



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**EFFECTS OF MECHANICAL WOUNDING AND INFECTION PATTERNS OF
Fusarium solani ON GAHARU FORMATION IN *Aquilaria malaccensis* Lam.**

JONG PHAI LEE

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By

JONG PHAI LEE

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
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JONG PHAI LEE

**MASTER OF SCIENCE
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

2012

SPECIALLY DEDICATED TO

My Beloved
Late Grandfather and Grandmother,
Jong San & Lee Moi Fah
Parents, Jong Siew Thong & Khoo Gek Hiang
Brothers & Sisters
and all my Friends...

'Thanks God for blessing me in all the aspects to be done successfully'...



Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master Science

EFFECTS OF MECHANICAL WOUNDING AND INFECTION PATTERNS OF *Fusarium solani* ON GAHARU FORMATION IN *Aquilaria malaccensis* Lam.

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April 2012

Chair: Rozi Mohamed, PhD
Faculty: Faculty of Forestry

Gaharu is the oleoresin found in karas (*Aquilaria malaccensis*). Recently, many studies have been conducted in order to produce the most suitable and effective inocula in the market. Indeed, there is a need to produce more gaharu in karas tree especially in plantation field. Various fungi have been associated with gaharu formation, however their roles and patterns of colonization are not fully understood. In general, gaharu formation is associated with natural wounding or artificial inoculation by different fungi or chemicals. This study focused on the patterns of *Fusarium solani* colonization at different wounding time-point via real - time quantitative PCR (qPCR) technique and the effects of artificial inoculation on young karas trees as compared to naturally infected wounded karas in the wild. In addition, artificial inoculation technique with different fungal isolates were also aimed to determine their effects on producing gaharu. This was done by comparing their degree of discoloration formed over a period of 1, 3, 6 months respectively and the chemical constituents. Gaharu compounds produced from

both induction methods were identified and compared to commercial samples via GC-MS.

When tracking the amount of *F. solani* inocula in two wounded tree over time in the wild, the fungus was found to colonize wounded karas most frequently at the early stage of wounding, often most abundantly during the first 2 weeks. The highest amount of target DNA copies was quantified at 2 weeks in both investigated trees. This indicates that the infection of fungi might take place at the early stage of the wounding process. The decreasing in gene copy number detected in the latter stages, from 6 to 12 months showed that there was no evidence to state that fungi colonized more abundantly in darker wood. In fact, more resins were produced in order to form gaharu. The high level of terpenes were maintained to control the pathogen attacked. The presence of *F. solani* consistently at every wounding time - point, except for two points in one of the trees, revealed the association of this microbe to gaharu formation. However, its direct role in gaharu formation has to be further investigated, perhaps in a more controlled environment.

The study on fungal inoculation was carried out on young 4-year-old trees in a shade house conditions. Trees were harvested at 1, 3 and 6 months after inoculation. The discoloration on the wound and its intensity were measured. ANOVA analysis concluded that the five species of fungal inocula tested were not giving significant differences in terms of discoloration length and intensity. However, the length of discoloration and its intensity increased progressively from pale yellow to dark brown

over the time period tested. This implies that time plays an important role for producing gaharu-impregnated wood.

When analyzing gaharu compounds using GC-MS, a total of 39 compounds mainly from the group monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes, oxygenated sesquiterpenes, chromone derivatives and fatty acids were identified. Samples analyzed were from commercial gaharu, artificial inoculation and mechanically wounded wood. From GC-MS profiles, all five commercial gaharu, SA, A, B, C and D grades had similar important compounds. Among them were (-)-Aristolene, Palustrol (derivatives of guaiene), γ . Eudesmol, (-)-Aristolene, α -Elemol, Anisylacetone, Benzaldehyde, Benzylacetone, 6-(Benzyloxy)-4,4-dimethyl-2-chromaone and Agarospirol. When compared to artificial inoculated wood, there were some important fragrant compounds found such as Guaiene, Benzenepropanoic acid, 2,5-dimethoxy, Palustrol, Benzylacetone, Benzaldehyde, 6-(Benzyloxy)-4,4-dimethyl-2-chromaone. A new compound of 6-(Benzyloxy)-4,4-dimethyl-2-chromaone was detected in the wood sample and it was also known as 4,4-dimethyl-6-phenylmethoxy-3H-chromen-2-one.

In overall, the existence of these compounds proved that gaharu was formed in the fungal inoculated wood. This study demonstrated that fungal inoculation could produce gaharu in young trees in just 6 months time. Fungal invasion could be a method to prolong aggression since it could indirectly increase resin production. However, this should be tested on a larger scale under field trial conditions.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Sarjana Sains

**KESAN PENCEDERAAN MEKANIKAL DAN POLA JANGKITAN KULAT
Fusarium solani KE ARAH PEMBENTUKAN GAHARU DALAM
Aquilaria malaccensis Lam.**

Oleh
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Gaharu merupakan sejenis resin yang terhasil pada pokok karas yang terjangkit. Baru-baru ini, banyak kajian telah dijalankan untuk menghasilkan inokula yang paling sesuai dan berkesan di pasaran. Sememangnya, terdapat keperluan untuk menghasilkan lebih banyak gaharu dalam pokok karas terutamanya di ladang tanaman. Pelbagai kulat dijangka berkait rapat dalam penghasilan gaharu tetapi pemahaman tentang peranan masing-masing dan arah pengkolonian adalah sangat tidak ketara dan jelas. Secara amnya, penghasilan dikaitkan dengan luka semulajadi atau inokulasi buatan atau penggunaan bahan kimia sebagai perangsang pada permukaan pokok karas. Kajian dalam tesis ini menumpu kepada kesa-kesan inokulasi buatan pada pokok karas muda yang dicucuk dengan pelbagai jenis kulat daripada pokok gaharu yang dijangkit secara semulajadi dan penurunan *Fusarium solani* dalam pelbagai sampel pokok yang dilakukan dengan menggunakan teknik PCR masa nyata. Selain itu, penghasilan bahan kimia minyak gaharu dalam kayu yang cedera dan sampel komersial telah dijalankan melalui analisis menggunakan kromatografi gas – spesifikasi jisim (GC-MS).

Apabila mengesan jumlah inokulum *F. solani* dalam kedua-dua pokok yang dcederakan dalam hutan, kulat didapati kepadatan menjajah kecederaan karas paling kerap di peringkat awal, paling banyak dalam tempoh 2 minggu pertama. Jumlah tertinggi salinan DNA sasaran adalah pada minggu kedua pada kedua-dua pokok yang dikaji. Ini menunjukkan bahawa jangkitan kulat mungkin berlaku pada peringkat awal proses luka. Penurunan dalam bilangan salinan gen yang dikesan di peringkat yang kemudian, 6 - 12 bulan menunjukkan bahawa tidak ada bukti yang menyatakan bahawa kulat dijajah lebih banyak pada kayu gelap. Hal ini adalah disebabkan penghasilan resin yang lebih banyak pada masa itu. Bahan kimia yang dikenali sebagai terpenes berperanan dalam mengawal jangkitan mikroorganisma pada pokok. Kehadiran *F. solani* yang konsisten pada setiap masa, mendedahkan penyatuan mikrob ini kepada pembentukan gaharu. Walau bagaimanapun, peranan kulat yang sebenar dalam pembentukan gaharu perlu lagi dikaji, mungkin dalam persekitaran yang lebih terkawal.

Kajian mengenai inokulasi kulat telah dijalankan ke atas pokok berumur 4-tahun-muda dalam keadaan rumah teduh. Pokok dituai pada 1, 3 dan 6 bulan selepas inokulasi. Perubahan warna pada luka dan intensiti warna diukur. Analisis ANOVA menyimpulkan bahawa lima spesies inokula kulat diuji tidak memberikan perbezaan yang ketara dari segi panjang perubahan dan intensiti warna. Walau bagaimanapun, panjang perubahan warna dan intensiti warna meningkat secara beransur-ansur dari kuning pucat ke perang gelap sepanjang tempoh masa yang diuji. Ini menunjukkan bahawa masa memainkan peranan yang penting dalam penghasilan gaharu.

Apabila menganalisis sebatian gaharu dengan menggunakan GC-MS, sejumlah 39 jenis kompaun terutamanya daripada kumpulan monoterpenes, sesquiterpenes, sesquiterpenes oksigen, derivatik chromone dan asid lemak telah dikenal pasti. Sampel yang dianalisis adalah daripada gaharu komersial, inokulasi buatan dan kayu cedera secara mekanikal. Daripada profil GC-MS, semua lima komersial gaharu, gred SA, A, B, C dan D mempunyai sebatian penting yang sama. Antaranya ialah (-)-Aristolene, Palustrol (derivatif guaiene), γ . Eudesmol, (-)-Aristolene, α -Elemol, Anisylacetone, Benzaldehyde, Benzylacetone, 6 - (Benzyloxy) -4,4-dimetil-2-chromaone dan Agarospirol. Apabila dibandingkan dengan kayu tiruan yang disuntik, terdapat beberapa sebatian penting wangi dijumpai seperti Guaiene, asid Benzenepropanoic, 2,5-dimethoxy, Palustrol, Benzylacetone, Benzaldehyde, 6 - (Benzyloxy) -4,4-dimetil-2-chromaone. Satu sebatian yang baru iaitu 6 - (Benzyloxy) -4,4-dimetil-2-chromaone dikesan dalam sampel kayu dan juga dikenali sebagai 4,4-dimetil-6-phenylmethoxy-3H-chromen-2-one. Kewujudan sebatian ini membuktikan bahawa gaharu telah dihasilkan pada kayu yang disuntik kulat. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa inokulasi kulat boleh menghasilkan gaharu dalam pokok-pokok muda hanya dalam masa 6 bulan. Serangan kulat boleh menjadi satu kaedah untuk memanjangkan pencerobohan kerana ia secara tidak langsung dapat meningkatkan pengeluaran resin. Walau bagaimanapun, kajian terhadap inokulasi kulat perlu diuji pada skala yang lebih besar contohnya di kebun tanaman yang lebih luas.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 26 April 2012 To conduct the final examination of Jong Phai Lee on her Master Thesis entitled “Effects of Mechanical Wounding and Infection Patterns of *Fusarium solani* on Gaharu Formation in *Aquilaria malaccensis* Lam.” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Science.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.



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LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	The taxonomy of <i>A. malaccensis</i>	7
2	Wounding time-points series up to 12 months	36
3	Wounding time-points randomly assigned at each subplot on T1 and T2	36
4	Digestion mixture of plasmid linearization	43
5	Specific primers for <i>Fusarium solani</i>	46
6	Component and amount of master mix solution for real-time PCR reaction	49
7	Likert scale scoring of discoloration in wounded karas in T1 and T2	52
8	Absorbance readings of DNA samples from wounded T1 and T2	57
9	Threshold cycle (C_T) values measured for 10^8 to 10^2 copies of target DNA in T1	63
10	Threshold cycle (C_T) values measured for 10^8 to 10^2 copies of target DNA in T2	64
11	The initial copy numbers of target DNA in each wood sample at different wounding time-points in T1	67
12	The initial copy numbers of target DNA in each wood sample at different wounding time-points in T2	67
13	Fungal inocula were randomly inoculated with 4 replicates in each tree	85
14	List of 8 different gaharu wood samples for extraction	96
15	Chemical constituents of gaharu oil from healthy /non infected wood	103

16	Chemical constituents of gaharu oil from artificial inoculated wood	104
17	Chemical constituents of gaharu oil from mechanical wounding in the wild	105
18	Chemical constituents of gaharu oil from grade Super A gaharu	106
19	Chemical constituents of gaharu oil from grade A gaharu	107
20	Chemical constituents of gaharu oil from grade B gaharu	107
21	Chemical constituents of gaharu oil from grade C gaharu	108
22	Chemical constituents of gaharu oil from grade D gaharu	108
23	Comparison of volatile constituents of the gaharu extracts identified in different types of karas or agarwood	110
24	Comparison of chemical compounds identified in gaharu wood	112
25	Discoloration length measured after 1 month of inoculation	133
26	Discoloration length measured after 3 months of inoculation	134
27	Discoloration length measured after 6 months of inoculation	135
28	Discoloration intensity measured at 1 month, 3 months and 6 months after inoculation	136

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Relationships among isoprenoid compounds	24
2	Schematic diagram of a typical GC-MS system	28
3	A schematic diagram of a rectangular sub block	37
4	Tree wounding experiment	39
5	Nucleotide sequence of the ITS region of <i>Fusarium solani</i>	45
6	A schematic diagram of a 10-fold dilution series of plasmid DNA containing ITS gene of <i>Fusarium solani</i>	48
7	Discoloration formed on the wounded bark surface	51
8	Likert scale scoring on the discoloration over a period of different wounding time-points	54
9	Agarose gel electrophoresis (1%) of genomic DNA from samples collected from wounded karas in T1	56
10	Agarose gel electrophoresis (1%) of genomic DNA from samples collected from wounded karas in T2	56
11	Restriction enzyme digestion of plasmid DNA	58
12	Real-time PCR amplification plots for a ten-fold dilution series of plasmid DNA to obtain 10^8 to 10^2 copies of target DNA of <i>F. solani</i> for T1	61
13	Real-time PCR amplification plots for a ten-fold dilution series of plasmid DNA to obtain 10^8 to 10^2 copies of target DNA of <i>F. solani</i> for T2	62
14	A linear standard curve generated by plotting the initial quantity (\log_{10}) of target DNA against threshold cycle (CT) in T1	64

15	A linear standard curve generated by plotting the initial quantity (log10) of target DNA against threshold cycle (CT) in T2	65
16	Real-time PCR amplification of the karas wood sample at different wounding time-points in T1	70
17	Real-time PCR amplification of the karas wood sample at different wounding time-points in T2	71
18	Quantity of targetted <i>Fusarium solani</i> DNA detected in karas wood (T1 and T2) at different wounding time-point	72
19	Young karas trees at nursery	78
20	Spore count on a Haemocytometer	79
21	A seven - day fungal isolates from infected karas wood cultured on PDA at 28°C	80
22	A schematic representation of the positions of 20 wounds along the trunk together with the desired drill depth of 1.5, 1.0 and 0.5cm	82
23	Fungal inoculation in a 4-years-old karas tree	83
24	Fungi inoculum stocks for artificial inoculation in karas tree	84
25	Naked eye measurement of discoloration rings formed after artificial inoculation in young karas tree	88
26	Discoloration of fungal inoculated wood after 1 month (1M), 3 months (3M),6 months (6M) of incubation time	91
27	The schematic diagram for Soxhlet extraction process	98
28	Extracts of Gaharu wood after 6 hours of Soxhlet extraction	101
29	Crude extracts of gaharu collected after rotary evaporation	102

30	Normal probability plot of longitudinal discoloration	148
31	Normal probability plot of discoloration intensity	162
33	Discoloration formed in 1-20 wounds after 1 month inoculation	163
34	Discoloration formed in 1-20 wounds after 3 months inoculation	164
35	Discoloration formed in 1-20 wounds after 6 months inoculation	165
36	GC-MS analysis of Healthy / Non Infected wood	166
37	GC-MS analysis of artificial inoculated wood	167
38	GC-MS analysis of mechanical wounding in the wild	168
39	GC-MS analysis of grade Super A gaharu	169
40	GC-MS analysis of grade A gaharu	170
41	GC-MS analysis of grade B gaharu	171
42	GC-MS analysis of grade C gaharu	172
43	GC-MS analysis of grade D gaharu	173

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Symbol	Description
ANOVA	analysis of variance
ASST	Allergic Stress Strain Technology
BLAST	Basic Local Alignment Research Tool
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
Ct	threshold cycle
DNA	deoxyribonucleic acid
dw	distilled water
EDTA	ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
FID	flame ionization detection
GC	Gas chromatography
GC-MS	Gas chromatography mass spectrometry
ITS	Internal Transcribed Spacer
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology
NTC	non template control
PCR	polymerase chain reaction
PDA	potato dextrose agar
qPCR	quantitative polymerase chain reaction
RCBD	randomized complete block design
RNA	ribonucleic acid
ROX	6-Carboxyl-X-Rhodamine
SYBR	Sybgreen
TAE	tri acetate EDTA
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UV	ultraviolet

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ABSTRAK	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ix
APPROVAL	x
DECLARATION	xii
LIST OF TABLES	xvi
LIST OF FIGURES	xviii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxi
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 <i>Aquilaria malaccensis</i>	6
2.1.1 Taxonomy and Botany	7
2.1.2 Ecology and Distribution	8
2.1.3 Utilization and Trade	8
2.2 Gaharu Formation	10
2.3 Microbial Floras of the Infected Wood	11
2.4 Endophytic Fungi	13
2.5 Wood anatomy of <i>Aquilaria</i>	14
2.5.1 Changes of Living Parenchyma cells After Wounding and During Agarwood Formation	15
2.6 Artificial Inoculation Technique	16
2.6.1 Inoculation Through Mechanical Wounding	17
2.6.2 Inoculation Using Chemical Compounds	18
2.6.3 Inoculation Using Microbes	19
2.6.4 Commercialized Inoculation Technique in Market	19
2.7 Essential Oils	20
2.7.1 Physical Properties of Essential Oils	21
2.7.2 Chemical Properties of Essential Oils	21
2.8 Chemical Components in Gaharu Oil	22
2.8.1 Isoprenoids or Terpenoid	23
2.8.2 Monoterpenes	25
2.8.3 Sesquiterpenes	26
2.9 Gas Chromatography- Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS)	26
2.9.1 Gas chromatography main part	29
2.9.2 Mass spectrometer main part	29
2.10 Real-time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)	30

3	PATTERNS OF <i>Fusarium solani</i> IN WOUNDED KARAS VIA qPCR TECHNIQUE	33
3.1	Introduction	33
3.2	Materials and Methods	35
3.2.1	Plant Materials	35
3.2.2	Mechanical Wounding	35
3.2.3	Preparation of DNA templates	40
3.2.4	Determination of DNA Concentration and Quality by Nanophotometric Method	41
3.2.5	Agarose gel electrophoresis	42
3.2.6	Purified Plasmid Digestion with Restriction Enzyme <i>Sal I</i>	43
3.2.7	Primer Design	44
3.2.8	Species -Specific Primer Design for <i>Fusarium solani</i> Detection	45
3.2.9	Copy Number Calculation	46
3.2.10	Standard Curve	47
3.2.11	Real-time Quantitative PCR Assay	48
3.2.12	Analysis of Real-time Quantitative PCR	49
3.3	Results and Discussion	50
3.3.1	Mechanical Wounding	50
3.3.2	Quality and Quantity of Genomic DNA	55
3.3.3	DNA Quantification	57
3.3.4	Restriction Enzyme Digestion of Plasmid DNA Containing the ITS Sequence of <i>F. solani</i>	58
3.3.5	Copy Number derivations	59
3.3.6	Standard Curve	60
3.3.7	Real-time Quantitative PCR Assays	65
3.4	Conclusion	73
4	ARTIFICIAL INOCULATION IN YOUNG KARAS TREE	75
4.1	Introduction	75
4.2	Materials and Methods	78
4.2.1	Plant Sample	78
4.2.2	Fungal Culture and Spore Count	79
4.2.3	Artificial Inoculation Technique	81
4.2.4	Experimental Design	84
4.2.5	Data Analysis	86
4.3	Results and Discussion	87
4.3.1	Discoloration Length	87
4.3.2	Discoloration Intensity	89
4.4	Conclusion	92

5	ANALYSIS OF VOLATILE COMPOUNDS IN GAHARU WOOD	93
5.1	Introduction	
5.2	Materials and Methods	96
5.2.1	Gaharu wood sample	96
5.2.2	Soxhlet Extraction	97
5.2.3	Gas Chromatography Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS) Analysis	99
5.3	Results and Discussion	
5.3.1	Gaharu Crude Extracts	100
5.3.2	GC-MS Analysis of Extracted Gaharu Oils	102
5.4	Conclusion	117
6	SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	120
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	123
	APPENDICES	132
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	174
	LIST OF PUBLICATION	175