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Authors
Tanaka, H.
Imada, J.

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Purification of Viruses of Citrus Mosaic and Navel Orange Infectious Mottling

H. Tanaka and J. Imada

Citrus mosaic (CiMV) was found in the 1940s in Wakayama Prefecture and was first described as a virus disease by Ishigai (1958). In addition to symptoms similar to Satsuma dwarf such as leaf malformation, multiple flushes, and dwarfing, affected trees developed ringspots and mosaic on rinds of fruit at the coloring stage. Navel orange infectious mottling (NIMV) has been known in Wakayama Prefecture since the 1930s. Symptoms of the disease consist of large diffused chlorotic blotches and mottling in the leaves, with brown spots on the under surfaces (Tanaka et al., 1971). The casual viruses of these two diseases (CiMV and NIMV) are easily transmitted from affected trees to citrus seedlings by graft inoculation (Tanaka and Yamada, 1972) and to herbaceous plants by mechanical means (Tanaka and Imada, 1974a). The host range of these two viruses is similar to that of Satsuma dwarf virus (SDV).

This paper reports purification of CiMV and NIMV, and contrasts the morphology of these two viruses with SDV.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Virus sources. The sources of CiMV and NIMV were trees maintained at the Laboratory of Plant Pathology, Akitsu Branch, Fruit Tree Research Station, and were propagations of diseased field trees in Wakayama Prefecture.

Test Plants. Plants of Physalis floridana served as production hosts for these two viruses. White sesame plants were used for assaying preparations of CiMV and NIMV, and Nicotiana rustica plants for the assay of NIMV.

Purification procedure. Purification of CiMV followed the same procedure described for SDV (Tanaka and Imada, 1974b). For purification of NIMV, a modified procedure from that for SDV and CiMV was employed. After grinding NIMV-affected P. floridana tissue with cold 0.1 M citrate buffer solution containing 0.1 per cent thioglycolic acid (1:3 ratio), the extract was mixed with one-fifth volume of Mg-treated bentonite solution, thoroughly shaken for 15 minutes with a magnetic stirrer, and centrifuged for 15 minutes at 13,500 g.

Electron microscopy. Specimens for electron microscopy were prepared from density-gradient samples. Preparations were negatively stained with 1.0 per cent PTA and examined with an Hitachi, Model HS-9, electron microscope.
RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Rate zonal sedimentation of each partially purified preparation of CiMV and NIMV from sucrose density-gradients produced a faint opalescent band about 20 mm below the meniscus. Each band gave a typical ultraviolet absorption spectrum for nucleoprotein with a maximum at 260 nm, and minimum at 240 nm. The UV-absorbing material of CiMV infected both sesame and N. rustica seedlings. Electron microscopy of CiMV and NIMV preparation revealed uniform spherical particles about 27 and 23 nm in diameter, respectively (fig. 1). Particles of CiMV were of the same dimension as those of SDV. Particles of NIMV however, were smaller than those of SDV and CiMV.

Symptoms induced in plants of sesame and N. rustica inoculated with purified preparations of CiMV and NIMV are identical to symptoms in plants inoculated with viruses extracted from affected citrus leaves. It would seem then that these two purified viruses may be the causal agents of citrus mosaic and navel orange infectious mottling. Back inoculations of these viruses to citrus seedlings are now being conducted. It is also of interest to us to know if CiMV and NIMV are strains of SDV. Further experiments are being planned.

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LITERATURE CITED


TANAKA, H., AND S. YAMADA

TANAKA, H., S. YAMADA, AND K. KISHI