



# MECHANISMS OF RESISTANCE TO PESTS AND PATHOGENS

**Moderator: Kimberly Wallin**

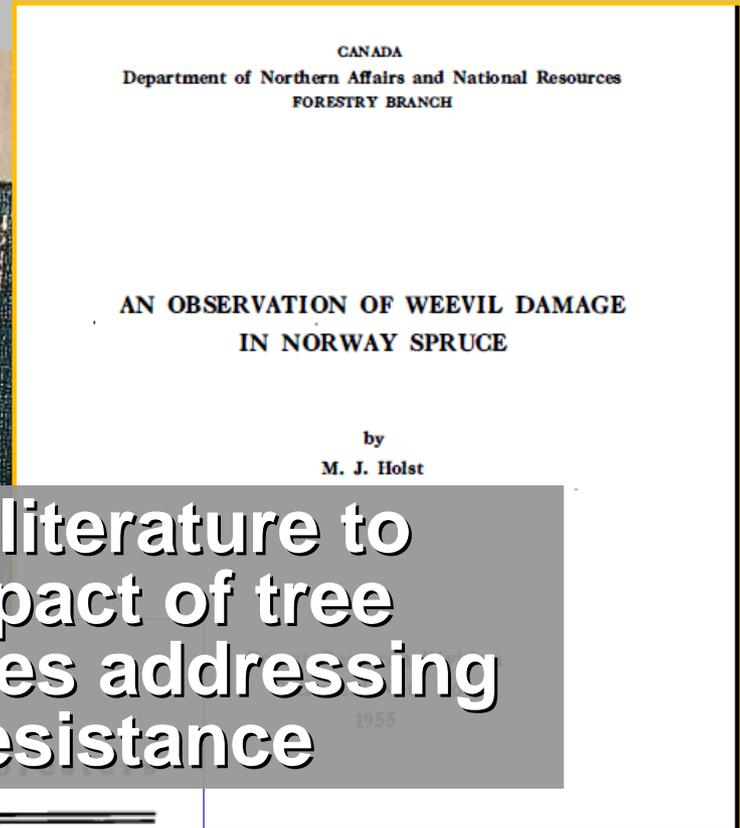
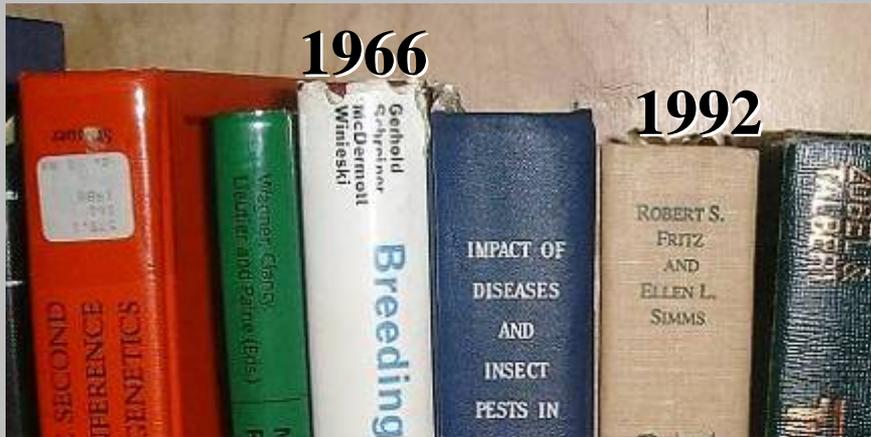
# Tree Breeding for Pest Resistance for the Next 50 years: the search for cross resistance?



Alvin Yanchuk



# A long history pest and disease resistance research in forestry....



2008 FAO survey of the literature to document status / impact of tree improvement programmes addressing disease and pest resistance

## Breeding Blister-Rust-Resistant Western White Pine

*The selection and breeding of white pines resistant to blister rust have been of continuing interest to pathologists, geneticists, and foresters for many years. Work on rust resistance in western white pine was started in the Inland Empire region in 1949. This article is a progress report covering work accomplished thus far and plans for future work.*

R. T. Bingham, A. E. Squillace,  
and J. W. Duffield

Respectively Office of Blister Rust Control, Spokane, Wash., Northern Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, Missoula, Mont., and California Forest and Range Experiment Station, Institute of Forest Genetics, Placerville, Calif.

1953





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## Selection and breeding for insect and disease resistance

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### Selection and breeding for insect and disease resistance

Pest and disease resistance has been an essential part of crop breeding for many years, but has only had marginal impact in tree breeding to date. Crop varieties are domesticated and their continued cultivation depends on continuous breeding programmes for insect, disease and virus resistance, since large-scale monocultures are generally more susceptible to variable pathogens. Forest trees are mainly wild, undomesticated, outbred organisms and their natural populations retain a wide genetic diversity that helps them resist insect pests and pathogens. In addition, the genetic control of insect pest and disease resistance is sophisticated and probably more complex than for annual crops. Moreover, conventional tree selection and breeding for insect and disease resistance requires complex and lengthy laboratory and field tests, especially since resistance patterns may change from young to adult trees.

Over the past 20 years, tree breeding programmes have been reduced worldwide and now focus on a limited number of species and traits. However, since the risk of introducing new pests is likely to increase in the future, insect and disease resistant breeding programmes may be particularly important for several large-scale or valuable commercial plantations.

Pest resistance breeding may be a technical option in large-scale or valuable commercial plantations if there:

- are few silvicultural options to mitigate losses to insect pests and diseases:

#### See also

- ▶ [Forest health](#)
- ▶ [Biosecurity in forestry](#)
- ▶ [Invasive species: impacts on forests & forestry](#)

#### Comments and feedback

Comments and feedback are welcome. For further information or if you are interested in providing information on breeding for resistance activities, please contact:

#### Gillian Allard

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Forest Management Division  
Forestry Department  
FAO  
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## Results and analysis

### Results

The files below summarize what has been gathered to date. The activities or programmes recorded were classified into four categories that capture the current **status** of the work:

1. Breeding programmes with deployed resistant material;
2. Programmes breeding for resistance, no deployed material;
3. Resistance detected in genetic/provenance trials;
4. Evidence in genetic variation in resistance in seedling or clonal screens.

The information is also categorized under three broad **approaches**:

1. traditional plant breeding methods;
2. molecular biology approaches;
3. genetic engineering.

While some research initiatives that have not been documented as of yet, may have been overlooked or misclassified in terms of the three approach categories, it is hoped and expected that this information will be continuously updated as more people become aware of the resource and can provide feedback, updates or new information.

### Documentation:

[Resistance breeding programmes for diseases and insect pests of forest trees](#) PDF

[Resistance breeding programmes for diseases and insect pests of forest trees](#)

[Programmes by status](#) PDF

[Programmes by approach](#) PDF

[Programmes by country and status](#) PDF

[Breeding programmes that have led to deployment of trees with improved pest resistance](#) PDF

[References](#) PDF

# Disease resistance breeding

- western white and sugar pines
  - blister rust resistance
    - USDA For Serv (Moscow, ID; Doreena, OR; IFG, CA)
    - BC MoFR and Canadian Forest Service
- loblolly and slash pines
  - fusiform rust resistance
    - NCSU / U. Florida / WGTIP
- radiata pine
  - *Dothistroma* (RPBC-FRI (Scion))
- poplars
  - e.g., Greenwood / many European countries)
  - *Melampsora*, *Septoria*, *Venturia*
- chestnut



# Insect resistance breeding

## Improvement Programs

- spruces
  - white pine weevil (B.C.)
  - aphids (DK,UK)
- poplar
  - long-horned beetle, stem borers (China, US)
  - leaf beetles

## Research / Screening Programs

- >> leaf beetles – poplars, ‘*Eucs*’
- >> mammals- ‘*Eucs*’, redcedar
- >> adelgids in spruce
- >> birch borer / ash borer
- >> bark beetles (lodgepole pine)
- >> many others!!



# Tree Improvement and Breeding Programmes for Pest and Disease Resistance.....summary

- ~ 260 resistance 'research programmes' identified
- ~ 20 programmes are 'using' or have identified resistance materials
- only 4-5 major commercial forestry programmes have documented 'impacts' (~2%!?)
  - substantial investments have had to be made in these 4-5 large commercial programmes!
  - and decades in most cases to develop.
- 'transgenic resistance' – most are with poplars in China

# 'Road blocks' to application of resistance research:

- studies are developed that work on materials not **related to a breeding (or with a significant planting) program**
- **adequate infection** does not occur in a trial, or
- artificial inoculation techniques are **too expensive (and a large enough population cannot be screened)**, and
- the genetic gain in resistance may **not be 'silviculturally' important or effective** (*and little confidence it will hold up, or is important in the long term*)



# Interior spruce breeding program

- first generation orchards producing resistant seed
- ~20-40% reduction in attack /yr (lower in Sitka spruce)
- over 80 million trees planted per year



## Modeling the timber supply impact of introducing weevil-resistant spruce in British Columbia with cellular automata

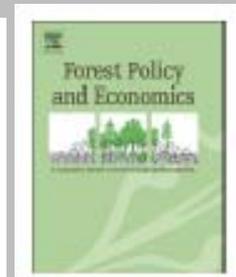
Olaf Schwab <sup>a,\*</sup>, Thomas Maness <sup>a,1</sup>, Gary Bull <sup>a</sup>, Clive Welham <sup>b</sup>, Brad Seely <sup>b</sup>, Juan Blanco <sup>b</sup>

Forest Policy and Economics (2010), doi:10.1016/j.forpol.2010.08.004

**Table 4**

Present value of avoided merchantable volume losses.

Discount rate		Present value (\$ million)		
		1%	3%	5%
Increase in weevil resistance	25%	195.2	4.3	0.2
	50%	562.3	13.4	0.8
	75%	1 123.3	30.0	2.3



They value of this resistance may be greater for some future biotic challenge, than the current problem (terminal weevil).....now largely 'solved'!?



# Climate and pest range shifts under future warming predictions; e.g., Gypsy moth



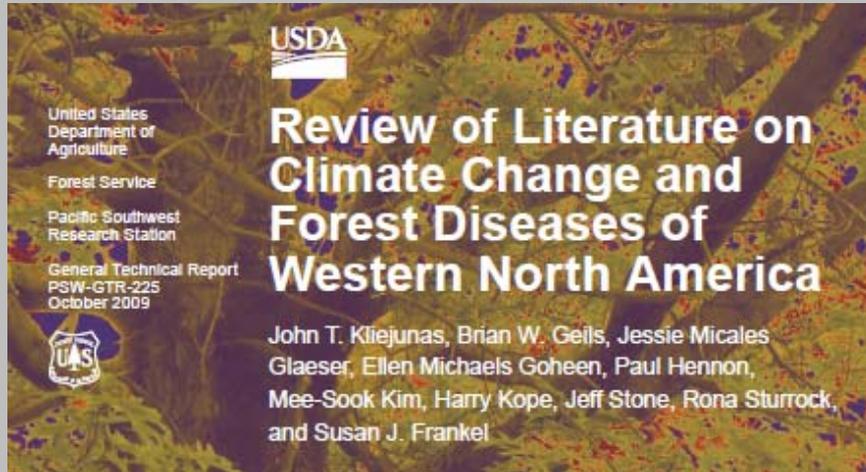
**Fig. 7.** Predicted distribution of Gypsy moth (*Lymantria dispar*) by CLIMEX in Europe using average global temperature increase of 3.6°C. Black circles indicate Ecoclimatic Indices (EI) at meteorological stations. Crosses indicate an EI of 0. Larger circles represent higher EI values and more favourable climatic conditions for *L. dispar*. Shaded area represents current distribution (For references: see Fig. 2).

**Vanhanen, H., Veteli, T.O., Päivinen, S., Kellomäki, S. & Niemelä, P. 2007.** Climate change and range shifts in two insect defoliators: gypsy moth and nun moth – a model study. *Silva Fennica* 41(4): 621–638.

## REVIEW / SYNTHÈSE

## Responses of insect pests, pathogens, and invasive plant species to climate change in the forests of northeastern North America: What can we predict?<sup>1</sup>

Jeffrey S. Dukes, Jennifer Pontius, David Orwig, Jeffrey R. Gamas, Vikki L. Rodgers, Nicholas Brazeel, Barry Cooke, Kathleen A. Theoharides, Erik E. Stange, Robin Harrington, Joan Ehrenfeld, Jessica Gurevitch, Manuel Lerda, Kristina Stinson, Robert Wick, and Matthew Ayres



## letters to nature

## Poleward shifts in geographical ranges of butterfly species associated with regional warming

Camille Parmesan<sup>†</sup>, Nils Ryholm<sup>‡</sup>, Constantî Stefanescu<sup>§</sup>, Jane K. Hill<sup>||</sup>, Chris D. Thomas<sup>¶</sup>, Henri Descimon<sup>#</sup>, Brian Huntley<sup>||</sup>, Lauri Kaila<sup>☆</sup>, Jaakko Kullberg<sup>☆</sup>, Toomas Tammaru<sup>\*\*</sup>, W. John Tennent<sup>††</sup>, Jeremy A. Thomas<sup>‡‡</sup> & Martin Warren<sup>§§</sup>

Global Change Biology (2006) 12, 1545–1553, doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2486.2006.01180.x

## Impacts of climate warming and habitat loss on extinctions at species' low-latitude range boundaries

ALDINA M. A. FRANCO<sup>\*</sup>, JANE K. HILL<sup>\*</sup>, CLAUDIA KITSCHKE<sup>\*</sup>, YVONNE C. COLLINGHAM<sup>†</sup>, DAVID B. ROY<sup>‡</sup>, RICHARD FOX<sup>§</sup>, BRIAN HUNTLEY<sup>†</sup> and CHRIS D. THOMAS<sup>\*</sup>

*Ecology Letters*, (2005) 8: 1138–1146

doi: 10.1111/j.1461-0248.2005.00824.x

## LETTER

## Changes to the elevational limits and extent of species ranges associated with climate change

Robert J. Wilson,<sup>1\*</sup> David Gutiérrez,<sup>1</sup> Javier Gutiérrez,<sup>1</sup> David Martínez,<sup>1</sup> Rosa Agudo<sup>1</sup> and Víctor J. Monserrat<sup>2</sup>

# Complexities with climate change and risk

- “warmer is better” for insects
- “warmer and wetter” better for pathogens
- reduced mortality of pests by natural enemies?
  - lag effect
  - variable range expansion
- increased host susceptibility
  - physiological maladaptation
  - changes to resistance gene expression in host
- complex ‘g x P x e’ interactions

## Making mistakes when predicting shifts in species range in response to global warming

NATURE | VOL 391 | 19 FEBRUARY 1998

Andrew J. Davis\*, Linda S. Jenkinson\*, John H. Lawton†, Bryan Shorrocks\* & Simon Wood†‡

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† NERC Centre for Population Biology, Imperial College Silwood Park, Ascot, Berkshire, SL5 7PY, UK

mountain pine beetle  
mortality in lodgepole pine

# Addressing climate change in the forest vegetation simulator to assess impacts on landscape forest dynamics

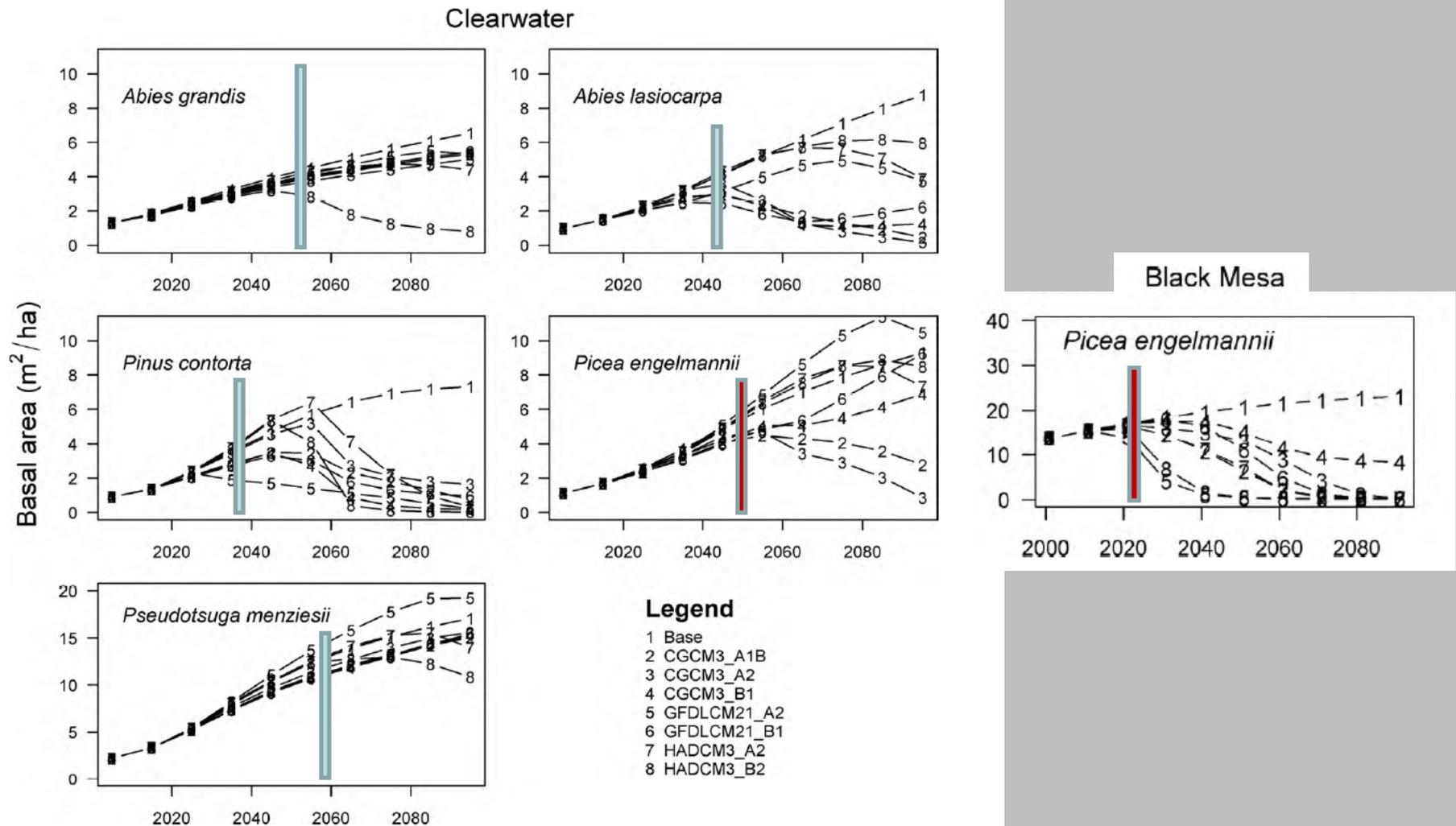
Nicholas L. Crookston<sup>a,\*</sup>, Gerald E. Rehfeldt<sup>a</sup>, Gary E. Dixon<sup>b</sup>, Aaron R. Weiskittel<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Forest and Woodland Ecosystems, Rocky Mountain Research Station, US Forest Service, 1221 South Main, Moscow, ID 83843, United States

<sup>b</sup> Forest Management Service Center, US Forest Service, Fort Collins, CO, United States

<sup>c</sup> School of Forest Resources, University of Maine, Orono, ME, United States

Forest Ecology and Management 260 (2010) 1198–1211



# Will our traditional approach serve us well with uncertain future climates?

- Pests and diseases we will be facing?
  - Increased activity/damage in current distributions
  - Continuing exotic pest and disease introductions
  - Large uncertainty in our predictions past 2040-2050
- Can we afford to develop 'specific' resistances to pest 'x' (or disease 'y')?
  - 15-40 years per programme to develop and deploy resistant material...!!??
  - Relatively few high economic impacts to report
- Can we utilize current biotic challenges as surrogates against classes/guilds of potential pests?

# The difficulty in 'finding' mechanisms

- e.g., mountain birch herbivory... (Haukioja *et al.*)... after decades of research – resistance is complex!
  - Large spectrum of compounds that change over seasons
  - Resistance varies by herbivore
  - Changes in nutrients, water content and leaf toughness as important as any chemistry
- **Endophyte interactions**
  - Induced responses?
  - g x 'E' x e interactions
- e.g., **Hessian wheat fly**
  - >25+ genes segregating for resistance to Hessian fly
  - resistance genes coding for the proteins unknown



Courtesy:  
R. Ganley, Scion



Hessian fly (*Mayetiola destructor*) on Wheat

## Heritable variation in the foliar secondary metabolite sideroxylonal in *Eucalyptus* confers cross-resistance to herbivores

Rose L. Andrew · Ian R. Wallis · Chris E. Harwood ·  
Michael Henson · William J. Foley

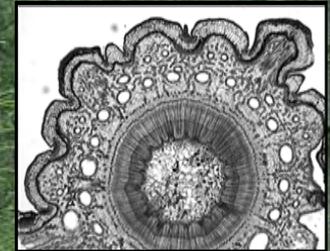
**Table 4** Phenotypic (below diagonal) and additive genetic (above diagonal, with standard errors in parentheses) correlations for defense and growth traits in *E. tricarpa*. Average narrow-sense heritability (with standard errors in parentheses), estimated using the same

provenances are shown italicized and on the diagonal. The genetic correlation of height and DBH was estimated using Fisher optimization to obtain model convergence

Trait 1	Trait 2			
	Sideroxylonal	Damage	Height	DBH
Sideroxylonal	0.60* (0.13*)	-0.39 (0.21)	-0.07 (0.19)	0.00 (0.20)
Damage	-0.40*	0.34* (0.14*)	-0.30 (0.20)	-0.34 (0.22)
Height	0.05	-0.27*	0.53* (0.08*)	0.96* (0.03)
DBH	0.02	-0.19*	0.84*	0.34* (0.06*)

\* Significantly different from zero ( $P < 0.05$ )

**Sitka spruce clone #898 – *immune to all attacks by spruce terminal weevil!***



One generation of strong selection has now provided 'silviculturally useful' levels of resistance in BC spruces

**-(+)<sup>3</sup>- carene**  
**- dehydriobietic acid**

- Yanchuk, A.D., Murphy, J.C. and K.F. Wallin. 2008. Preliminary evaluation of genetic variation of attack and resistance in lodgepole pine to mountain pine beetle. *Tree Genetics and Genomes* 4:171-180.
- Ott, D. 2010. M.Sc. thesis, UNBC

$h^2$  @ 80% mortality = 0.25

$r_f$  (mortality, d-3-carene) = - 0.35



**Indian Point (IP86) – lodgepole pine  
open-pollinated progeny test – age 20**

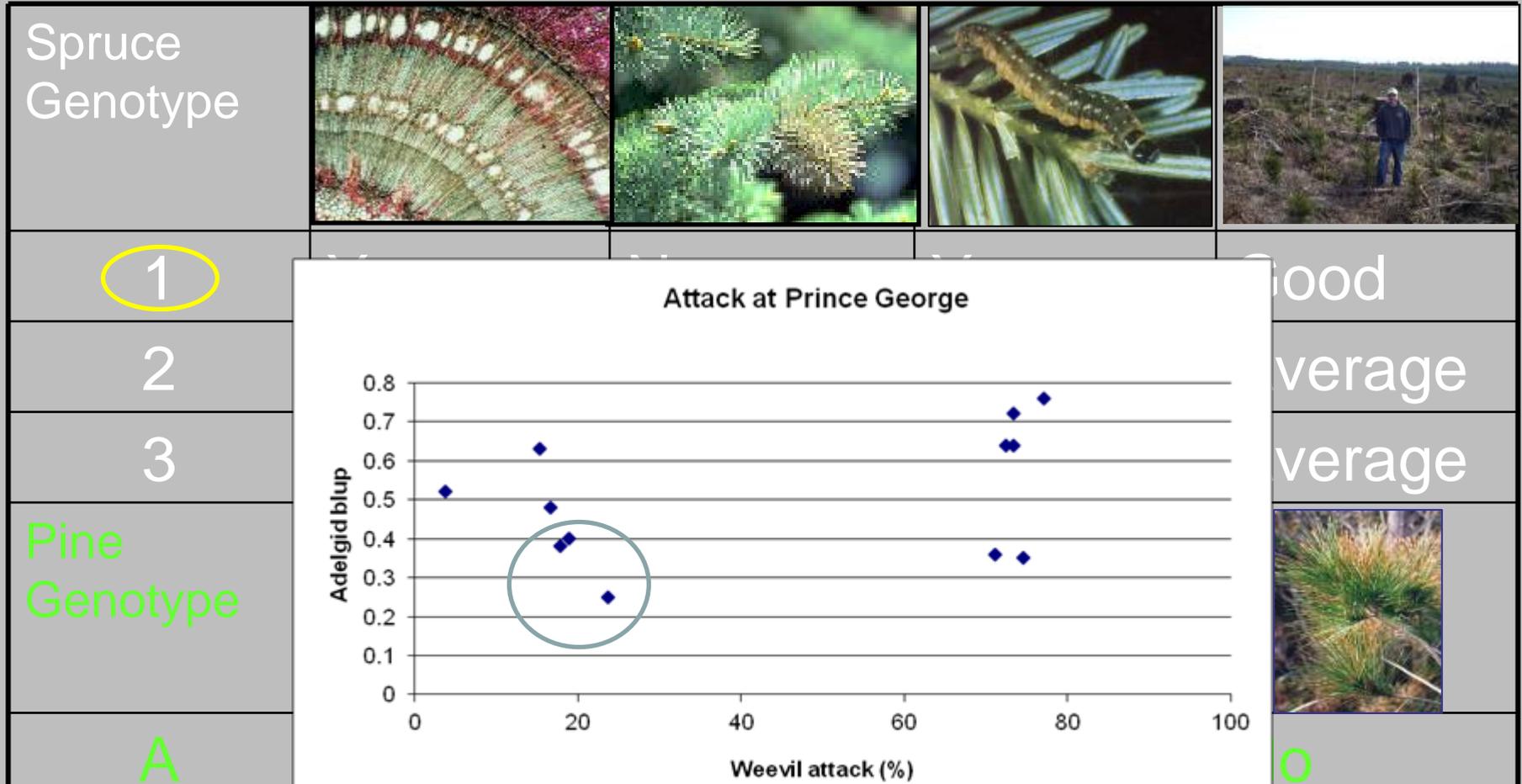


## Findings from genomics research

- well known 'housekeeping' genes
  - **TBS-LRRS**
  - kinases
  - heat shock proteins
- marker assisted selection?
- genome wide (assisted) selection?

$h^2 \sim 30\%$

# Building resistance 'portfolios' to classes of diseases and pests?



so, we can also build our own 'crosses resistance' (stacking)

C	Yes	No	No	Yes
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# Concluding Points

- **Traditional breeding approaches have been very successful in several places, but...**
  - limited to species have the tree improvement 'machinery' in place
  - not generally focused on problems where resistance can be delivered, and silvicultural management options are limited
  - **expect a continuation of new pest introductions and outbreaks!?**
  - resistance has taken decades to develop...???
- **New approaches necessary?**
  - **can we develop 'general mechanisms' of resistance across classes of pests (i.e., cross resistance?)**
    - *General resistance features*
    - *Multiple challenges from different pathogens / insects*
    - *Pyramiding or stacking*
    - *Focus on fewer species, and pool resources and expertise*

# Thank you



**Finally, climatic change effects will force to accept higher levels of risk (and losses) than we are accustomed!**

