

## Polymorphic information content of SSR markers for *Coffea* spp.

Robson Fernando Missio<sup>1</sup>, Eveline Teixeira Caixeta<sup>2,3\*</sup>, Eunize Maciel Zambolim<sup>2</sup>, Laércio Zambolim<sup>2</sup>, Cosme Damião Cruz<sup>4</sup>, and Ney Sussumu Sakiyama<sup>2</sup>

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**ABSTRACT** - Thirty-three coffee SSR primers from enriched genomic library with (GT)<sub>15</sub> and (AGG)<sub>10</sub> repeats were analyzed in 24 coffee tree accessions. Twenty-two primers were polymorphic among accessions; the number of alleles ranged from 2 to 13, with the mean number of 5.1 alleles per primer. PIC values ranged from 0.08 to 0.79. The highest mean PIC values were found for *C. canephora* (0.46), and the lowest values for *C. arabica* (0.22) and triploids (0.22) accessions. The polymorphic SSR markers used in this study were useful for genetic fingerprinting in the coffee tree, especially in the *C. canephora* and the leaf rust resistant arabica cultivars.

**Key words:** SSR, arabica coffee, molecular markers, genomic DNA libraries enriched, PIC.

### INTRODUCTION

The *Coffea* genus consists of 103 known species, of which *Coffea arabica* L. is the most important commercially and the most cultivated worldwide. Previous studies using different molecular markers showed low levels of polymorphism among *C. arabica* accessions (Poncet et al. 2006, Aggarwal et al. 2007, Missio et al. 2009a), hindering further genetic research in this species. Simple Sequence Repeats (SSRs) or microsatellite markers are potentially useful in this situation, especially for exploring highly variable regions of the genome among individuals or populations of the same species. Furthermore, SSRs have other relevant features, such as high reproducibility, codominant inheritance, and the possibility of automation.

Notwithstanding all the advantages of SSR molecular markers for genetic studies, few SSR primers

have been developed for coffee (Combes et al. 2000, Rovelli et al. 2000, Baruah et al. 2003, Moncada and McCouch 2004, Bhat et al. 2005, Poncet et al. 2006, Aggarwal et al. 2007, Hendre et al. 2008, Missio et al. 2009b), compared to other crops (<http://www.gramene.org/>). In this study, the potential of 33 SSR markers, developed from *C. arabica* were used for assessed the Polymorphism Information Content (PIC) in 24 accessions of the *Coffea* genus, including *C. arabica*. We also show here the potential these SSR markers for genetic fingerprinting in coffee tree.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

The genomic DNA of the *C. arabica* Bourbon Amarelo (UFV 570) genotype was extracted from leaves according to Diniz et al. (2005). The genomic DNA (50mg) was digested using the *EcoRI*, *NheI*, *HaeIII* and

<sup>1</sup> Universidade Federal do Paraná - Campus Palotina (UFPR), Rua Pioneiro, 2153, 85950-000, Palotina, PR, Brazil

<sup>2</sup> Universidade Federal de Viçosa (UFV), Laboratório de Biotecnologia do Cafeeiro (Biocafé), BIOAGRO, 36570-000, Viçosa, MG, Brazil

<sup>3</sup> Empresa Brasileira de Pesquisa Agropecuária, Embrapa Café, 36570-000, Viçosa, MG, Brazil. \*E-mail: eveline.caixeta@embrapa.br

<sup>4</sup> Universidade Federal de Viçosa (UFV), Departamento de Biologia Geral, 36570-000, Viçosa, MG, Brazil

*RsaI* restriction enzymes. Fragments were blunted with the *Mung Bean Nuclease* enzyme, dephosphorylated with *Calf intestinal phosphatase* and linked to the double strand SNX adapters (Hamilton et al. 1999). Enriching was done by DNA hybridization using two biotinylated SSR probes, (GT)<sub>15</sub> and (AGG)<sub>10</sub>. Enriched fragments were digested with *NheI* and linked to the *pBluescript* SK+ plasmid, previously digested with *XbaI*. Competent *Escherichia coli* DH5 $\alpha$  cells were transformed with the recombinant plasmids by thermal shock. Selection and diagnosis of white colonies was done by PCR using the T3 and T7 primers (Invitrogen). Colonies containing transformants with insertions over 400bp were selected. Positive clones were sequenced and the DNA fragments were analyzed using the CodonCode Aligner 1.6.3 (CodonCode Corporation) and the SSRIT software.

The PCR reaction were done in a 20 $\mu$ L volume containing 50ng of DNA, 0.6 U of *Taq* DNA polymerase and a 1 X buffer (Promega), 1mM of MgCl<sub>2</sub>, 150 $\mu$ M of each dNTP and 0.1mM of each primer. Amplification was performed in a PTC-200 Thermocycler (MJ Research) using a touchdown PCR procedure consisted

of initial denaturation at 94 °C/2min, followed by 13 cycles of denaturing at 94 °C/30s, annealing at 67 °C to 55 °C/30s, sinking 1 °C in each cycle, and extension at 72 °C/30s. The last 30 cycles were at 94 °C/30s, 55 °C/30s and 72 °C/30s, followed by final extension at 72 °C/8min. SSR marker polymorphism was verified in 6% silver stained denaturing polyacrylamide gel.

The potential of the 33 primer pairs as molecular markers was assessed in 24 accessions of the *Coffea* genus. The analysis included six arabica (*C. arabica*) accessions, five robusta accessions (*C. canephora*), three Híbrido de Timor (*C. arabica* x *C. canephora*), three Triploids (*C. arabica* x *C. racemosa*) and one racemosa (*C. racemosa*) accession. Six leaf rust resistant arabica were also included in this study (Table 1). The DNA of each of the 24 accessions was extracted from young leaves, according to the protocol described by Diniz et al. (2005).

The allele richness and the PIC (Polymorphism Information Content) were evaluated for each SSR marker. The allele richness was the number of alleles of each microsatellite *locus*. The PIC was calculated using

**Table 1.** Coffee tree accessions used in this study

Group	Accessions	Species (ploidy)
Arabica	UFV 2144 (Catuaí Vermelho IAC 44)	<i>Coffea arabica</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Arabica	Típica UFV 2945	<i>Coffea arabica</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Arabica	Bourbon UFV 2952	<i>Coffea arabica</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Arabica	Bourbon Amarelo UFV 535-1	<i>Coffea arabica</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Arabica	Arábica UFV 10832	<i>Coffea arabica</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Arabica	Bourbon Amarelo UFV 10745	<i>Coffea arabica</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Robusta	T 3751 (Robusta)	<i>Coffea canephora</i> (2n = 2x = 22)
Robusta	T 3580 (Robusta)	<i>Coffea canephora</i> (2n = 2x = 22)
Robusta	Conillon UFV 513 (Conillon)	<i>Coffea canephora</i> (2n = 2x = 22)
Robusta	Guarini UFV 514 (Robusta)	<i>Coffea canephora</i> (2n = 2x = 22)
Robusta	Apoatã IAC 2258 (Robusta)	<i>Coffea canephora</i> (2n = 2x = 22)
Híbrido de Timor	Híbrido de Timor CIFC 832/2	<i>C. arabica</i> x <i>C. canephora</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Híbrido de Timor	Híbrido de Timor CIFC 4106	<i>C. arabica</i> x <i>C. canephora</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Híbrido de Timor	Híbrido de Timor CIFC 1343/269	<i>C. arabica</i> x <i>C. canephora</i> (2n = 4x = 44)
Triploid	UFV 557-2	Triploid ( <i>C. arabica</i> x <i>C. racemosa</i> ) (2n = 3x = 33)
Triploid	UFV 557-3	Triploid ( <i>C. arabica</i> x <i>C. racemosa</i> ) (2n = 3x = 33)
Triploid	UFV 557-4	Triploid ( <i>C. arabica</i> x <i>C. racemosa</i> ) (2n = 3x = 33)
Racemosa	<i>Coffea racemosa</i>	<i>Coffea racemosa</i> (2n = 2x = 22)
Resistant arabica	Catiguá MG2	Commercial variety ( <i>C. arabica</i> x HT) (2n = 4x = 44)
Resistant arabica	IAPAR 59	Commercial variety ( <i>C. arabica</i> x HT) (2n = 4x = 44)
Resistant arabica	Oeiras MG6851	Commercial variety ( <i>C. arabica</i> x HT) (2n = 4x = 44)
Resistant arabica	Sacramento MG1	Commercial variety ( <i>C. arabica</i> x HT) (2n = 4x = 44)
Resistant arabica	Catucaí Amarelo 2SL	Commercial variety ( <i>C. arabica</i> x Icatu Vermelho) (2n = 4x = 44)
Resistant arabica	Obatã Amarelo IAC 4932	Commercial variety ( <i>C. arabica</i> x HT) (2n = 4x = 44)

the CENES software (<http://www.ufv.br/dbg/genes/genes.htm>) (Cruz 2007).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From the 33 primer pairs used in this study, named SSRCa, 26 (79%) amplified well-defined bands. Twenty two of them (67%) showed polymorphism among the 24 accessions. These polymorphic loci amplified 112 alleles, a mean 5.1 alleles per primer (Table 2).

PIC values of the polymorphic loci in the 24 *Coffea* accessions ranged from 0.08 to 0.79. The highest mean PIC values were found for *C. canephora* (0.46), while the lowest values were in *C. arabica* (0.22) and triploid (0.22) accessions. The low polymorphism found for *C. arabica* is in agreement with Baruah et al. (2003) work, and may be explained by the autogamous nature and the narrow genetic base of this species. All SSR primers were able to detect genetic differences between *C. arabica* and *C. canephora* populations, as well as among *C. canephora* and the remaining populations. This may be attributed to the *C. canephora* species allogamy, which results in high genetic variability. The SSRCa 018 and 091 had the highest PIC values (0.87 and 0.82) for *C. canephora* genotypes (Table 1). Primers with the highest PIC values for *C. arabica* were the SSRCa 094 (0.59), SSRCa 018 (0.54) and SSRCa 087 (0.54) (Table 2).

The SSRCa 018 and 091 primers were able to differentiate all robusta accessions (T 3751; T 3580; Guarini UFV 514 and Apatã IAC 2258, of the Robusta group; and UFV 513, of the Conillon group). These primers may be useful for genetic fingerprinting and certification of clonal commercial varieties derived from *C. canephora* (Missio et al. 2009a). The SSRCa 068 and 018 primer differentiated the IAPAR 59 cultivar among the others leaf rust resistant cultivar of arabica (Catiguá MG2, Oeiras MG6851, Sacramento MG1, Catucaí Amarelo 2SL and Obatã Amarelo IAC 4932) indicating the potential of this SSR markers in variety identification studies and in genetic fingerprinting (Figure 1).

The SSRCa 003, 016, 019, 020, 023, 026, 062, 078, 079, 082, 083, 091, 094 and 095 amplified not more than two alleles per individual in all accessions. The SSRCa 018, 052, 068, 080, 087, 088 and 092 revealed more two or four alleles per individual in some triploid and allotetraploid accessions (Figure 1). In the *Coffea* allotetraploid accessions, SSR markers may show diploid and tetraploid segregation. Markers behave as tetraploids when amplifying homologous regions in both ancestral genomes of the species, and as diploids when amplifying only one of the genomes. No primer in this study showed a higher than expected number of alleles per individual for tetraploid species (up to four alleles), triploid species (up to three alleles) and diploid species (up to two alleles), making them adequate for breeding and genetic studies.

**Figure 1.** Allelic variation revealed by SSRCa 068 (A), SSRCa 092 (B) and SSRCa 018 (C) primers. M: Molecular weight marker; C.a: *Coffea arabica*; C.c: *Coffea canephora*; HT: Híbrido de Timor; T: Triploids; C.r: *Coffea racemosa*; V: Leaf rust resistant arabica varieties

**Table 2.** The allele richness and Polymorphic Information Content of SSR loci for *Coffea* genus

Primer	Repeats	Primer sequence (5' → 3')	Size of frag. (bp)	Number of alleles: PIC						Total number of alleles: PIC
				C,c (n=5)	C,a (n=6)	HT (n=5)	T (n=5)	C,r <sup>1</sup>	V (n=6)	
SSRCa 003	(GT) <sub>12</sub>	F: ATGATTCGTAAGGTGGATGG R: CTAAGCCGC AAAATGACAGA	196	2/0.31	1/0.00	1/0.00	1/0.00	2	1/0.00	4/0.21
SSRCa 010*	(CT) <sub>6</sub>	F: GTTGA TTGGTGGAGTGTATTG R: AAGCA TCAAGTAAGGGAGGA	105	2/0.00	2/0.00	2/0.00	2/0.00	2	2/0.00	2/0.00
SSRCa 016	(GAA) <sub>f</sub> / (GGAAAG) <sub>3</sub>	F: AGCAGATCCATCCCTATCCCT R: CCACTAATCCATTCCTATCC	172	1/0.00	2/0.38	2/0.38	2/0.38	2	2/0.38	3/0.54
SSRCa 017*	(ATTTT) <sub>3</sub>	F: TATGATGGTTGCTTGGATG R: ATCCTACAAGCGGGTGTG	205	2/0.00	2/0.00	2/0.00	2/0.00	2	2/0.00	2/0.00
SSRCa 018	(GT) <sub>10</sub> / (GA) <sub>10</sub>	F: GTCCTGTTTCAACGCTCTC R: ATTTTGGCACGGTATGTTTC	115	9/0.87	3/0.54	2/0.38	3/0.54	2	3/0.54	13/0.74
SSRCa 019	(GA) <sub>11</sub>	F: GGGTTAGATAGAGCAAGAAATGA R: CTGTGAAGGTTGGAGGTTTT	329	4/0.67	1/0.00	2/0.24	2/0.7	1	1/0.00	4/0.44
SSRCa 020	(AGAGAGAGA) <sub>f</sub> / (TG) <sub>d</sub> / (ATT) <sub>6</sub>	F: GGTAGCCGAGAGACAGATAA R: TGGGGCAAGTGAAGATAAAG	264	1/0.00	1/0.00	1/0.00	1/0.00	1	1/0.00	3/0.08
SSRCa 023	(AATG) <sub>8</sub>	F: GACCTTCCTTTTGTG R: GCCATTCACCAATTCATTC	259	2/0.38	2/0.36	2/0.38	2/0.38	-	2/0.38	2/0.37
SSRCa 026	(T) <sub>10</sub> N <sub>12</sub> / (TC) <sub>7</sub> / (CA) <sub>8</sub>	F: GAATCTGGTGGCTTTGA R: AAAGAGAGGGGAGAAAATG	289	4/0.60	2/0.38	2/0.38	2/0.38	-	2/0.38	5/0.60
SSRCa 036*	(CA) <sub>8</sub>	F: ATGTTCTGTAACACACGTC R: GGTTCCTCATCTTTGTT	128	2/0.00	2/0.00	2/0.00	2/0.00	2	2/0.00	2/0.00
SSRCa 052	(TTG) <sub>8</sub>	F: GATGGAAACCCAGAAAGTTG R: TAGAAGGGCTTTGACTGGAC	129	3/0.34	2/0.38	3/0.15	2/0.38	1	3/0.36	4/0.46
SSRCa 062	(CAA) <sub>3</sub> / (AGAA) <sub>2</sub> / (AG) <sub>4</sub> N <sub>4</sub> / (GA) <sub>4</sub>	F: AAGTTATTAAGGCAAGAGTGA R: AAGTCCAAGACCAAGATG	275	2/0.38	2/0.38	2/0.38	2/0.38	1	2/0.38	3/0.37
SSRCa 063	(TG) <sub>3</sub> A(GT) <sub>3</sub> N(TG) <sub>4</sub>	F: CTCGGTGAATTTGCTTTT R: ACCACTTTTCTCCCTC	222	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SSRCa 064*	(TCT) <sub>3</sub>	F: TGCAGTAAAGTGAACCAACC R: TGGACTATCCATACATAACCA	242	2/0.00	2/0.00	2/0.00	2/0.00	2	2/0.00	2/0.00
SSRCa 068	(AGG) <sub>7</sub> / (GA) <sub>4</sub>	F: ATGTTGTTGGAGGCATTTTC R: AGGACCACTGATGTTTTC	236	2/0.31	1/0.00	4/0.26	1/0.00	-	2/0.14	4/0.38
SSRCa 078	(TCC) <sub>3</sub>	F: AGCCTCCCTHAGTTGTTCTC R: GGAAAGTCGTCAAGTTGTTT	210	2/0.27	1/0.00	1/0.00	1/0.00	-	1/0.00	2/0.10
SSRCa 079	(CCCT) <sub>2</sub> N <sub>3</sub> / (GAAA) <sub>3</sub>	F: AAGTGGAGAGTTTGTGGG R: CCAAGTGGATAGGTGGAGAG	287	2/0.37	1/0.00	1/0.00	1/0.00	2	1/0.00	3/0.19
SSRCa 080	(CA) <sub>8</sub> N <sub>8</sub> / (CT) <sub>10</sub>	F: GTTCTTCCCGTCAAT R: GAGAAGAGAGGAAAGGGA	250	4/0.72	1/0.00	4/0.61	2/0.44	-	4/0.71	10/0.79
SSRCa 081	(CT) <sub>38</sub>	F: ACCGTGTTGGATATCTTTG R: GGTGAACTAGACCTATTT	229	3/0.59	1/0.00	2/0.24	1/0.00	-	1/0.00	4/0.28
SSRCa 082	(CT) <sub>17</sub> CG(CT) <sub>8</sub>	F: GCTGTTTCCA TCGCTAAA R: TTAACAGTCAACCCCAAC	178	3/0.50	2/0.24	3/0.54	2/0.35	1	3/0.36	7/0.62
SSRCa 083	(TC) <sub>32</sub>	F: TCCAAACAATTAAAGCTATTC R: GACAAACCTGAGGAAAAGA	223	3/0.59	1/0.00	2/0.35	1/0.00	-	1/0.00	5/0.32
SSRCa 084	(CCA) <sub>8</sub> / (CAC) <sub>5</sub>	F: ATCGAAAAGATGTCAACCAT R: CAATTGAAGCCAGTGTG	157	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
SSRCa 085	(TC) <sub>24</sub>	F: ATGTGAAATGGAGGATG R: CACAGGAAAGTACACGAAG	105	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SSRCa 086	(AC) <sub>11</sub>	F: AGAGAGAAACCAATGATTTGA R: TCAGTCCAGAGAATAAGGA	105	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SSRCa 087	(TC) <sub>22</sub>	F: TCACTCTGAGACACACTAC R: GCAAGATGATCAAGTCC	143	4/0.57	3/0.54	4/0.67	3/0.13	1	4/0.53	8/0.65
SSRCa 088	(TTTCT) <sub>3</sub>	F: TACTCTCTCTCTCTCTCT R: ATTTCTATGGACCGGCAC	180	3/0.49	3/0.25	3/0.13	2/0.38	2	2/0.38	5/0.47
SSRCa 090	(GA) <sub>21</sub>	F: TGACTGATACATCCCTAAATG R: GATTTGGTTTCCCAATGTT	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SSRCa 091	(GT) <sub>8</sub> / (GA) <sub>10</sub>	F: CGTCTGATACACGCTCTC R: TGTCTCTGTTCTCTCTCT	110	8/0.82	3/0.48	2/0.35	1/0.00	-	3/0.46	10/0.60
SSRCa 092	(CCA) <sub>3</sub> CT(TCCACC) <sub>3</sub>	F: ATA GCCTGAGCCGTAACCA R: GGTAAATATGACGGGACA	142	4/0.64	2/0.38	3/0.15	2/0.38	2	2/0.38	6/0.56
SSRCa 093	(CT) <sub>37</sub>	F: TTGCTACAA TACCTGTCTCC R: CCCAATCTCTCCAATCT	196	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SSRCa 094	(TC) <sub>4</sub> / (TTCT) <sub>3</sub> / (TTTCT) <sub>3</sub> / (TTTCT) <sub>3</sub> / (TTTCT) <sub>3</sub>	F: GTGTCCTAGGAAAGGTTAA R: GATGCTAGGAGGAGGAG	195	2/0.30	3/0.59	2/0.38	2/0.38	1	2/0.24	4/0.49
SSRCa 095	(TG) <sub>11</sub>	F: GAGAGCCGAGTGAAGA R: GAGAAGAAGCCATGATTA	185	4/0.45	1/0.00	1/0.00	1/0.00	-	1/0.00	4/0.30
SSRCa 096	(CT) <sub>18</sub>	F: GAAATGGTGAACCTCTCTTGG R: AATTTGCATGGCTTTGGTG	183	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Mean				3.3/0.46	1.8/0.22	2.2/0.27	1.7/0.22	1.5	2.0/0.2	5.1/0.43

C.a: *Coffea arabica*; C.c: *Coffea canephora*; HT: H. B. de Tavora; F: Triphoid (*C. arabica* x *C. racemosa*); Cr: *Coffea racemosa*; V: rust-resistant commercial varieties; only one accession; (-) no amplification product; (+) primers that amplified multiple bands; \* monomorphic primers.

Although developed from *C. arabica*, all polymorphic loci obtained in this study amplified fragments in *C. canephora*, Híbrido de Timor and Triploid accessions. Thirteen of these (59%) were also validated for *C. racemosa* (Table 2). These results demonstrate the potential of these SSR markers for genetic studies in related species of *Coffea*. Cross-species transferability primers in *Coffea* has been observed previously for EST-SSR markers (Bhat et al. 2005, Aggarwal et al. 2007).

According to our results the 22 polymorphic SSR loci showed a considerable Polymorphic Information Content among the accessions of coffee, and can enable molecular advances,

especially in genetic studies of the *C. arabica* species. In addition, it was showed that it is possible to use these SSRs for coffee variety identification studies.

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# Conteúdo de informação polimórfica de marcadores SSR para *Coffea* spp.

**RESUMO** - Trinta e três primers SSR para o gênero *Coffea*, oriundos de biblioteca genômica enriquecida com repetições (GT)<sub>15</sub> e (AGG)<sub>10</sub>, foram analisados em 24 acessos de cafeeiros. Vinte e dois primers foram polimórficos entre os acessos; o número de alelos variaram de 2 a 13, com um número médio de 5,1 alelos por primer. Os valores de PIC variaram de 0,08 a 0,79. Os maiores valores médios de PIC foram encontrados para *C. canephora* (0,46), e os menores valores para acessos de *C. arabica* (0,22) e Triplóides (0,22). Os marcadores SSR polimórficos utilizados neste estudo foram úteis para fingerprinting genético em acessos de cafeeiros, especialmente em *C. canephora* e cultivares arábicas resistente a ferrugem.

**Palavras chave:** SSR, café arábica, marcadores moleculares, biblioteca genômica enriquecida, PIC.

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