

# Crazy roots with its crazy biological solutions



**Lien Bosmans\***, Wendy Vanlommel\*, Céline Gilli, Matthias Lutz, Pablo Vargas, Hans Rediers, Bart Lievens

15 January 2019

\*Research Centre Hoogstraten  
Voort 71, B-2328 Hoogstraten (Meerle)  
Tel.: +32 (0) 3 315 70 52  
[Lien.bosmans@proefcentrum.be](mailto:Lien.bosmans@proefcentrum.be)  
[www.proefcentrum.be](http://www.proefcentrum.be)

Symposium: monitoring and management of current and emerging plant pests and diseases in tomato and bell pepper

# Introduction

- Hairy root disease (HRD): rhizogenic agrobacteria
- First symptoms: 1970, UK
- Hydroponics: tomatoes, cucumber, eggplants
- Europe: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, the Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland, United Kingdom,...
- Other countries: Russia, Japan, New Zealand, USA,...

→ **Severe losses** in marketable yield



# Introduction

- Symptoms of Hairy Root Disease (HRD)



Healthy

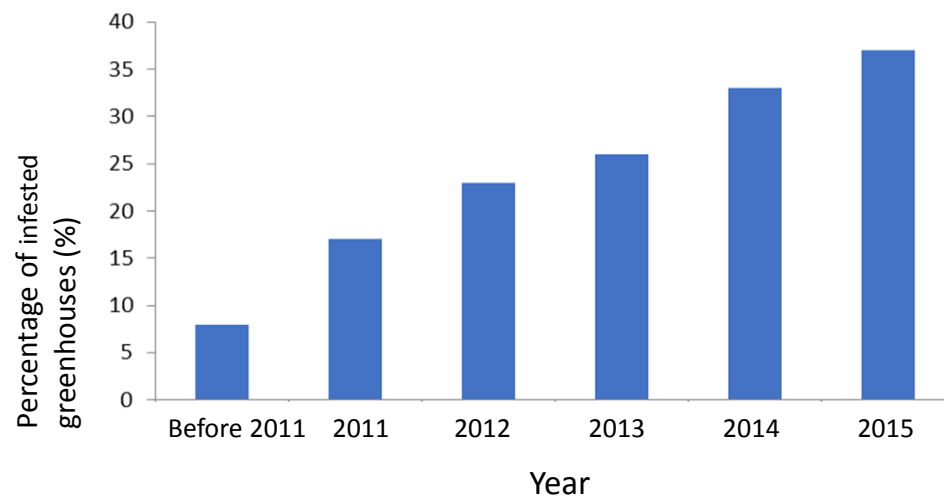


HRD

Bosmans et al. (2017). Rhizogenic agrobacteria in hydroponic crops: epidemics, diagnostics and control. Plant Pathology. Doi: 10.1111/ppa.12687.

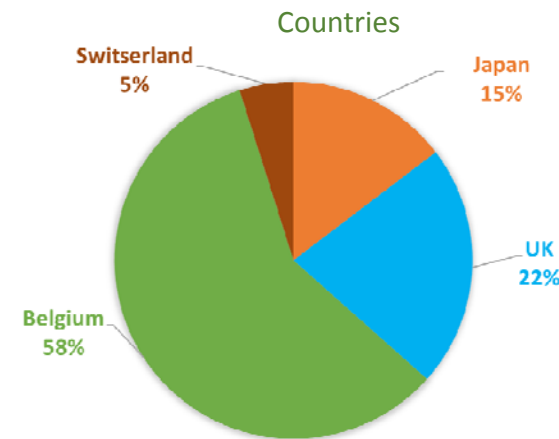
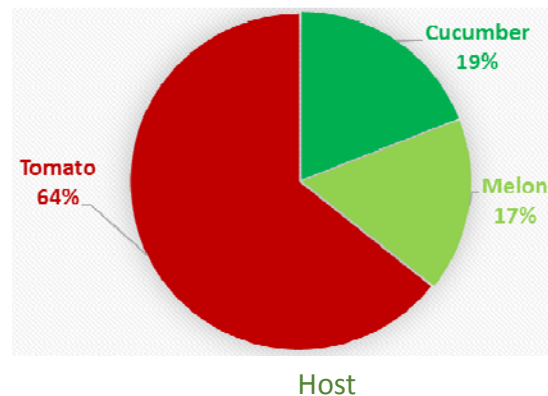
# Introduction

- Occurrence of HRD in Flanders



# Introduction

- Collection of 41 isolates (different host species/ countries/ years of isolation)



# Introduction

- Phenotypic diversity



	Catalase	pH					Temperature (°C)							Biofilm
		3	5	7	9	11	4	22	25	30	37	42	44	
ST15.13/043														
ST15.13/045														
ST15.13/012														
ST15.13/048														
ST15.13/013														
ST15.13/040														
ST15.13/001														
ST15.13/046														
ST15.13/042														
ST15.13/056														
ST15.13/059														
ST15.13/064														
ST15.13/095														
ST15.13/091														
ST15.13/097														
ST15.13/098														
ST15.13/060														
ST15.13/004														
ST15.13/039														
ST15.13/007														
ST15.13/054														
ST15.13/006														
ST15.13/057														
ST15.13/077														
ST15.13/090														
MAFF 106580														
MAFF 106587														
MAFF 106591														
MAFF 210265														
MAFF 210268														
MAFF 301724														
NCPPB 2655														
NCPPB 2656														
NCPPB 2657														
NCPPB 2659														
NCPPB 2660														
NCPPB 4042														
NCPPB 4043														
NCPPB 4062														
ST15.13/067														
ST15.13/073														

rated  
In Europe



# Introduction

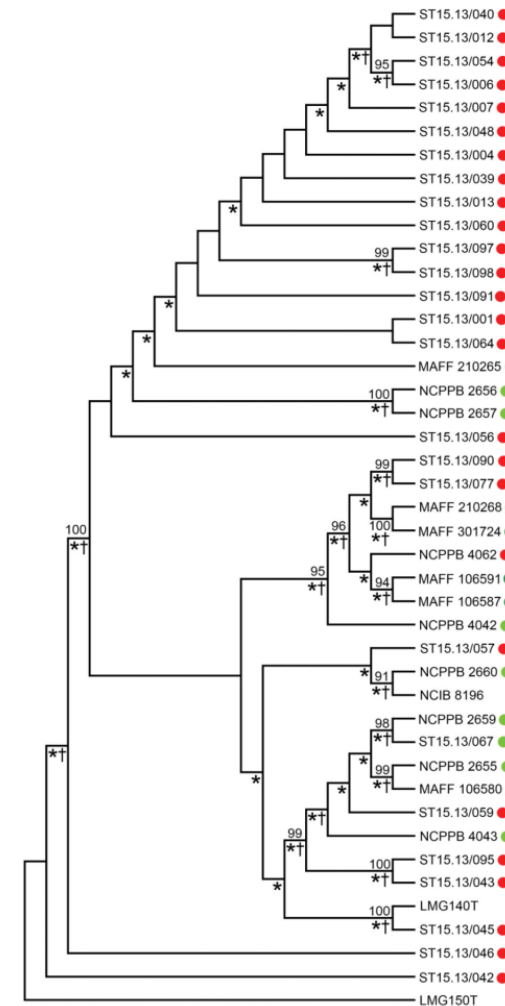
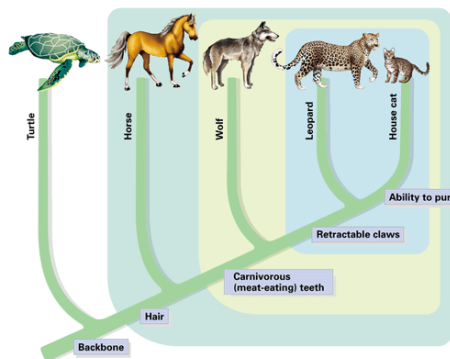
- Genetic diversity

- Multilocus sequence analysis (MLSA)

4 core housekeeping genes (16S rRNA gene, *recA*, *rpoB* and *trpE*)

two regions located on the Ri plasmid (*rolB* and *virD2*)

- Remarkable genotypic diversity



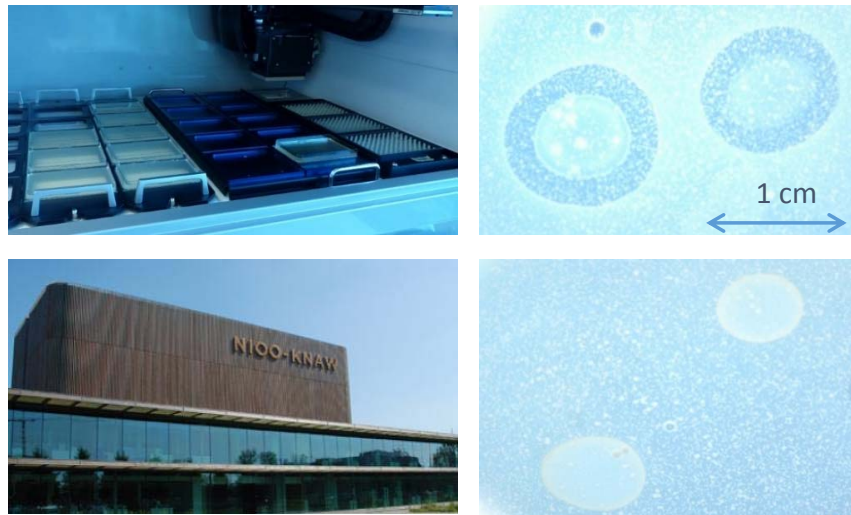
Bosmans et al. (2015). Assessment of the genetic and phenotypic diversity among rhizogenic Agrobacterium biovar 1 strains infecting solanaceous and cucurbit crops. FEMS Microbiology Ecology 91, 1-16.



# Biological solution (Laboratorium)

- Screening

A collection of diverse bacterial isolates was screened for antagonistic activity against rhizogenic *Agrobacterium* biovar 1 using the agar overlay assay



**Bosmans** et al. (2016). Agar composition affects in vitro screening of biocontrol activity of antagonistic microorganisms. *Journal of Microbiological Methods* 127, 7-9.

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# Biological solution (Laboratorium)

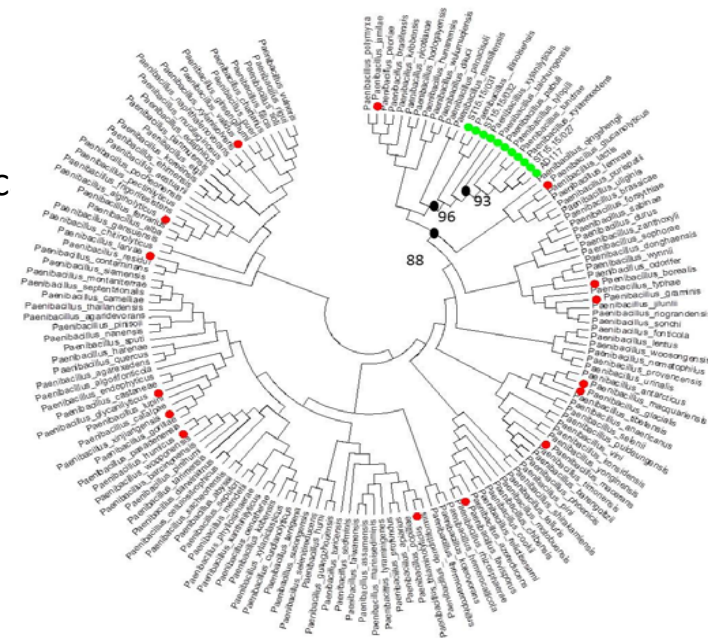
## • Screening

- Out of more than 130 strains tested a clade of phylogenetic

### Paenibacillus clade:

*P. illinoisensis*  
*P. pabuli*  
*P. taichungensis*  
*P. tundrae*  
*P. tylopili*  
*P. xylanexedens*  
*P. xylanilyticus*

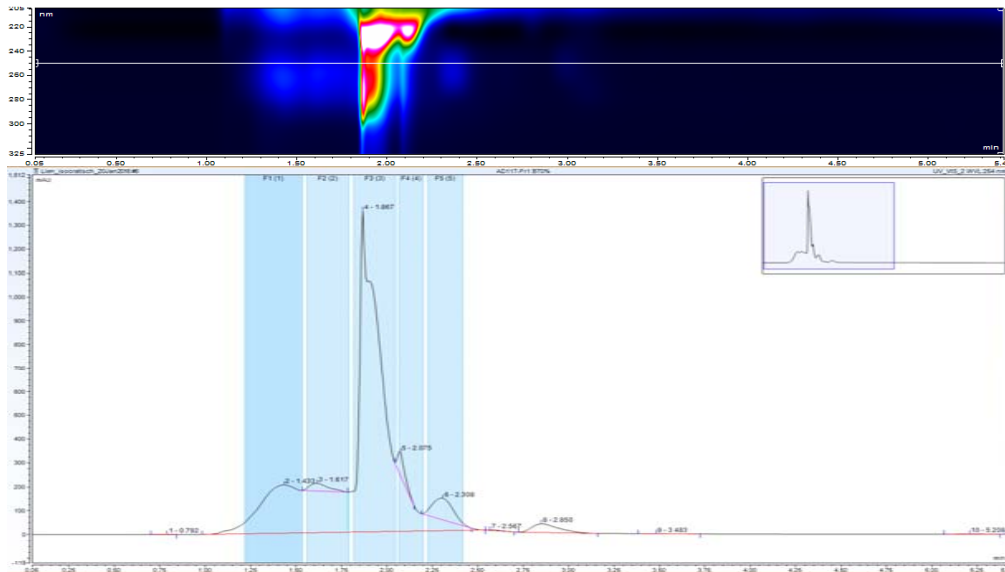
Patent application



Bosmans et al. (2017). Potential for biocontrol of hairy root disease by a Paenibacillus clade exhibiting antagonistic activity against rhizogenic Agrobacterium biovar 1 strains. Frontiers in Microbiology 8, 243031.

# Biological solution (Laboratorium)

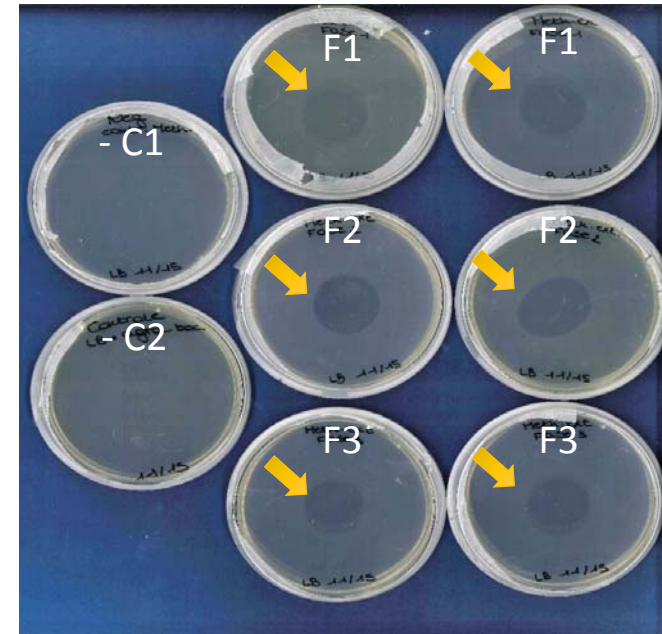
- Preliminary characterization of the compound(s)



# Biological solution (Laboratorium)

- Preliminary characterization of the compound(s)

- Compound extraction was done using 65% methanol + 0.1% formic acid
- Spotting of 10 ul on LB agar spiked with  $10^6$  CFU/ml Agrobacterium
- F1: phase 1 of crude extract (supernatant)
- F2: phase 2 of crude extract (supernatant after centrifugation)
- F3: phase 3 of crude extract (resuspended pellet after centrifugation)
- - C1 & C2: control

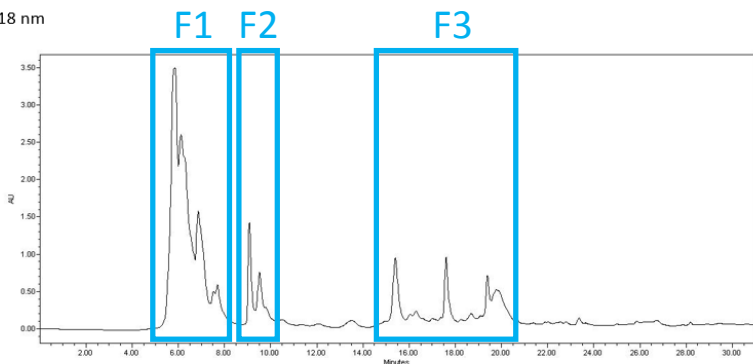


# Biological solution (I)

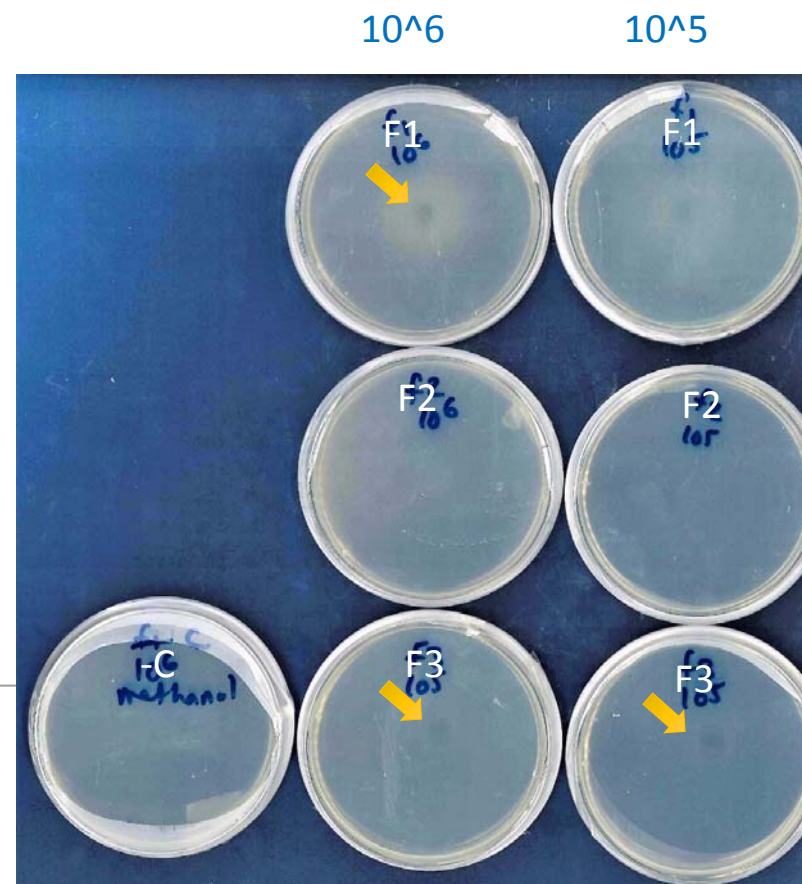
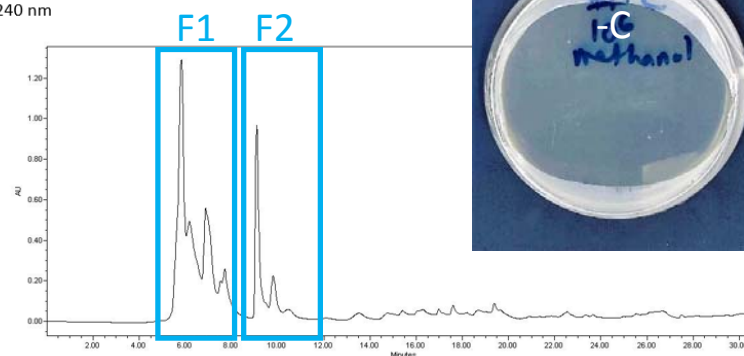
## • Preliminary characterization of the compound(s)

- 2 ml extracted compound was run on an HPLC column with water/acetonitrile mobile phase
- 3 fractions of 7 runs were pooled
- F3 seems to contain the compound responsible for the antagonistic activity against rhizogenic *Agrobacterium*, and slight activity in F1 (to be confirmed)

218 nm  
218 nm



240 nm  
240 nm



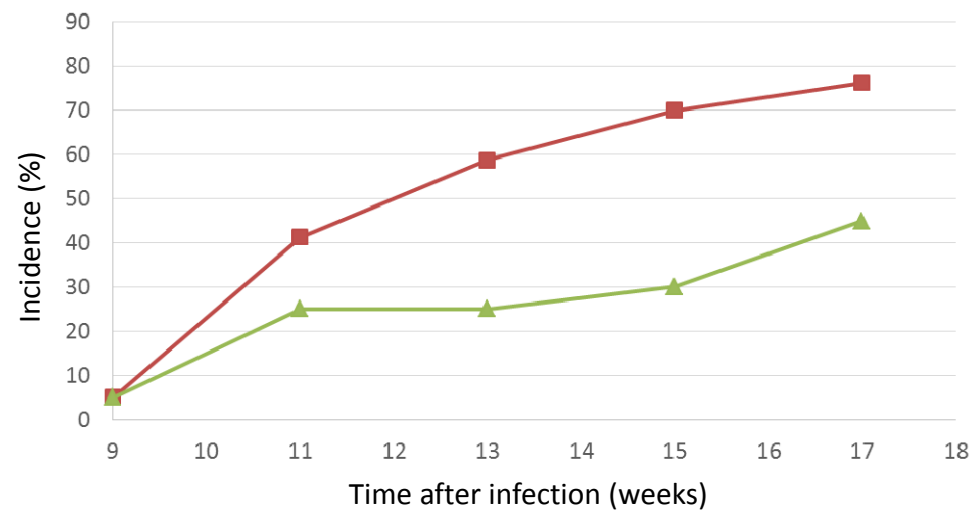
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# Biological solution (Greenhouse)

- Evaluation strains under greenhouse conditions

- Application of a combination of two of these strains in greenhouse conditions resulted in a significant reduction of HRD

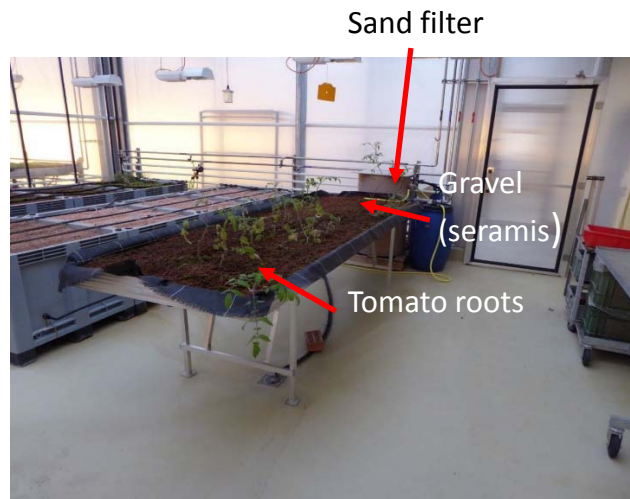


**Bosmans et al. (2016).** Development of a qPCR assay for detection and quantification of rhizogenic agrobacterium biovar 1 strains. European Journal of Plant Pathology 145 , 719-730.

# Biological solution (Laboratorium)

- Screening (Agroscope)

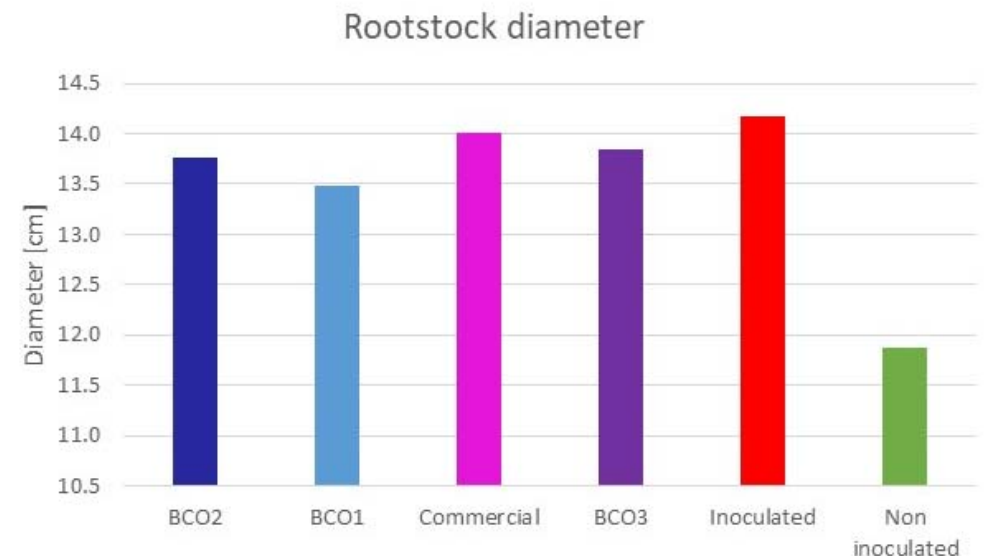
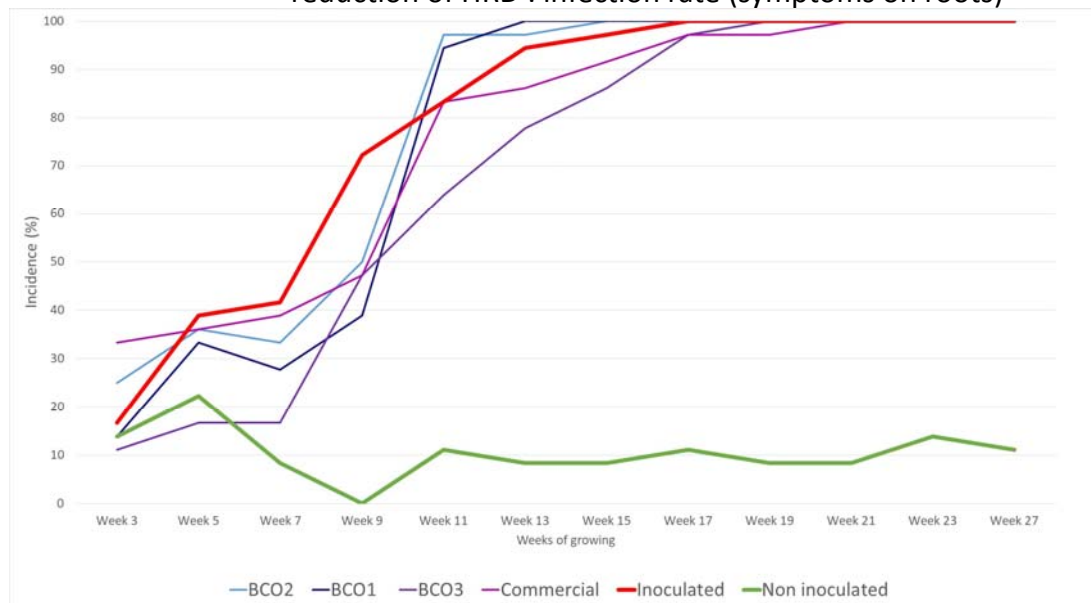
- About 400 isolates extracted from the system
- About 4% of the isolates showed high activity against *A. rhizogenes* in laboratory trials
- 12 isolates were selected for more tests



# Biological solution (Greenhouse)

- Evaluation strains under greenhouse conditions (eggplants)

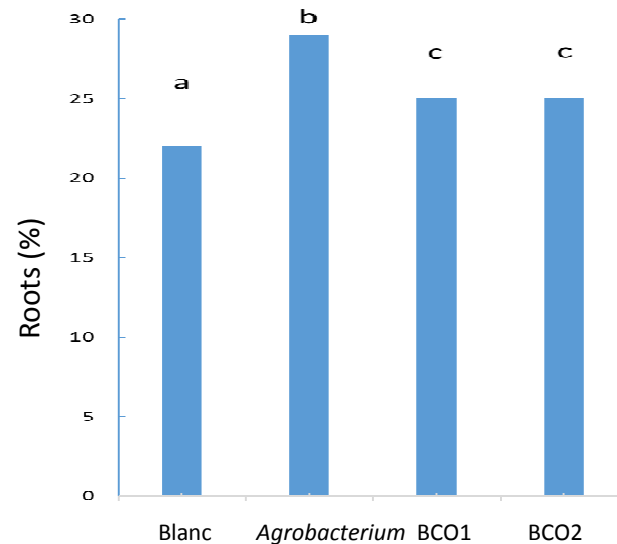
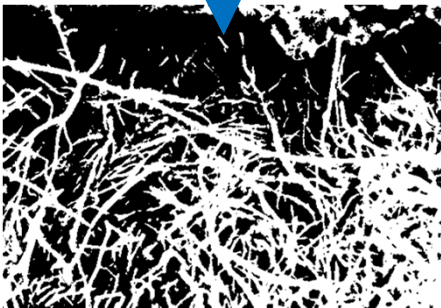
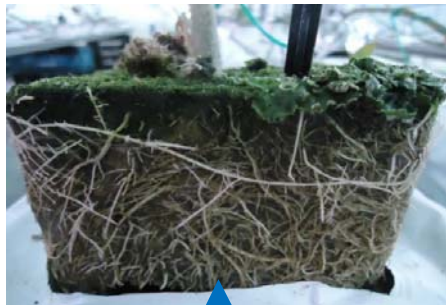
- Artificial inoculation of *A. rhizogenes*
- BCO: 2 from Belgium (BCO1 and BCO2), 1 isolated from the screening (BCO3), 1 commercial *Bacillus amyloliquefaciens*, RhyzoVital® 42.
- Inoculation of BCOs in 6 times (one before plantation and then five times each week)
- Application of three different strains in greenhouse conditions resulted in no significant reduction of HRD : infection rate (symptoms on roots)





# Biological solution (Greenhouse)

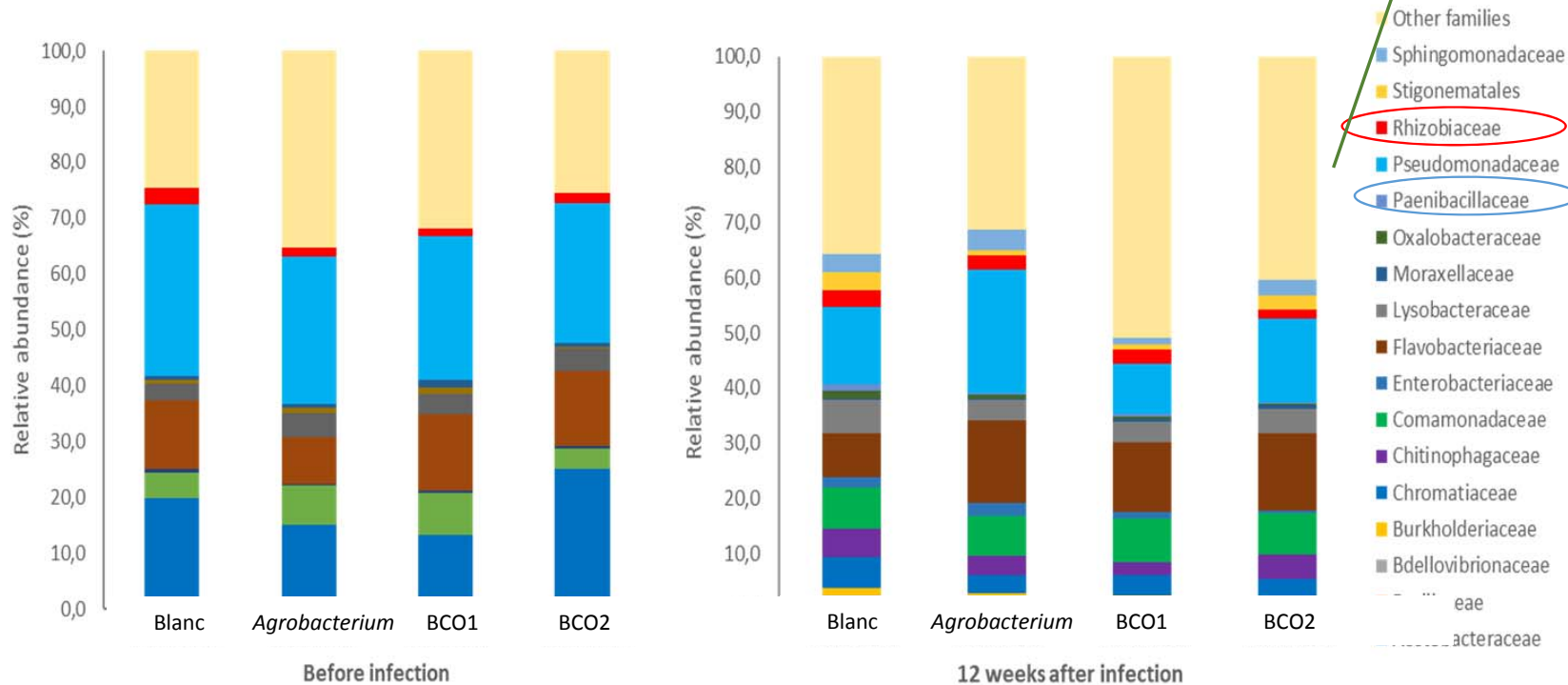
- Tunnelexperiment (PSKW): no significant reduction of HRD ?
- Greenhouse experiment (PCH): no significant reduction of HRD ?
- Small greenhouse experiment (12 weeks) (PCH): significant reduction of HRD



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# • Biological solution (Greenhouse)

- Small greenhouse experiment (PCH):
  - Illumina sequencing → microbial community



Integrated management in Europe



Bosmans et al. (2019). Effect of biocontrol agent *Paenibacillus* sp. ST15.15/027 on hairy root disease and associated tomato rhizosphere bacterial community composition in greenhouse conditions. *In prep.*

# General Conclusions



- *Agrobacterium* biovar 1 strains encompass a genetically and phenotypically diverse group of agrobacteria
- *Paenibacillus* holds great potential for biocontrol of HRD
- Further research required in BARATom :VLAIO(01/11/2018–30/10/2022) Kuleuven-PCH-PSKW-Scientia Terrae
  - Antibiofilm molecules
  - BCO: concentration, commercial BCO's, frequency,...

## KU LEUVEN

- Pablo Vargas
- Bart Lievens
- Hans Steenackers
- Hans Rediers
- More info:  
[hans.rediers@kuleuven.be](mailto:hans.rediers@kuleuven.be)



- Céline Hamon
- Charlotte Roby
- Daniel Le Corre



- Alain Guillou
- Lucie Drogou
- Marine Guerret



- Wendy Vanlommel
- Lien Bosmans



- Bart Van Calenberge
- Lieve Wittemans

## Agroscope

- Céline Gilli
- Matthias Lutz
- Sandrine Eberlé
- Timea Szikora



- Barbora Jostiakova
- Stefan Van Kerckhove

