (quantity and quality), reaction mix composition, and instrument used (Ganopoulos et al. 2013). A second limitation is that this method is qualitative and does not provide a quantitative measure like the frequency of alleles within a population (Samaras et al. 2016). Finally, it is important to



**Figure 5.** High-resolution melting analysis (HRMA) for detection of the Trp-2027-Cys mutation in *Rottboellia cochinchinensis* carboxyl-transferase domain of the acetyl-coenzyme A carboxylase gene conferring resistance to fluazifop-P-butyl. (B) Normalized plot and (C) difference plot using susceptible (wild type) as the reference genotype.

take into consideration in a large-scale monitoring program the probability for the presence of natural polymorphisms, which are not necessarily implicated in resistance (Kaundun 2014), in the amplified products that might change the melting profile of the



**Figure 6.** Direct sequence results of two genotypes of the Trp-2027-Cys (G > C) mutation in *Rottboellia cochinchinensis* samples. (A) Wild type and (B) mutant type.

amplicon, leading to false positives related to wild type. This probability is considered low for the plastidic ACCase gene due to its relatively conserved nature (Kaudun 2014). Also, keeping the length of the PCR amplicon as small as possible reduces the risk for detection of natural polymorphisms. Moreover, *R. cochinchinensis* plants carrying another ACCase-inhibitor resistance mutation outside the PCR fragment flanked by the primers will appear to be susceptible although they are resistant (false negative).

A strategy frequently used in mutation screening is to pool multiple samples to reduce the number of samples to be analyzed, thus increasing the efficiency of the screen, while reducing overall costs of the assay. The method we developed can be integrated into this type of monitoring system by allowing for composite samples from different regions (i.e., each sample containing multiple populations of the same region) to be processed first, and once a positive sample is detected, a second analysis of individual populations to identify the population where the resistant allele is present can be made. Finally, sequencing can be used to confirm the positive results. It has been shown that HRMA can detect mutations in samples containing from 1% to 10% of mutant DNA in the background of wild-type DNA (Liu et al. 2014), although using composite samples may lower sensitivity, thus making it more difficult to detect mutations that are present at low frequency in a wild-type background (Li et al. 2010; Simko 2016). Therefore, further titration studies are needed to identify the number of samples that can be combined to identify the resistant mutation in a predominantly susceptible sample.

Many ACCase herbicide-resistant grass weed species are polyploids (auto- and allopolyploids) with multiple homologous plastidic ACCase gene copies containing ACCase-resistant mutations (Beckie and Tardif 2012; Yu et al. 2013). Although it was not assessed in this study, small amplicon analysis using HRMA also proved to be a sensitive and consistent method for SNP genotyping and assaying allelic dosage in polyploidy species (Han et al. 2012; Simko 2016).

Although we acknowledge that further evaluation should be carried out on a larger number of samples, the RT-PCR HRMA presented in this study has the potential to be used in a routine manner as a high-throughput technique for genotyping fluzifop-P-butyl resistance in *R. cochinchinensis* based on the C/G mutation (Trp-2027-Cys) within the amplified ACCase gene fragment. This method could be extended to other resistance-associated mutations within the ACCase gene and also to other target-site mutation herbicide-resistance mechanisms in other species.

**Acknowledgments.** The authors would like to thank Ramon Leon from North Carolina State University and Paul Esker from Penn State University for their input and critical review of the article.

## References

- Alarcón-Reverte R, Hanley S, Kaundun SS, Karp A, Moss SR (2013) A SNaPshot assay for the rapid and simple detection of known point mutations conferring resistance to ACCase inhibiting herbicides in *Lolium* spp. *Weed Res* 53:12–20
- Avila W, Bolaños A, Valverde BE (2007) Characterization of the cross resistance mechanism to herbicides inhibiting acetyl coenzyme-A carboxylase in itchgrass (*Rottboellia cochinchinensis*) biotypes from Bolivia. *Crop Prot* 26:342–348
- Beckie HJ, Tardif FJ (2012) Herbicide cross-resistance in weeds. *Crop Prot* 35:15–28
- Beffa R, Figge A, Lorentz L, Hess M, Laber B, Ruiz-Santaella JP, Strek H (2012) Weed resistance diagnostic technologies to detect herbicide resistance in cereal growing areas. A review. *Julius-Kuhn-Archiv* 434:75–80
- Bolfrey-Arku GE-K, Chauhan BS, Johnson DE (2011) Seed germination ecology of itchgrass (*Rottboellia cochinchinensis*). *Weed Sci* 59:182–187
- Burgos NR (2015) Whole-plant and seed bioassays for resistance confirmation. *Weed Sci* 63(SP1): 152–165
- Burgos NR, Tranel PJ, Streibig JC, Davis VM, Shaner D, Norsworthy JK, Ritz C (2013) Review: confirmation of resistance to herbicides and evaluation of resistance levels. *Weed Sci* 61:4–20
- Castillo-Matamoros R, Brenes-Angulo A, Herrera-Murillo F, Gómez-Alpizar L (2016) Molecular basis for resistance to fluzifop-P-butyl in itchgrass (*Rottboellia cochinchinensis*) from Costa Rica. *Planta Daninha* 34:143–150
- Chatzidimopoulos M, Ganopoulos I, Madesis P, Vellios E, Tsafaris A, Pappas AC (2015) High-resolution melting analysis for rapid detection and characterization of *Botrytis cinerea* phenotypes resistant to fenhexamid and boscalid. *Plant Pathol* 63:1336–1343
- Chatzidimopoulos M, Ganopoulos I, Vellios E, Madesis P, Tsafaris A, Pappas AC (2014) Development of a two-step high-resolution melting (HRM) analysis for screening sequence variants associated with resistance to the QoIs, benzimidazoles and dicarboximides in airborne inoculum of *Botrytis cinerea*. *FEMS Microbiol Lett* 360:126–131
- Cheng J, Yim O-S, Low P-S, Tay SKH, Yap, Lai P-S (2011) Detection of hemi/homozygotes through heteroduplex formation in high-resolution melting analysis. *Anal Biochem* 410:158–160
- Curvers K, Pycke B, Kyndt T, Vanrompay D, Haesaert G, Gheysen G (2015) A high-resolution melt (HRM) assay to characterize CYP51 haplotypes of the wheat pathogen *Mycosphaerella graminicola*. *Crop Prot* 71:12–18
- Délye C, Jasieniuk M, Le Corre V (2013) Deciphering the evolution of herbicide resistance in weeds. *Trends Genet* 29:649–648
- Délye C, Matějček A, Gasquez J (2002) PCR-based detection of resistance to acetyl-CoA carboxylase-inhibiting herbicides in black-grass (*Alopecurus myosuroides* Huds.) and ryegrass (*Lolium rigidum* Gaud.). *Pest Manag Sci* 58:474–478
- Délye C, Matějček A, Michel S (2008) Cross-resistance patterns to ACCase-inhibiting herbicides conferred by mutant ACCase isoforms in *Alopecurus myosuroides* Huds. (black-grass), re-examined at the recommended herbicide field rate. *Pest Manag Sci* 64:1179–1186
- Délye C, Pernin F, Michel S (2011) “Universal” PCR assays detecting mutations in acetyl-coenzyme A carboxylase or acetolactate-synthase that endow herbicide resistance in grass weeds. *Weed Res* 51:353–362
- Ganopoulos I, Aravanopoulos F, Madesis P, Pasentsis K, Bosmali I, Ouzounis C, Tsafaris A (2013) Taxonomic identification of Mediterranean pines and their hybrids based on the high resolution melting (HRM) and trnL approaches: from cytoplasmic inheritance to timber tracing. *PLoS ONE* 8:e60945
- Gundry CN, Dobrowolski SF, Martin YR, Robbins TC, Nay LM, Boyd N, Coyne T, Wall MD, Wittwer CT, Teng DH (2008) Base-pair neutral homozygotes can be discriminated by calibrated high-resolution melting of small amplicons. *Nucleic Acids Res* 36:3401–3408
- Han Y, Khu D-M, Monteros MJ (2012) High-resolution melting analysis for SNP genotyping and mapping in tetraploid alfalfa (*Medicago sativa* L.). *Mol Breeding* 29:489–501
- Hall TA (1999) BioEdit: a user-friendly biological sequence alignment editor and analysis program for Windows 95/98/NT. *Nucleic Acids Symp Ser* 41:95–98
- Heap I (2014) Review: global perspective of herbicide-resistant weeds. *Pest Manag Sci* 70:1306–1315
- Heap I (2017) The International Survey of Herbicide Resistant Weeds. <http://www.weedscience.org/summary/MOASummary.asp>. Accessed: February 15, 2017
- Hess M, Beffa R, Kaiser J, Laber B, Menne H, Strek H (2012) Status and development of ACCase and ALS resistant black-grass (*Alopecurus myosuroides* Huds.) in neighboring fields in Germany. *Julius-Kuhn-Archiv* 434:163–170
- Jang SR, Marjanovic J, Gornicki P (2013) Resistance to herbicides caused by single amino acid mutations in acetyl-CoA carboxylase in resistant populations of grassy weeds. *New Phytol* 197:1110–1116
- Kaundun SS (2014) Resistance to acetyl-CoA carboxylase-inhibiting herbicides. *Pest Manag Sci* 70:1405–1417
- Kaundun SS, Cleere SM, Stanger CP, Burbidge JM, Windass JD (2006) Real-time quantitative PCR assays for quantification of L1781 ACCase inhibitor resistance allele in leaf and seed pools of *Lolium* populations. *Pest Manag Sci* 62:1082–1091

- Kaundun SS, Hutchings S-J, Dale RP, McIndoe E (2012) Broad resistance to ACCase inhibiting herbicides in a ryegrass population is due only to a cysteine to arginine mutation in the target enzyme. *PLoS ONE* 7: e39759
- Kaundun SS, Windass JD (2006) Derived cleaved amplified polymorphic sequence, a simple method to detect a key point mutation conferring acetyl CoA carboxylase inhibitor herbicide resistance in grass weeds. *Weed Res* 46:34–39
- Leon RG, Izquierdo J, González-Andújar J (2015) Characterization and modeling of itchgrass (*Rottboellia cochinchinensis*) biphasic seedling emergence patterns in the tropics. *Weed Sci* 63:623–630
- Li YD, Chu ZZ, Liu XG, Jing HC, Liu YG, Hao DY (2010) A cost-effective high-resolution melting approach using the EvaGreen dye for DNA polymorphism detection and genotyping in plants. *J Integr Plant Biol* 52:1036–1042
- Liew M, Pryor R, Palais R, Meadows C, Erali M, Lyon E, Wittwer C (2004) Genotyping of single-nucleotide polymorphisms by high-resolution melting of small amplicons. *Clin Chem* 50:1156–1164
- Liu W, Harrison DK, Chalupska D, Gornicki P, O'Donnell CC, Adkins SW, Haselkorn R, Williams RR (2007) Single-site mutations in the carboxyltransferase domain of plastid acetyl-CoA carboxylase confer resistance to grass-specific herbicides. *Proc Nat Acad Sci USA* 104: 3627–3632
- Liu YP, Wu HY, Yang X, Xu HQ, Chen D, Huang Q, Fu WL (2014) Diagnostic accuracy of high resolution melting analysis for detection of KRAS mutations: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Sci Rep* 4:7521
- Nagai Y, Iwade Y, Hayakawa E, Nakano M, Sakai T, Mitarai S, Katayama M, Nosaka T, Yamaguchi T (2013) High resolution melting curve assay for rapid detection of drug-resistant *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. *J Infect Chemother* 19:1116–1125
- Pan L, Li J, Zhang W, Dong L (2015) Detection of the I1781L mutation in fenoxaprop-p-ethyl-resistant American sloughgrass (*Beckmannia syzigachne* Steud.), based on the loop-mediated isothermal amplification method. *Pest Manag Sci* 71:123–130
- Pasay C, Arlian L, Morgan M, Vyszynski-Moher D, Rose A, Holt D, Walton S, McCarthy J (2008) High-resolution melt analysis for the detection of a mutation associated with permethrin resistance in a population of scabies mites. *Med Vet Entomol* 22:82–88
- Petersen J, Dresbach-Runkel M, Wagner J (2010) A method to determine the pollen-mediated spread of target site resistance to acetyl coenzyme A carboxylase inhibitors in black grass (*Alopecurus myosuroides* Huds.). *J Plant Dis Protect* 117:122–128
- Raghav N, Singh R, Chhokar RS, Sharma D., Kumar R (2016) Mutations in the plastidic ACCase gene endowing resistance to ACCase-inhibiting herbicide in *Phalaris minor* populations from India. *3 Biotech* 6:12
- Reed GH, Kent JO, Wittwer CT (2007) High-resolution DNA melting analysis for simple and efficient molecular diagnostics. *Pharmacogenomics* 8:597–608
- Samaras A, Madesis P, Karaoglanidis GS (2016) Detection of *sdhB* gene mutations in SDHI-resistant isolates of *Botrytis cinerea* using high resolution melting (HRM) analysis. *Front Microbiol* 7:1815
- Scarabel L, Panozzo S, Savoia W, Sattin M (2014) Target-site ACCase-resistant johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*) selected in summer dicot crops. *Weed Technol* 28:307–331
- Simko I (2016) Review: high-resolution DNA melting analysis in plant research. *Trends Plant Sci* 21:528–537
- Singh R, Sharma D, Raghav N, Chhokar RS, Sharma I (2015) Molecular genotyping of herbicide resistance in *P. minor*: ACCase resistance. *Appl Biochem Biotechnol* 175:1617–1621
- Tong SYC, Giffard PM (2012) Microbiological applications of high-resolution melting analysis. *J Clin Microbiol* 50:3418–3421
- Yu Q, Ahmad-Hamdani MS, Han H, Christoffers MJ, Powles SB (2013) Herbicide resistance-endowing ACCase gene mutations in hexaploid wild oat (*Avena fatua*): insights into resistance evolution in a hexaploid species. *Heredity* 110:220–231