

Application of citral to control postharvest diseases of oranges



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Alhamdulillahirrabbiilamin...

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dengan kasih sayangnya tidak pernah lelah mendoakanku,
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Declaration	iv
Acknowledgement	v
Publications and conference proceeding	vii
List of tables	viii
List of figures	xi
Abbreviations	xiii
Glossary of terms	xv
1 <u>General introduction</u>	1
2 <u>Literature review</u>	5
2.1. Citrus	5
2.2. Postharvest fungal pathogens of oranges	10
2.2.1. Green mould	11
2.2.2. Blue mould	13
2.2.3. Sour rot	14
2.3. Control of postharvest fungal diseases of oranges	15
2.3.1. Synthetic chemical fungicides	16
2.3.2. Biological control	19
2.3.3. Natural chemical fungicides	21
2.4. Citral	23
2.4.1. Chemistry of citral	23
2.4.2. Citral in citrus	27
2.4.3. Analysis of citral	30
2.4.4. Bioactivity of citral	31
2.5. Application of citral to control of postharvest fungal pathogens of oranges	32
2.6. Summary	37
2.7. Aims of the study	38

3	<u>General materials and development of methods</u>	40
3.1.	Introduction	40
3.2.	Fungal cultures	40
	3.2.1. Isolation, identification and maintenance of the fungi	40
	3.2.2. Pathogenicity tests	41
	3.2.3. Culture media and inoculum production	42
3.3.	Chemical analysis	43
	3.3.1. Chemicals used	43
	3.3.2. GC analysis of citral	45
3.4.	Synthesis of geranial and neral	45
3.5.	SPME-GC analysis of volatile citral	48
3.6.	Statistical analysis	54
4	<u>Methods of citral application to control pathogens in culture</u>	55
4.1.	Introduction	55
4.2.	Materials and methods	56
	4.2.1. Preliminary experiment	56
	4.2.2. Incorporation of citral in culture medium	57
	4.2.3. Exposure to citral solution	58
	4.2.4. Exposure to citral volatile	58
	4.2.5. SPME-GC analysis of headspace citral concentration inside NDY Plates	59
	4.2.6. Statistical analysis	59
4.3.	Results	59
	4.3.1. Effect of citral incorporated into culture medium	60
	4.3.2. Effect of citral solution	61
	4.3.3. Effect of volatile citral	62
	4.3.3.1. Exposure of spores to citral volatile at 22°C	62
	4.3.3.2. Exposure of spores to volatile citral at 5°C	64
	4.3.3.3. Citral headspace concentration in NDY plates	66
4.4.	Discussion	66
	4.4.1. Effect of citral incorporation into culture medium	66
	4.4.2. Effect of citral solution	67
	4.4.3. Effect of volatile citral	68
4.5.	Summary	69

5	<u>Inhibition of citrus postharvest pathogens by vapour of citral and its related compounds in culture</u>	71
5.1.	Introduction	71
5.2.	Materials and methods	72
5.2.1.	Synthesis of geranial and neral	72
5.2.2.	Comparison of citral with its isomers, and with its related compounds	73
5.2.3.	Citral degradation analysis	74
5.2.4.	Statistical analysis	76
5.3.	Results	77
5.3.1.	Synthesis of geranial and neral	77
5.3.2.	Effects of vapour of citral and related compounds on <i>P. digitatum</i>	77
5.3.3.	Effects of vapour of citral and related compounds on <i>P. italicum</i>	81
5.3.4.	Effects of vapour of citral and related compounds on <i>G. citri-aurantii</i>	84
5.3.5.	Citral degradation analysis	86
5.4.	Discussion	88
5.4.1.	Synthesis of geranial and neral	88
5.4.2.	Effects of the treatments on post-harvest pathogens	90
5.4.3.	Change of citral content during storage	94
5.5.	Summary	95
6	<u>Fumigation of oranges with citral to control postharvest fungal diseases</u>	97
6.1.	Introduction	97
6.2.	Materials and methods	98
6.2.1.	Preparation of fruit before treatment	99
6.2.2.	Experimental design and treatments	100
6.2.3.	Assessment of disease	102
6.2.4.	SPME-GC analysis of headspace citral concentration in box	103
6.2.5.	Citral residue analysis	104
6.2.6.	Statistical Analysis	105
6.3.	Results	105
6.3.1.	RH measurement to interpret the difference between control in open and closed boxes	105
6.3.2.	Fumigation of fruit with citral at room temperature after inoculation of puncture wounds	107
6.3.3.	Fumigation of fruit with citral at 5°C after inoculation of puncture wound	111

6.3.4. Fumigation of fruit with citral at 5°C after inoculation of abrasion wound	115
6.3.5. Effect of wounding method on disease incidence	118
6.3.6. SPME-GC analysis of headspace citral concentration in box	122
6.3.7. Residue analysis	125
6.4. Discussion	
6.4.1. Disease development on control fruit	126
6.4.2. Effect of volatile citral on disease development on fruit	128
6.4.3. Effect of citral fumigation on fruit	133
6.5. Summary	134
7 <u>General Discussion</u>	136
7.1. Research findings	136
7.2. Implication of research findings	137
7.3. Future research	145
References	148
Appendixes	175

Abstract

Green mould, blue mould and sour rot, caused by the fungi *Penicillium digitatum*, *P. italicum* and *Geotrichum citri-aurantii*, are postharvest diseases which cause significant losses to the citrus industry worldwide. Current control of the diseases raises some problems, such as development of fungicide resistance, concerns about residues harmful to humans, and also restrictions on the use of certain fungicides. Those problems have led to a need to develop alternative fungicides, including exploitation of some natural products such as essential oils.

Application of the essential oil, citral (3,7-dimethyl-2,6-octadienal) to control the fungi and the diseases was assessed in this study. *In vitro*, citral incorporated into agar at 2%, 6% and 15% prevented germination of spores of the fungi, and no mycelial growth was observed by microscopic observation after 17 days of incubation. When citral was applied as a solution on agar, spore germination of *P. digitatum* and *G. citri-aurantii* was inhibited at concentrations of 6% and 15%. However, germination of *P. italicum* spores was not affected. Vapour of citral and its individual isomers, geranial and neral, generated from 6 and 15% aqueous solutions, inhibited spore germination and growth of the three pathogens. Vapour generated from 15% aqueous solutions of citral and geranial were fungicidal to *P. digitatum* and *G. citri-aurantii*, and fungistatic to *P. italicum*, while neral was fungicidal to *G. citri-aurantii* and fungistatic to the other two fungi. The result suggested that method of application and citral concentration affected the efficacy of

citral in controlling the fungi. In the three methods of applications examined, citral was effective in controlling *G. citri-aurantii*, especially at high concentration.

As an α , β -unsaturated aldehyde, citral may be degraded over time due to oxidative reactions, resulting in change in its composition, and this may affect its antifungal activity. Storage of citral may result in the oxidation of neral and geranial to produce nerolic acid and geranic acid. GC/MS results showed that neral, geranial, nerolic acid and geranic acid were detected, while the related compounds, nerol, geraniol, citronellal, citronellol and citronellic acid were not detected either for citral stored at 5°C or at room temperature. At room temperature, geranial and neral content declined more quickly than at 5°C.

The effect of citral on the incidence of disease on fruit was studied by applying citral as a fumigant. Wounded oranges inoculated with spore suspension (10^6 spores mL⁻¹) of the fungi were placed in 5-litre plastic boxes, fumigated with 2, 6, or 15% citral, and incubated at 5°C or room temperature. Fumigation of oranges with citral in this closed system delayed the onset of sour rot at room temperature by 7 – 10 days and at 5°C, by 13 – 30 days, suggesting that volatile citral controlled *G. citri-aurantii* on fruit as well as *in vitro*. The effects of fumigation with citral on green and blue mould were more variable. Fumigation delayed the onset of green mould and blue mould at 5°C by 2 days at the higher concentrations (6 and 15%) tested, while at room temperature, spoilage was not delayed even at the highest concentration tested. Measurement of citral in the headspace of boxes containing fruit and citral-soaked pads showed that the concentration above the fruit was higher than that measured

below the fruit both at 5°C and at room temperature. Phytotoxicity symptoms were observed on the upper surface of some fruit that was close to or in direct contact with the citral-soaked pad at concentrations of 6% and 15%, suggesting that phytotoxicity may have been associated with high volatile citral concentration. However, citral residue was not detected in oranges irrespective of treatment with citral, which suggested that little citral had penetrated into the peel. During storage the citral content decreased due to oxidation of geranial and neral to produce geranic acid and neric acid both at 5°C and room temperature. This may have had an impact on the efficacy of citral against the pathogens.

Findings may contribute to a better understanding of the efficacy of citral when applied to the pathogens *in vitro* and to the development of effective control methods when applied on fruit. The possibility of combining citral treatment with other commonly used practices is also worthy of consideration. For example, citral could be combined with heat treatment to increase the volatility of the citral. In addition, incorporation of citral in a wax formulation may allow a low concentration of citral to be used in direct contact with the pathogens on fruit. Fumigation of fruit with citral may offer potential as a means to control development of sour rot of oranges, and its effects on fruit quality, flavour and nutritional aspects require further investigation.

Declaration

NAME: ERMINAWATI WURYATMO (WATI). PROGRAM: PhD

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any degree or diploma in any university or other institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contain no material previously published or written by any other person, except where due reference is made in the text.

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Publications and conference proceedings

The following publications and abstracts in conference proceedings were produced during the PhD candidature;

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Klieber, A., Scott, E., and Wuryatmo, E. (2002) Effect of method of application on antifungal efficacy of citral against post-harvest spoilage fungi of citrus in culture. *Australasian Plant Pathology*, **31**, 329-332.

Wuryatmo, E., Klieber, A., and Scott, E. (2003) Inhibition of citrus postharvest pathogens by vapor of citral and related compounds in culture. *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, **51**, 2637-2640.

List of tables

Table 2.1	Fungicides registered in Australia for postharvest use on citrus	16
Table 2.2	Fungicides permitted for use in export destinations for Australian citrus	17
Table 3.1	Description and source of chemicals used in experiments	44
Table 4.1	Comparison study of the efficacy between citral and fungicides to the three pathogens	60
Table 4.2	Effect of citral incorporated into NDY agar on germination and growth of fungal spores incubated at 22°C for 14 days	61
Table 4.3	Effect of exposure of fungal spores to citral solution for 1 hour before being inoculated onto NDY agar incubated at 22°C (room temperature)	63
Table 4.4	Effect of volatile citral on fungal spores inoculated onto NDY agar incubated at 22°C for 14 days	64
Table 4.5	Effect of volatile citral on fungal spores inoculated onto NDY agar and incubated at 5°C for 6 weeks	65
Table 5.1	The effect of vapour of citral and its isomers (in 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ TritonX) at different concentrations on the growth of <i>P. digitatum</i> at 22°C	81
Table 5.2	The effect of vapour of citral and its related compounds (in 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ TritonX) at different concentrations on the growth of <i>P. digitatum</i> at 22°C	82
Table 5.3	The effect of vapour of citral and its isomers (in 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ TritonX) at different concentrations on the growth of <i>P. italicum</i> at 22°C	83
Table 5.4	The effect of vapour of citral and its related compounds (in 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ TritonX) at different concentrations on the growth of <i>P. italicum</i> at 22°C	84
Table 5.5	The effect of vapour of citral and its isomers (in 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ TritonX) at different concentrations on the growth of <i>G. citri-aurantii</i> at 22°C	85

Table 5.6	The effect of vapour of citral and its related compounds (in 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ TritonX) at different concentrations on the growth of <i>G. citri-aurantii</i> at 22°C	86
Table 5.7	Changes in citral composition after storage for 12 days at room temperature in the preliminary experiment, as determined by GC/MS analysis of citral solution 2% (v/v) ethanol	87
Table 5.8	Citral degradation components after storage at 5°C	89
Table 5.9	Citral degradation components after storage at room temperature	89
Table 6.1	Relative humidity (RH) measured at 22°C and 5°C as an aid to interpret differences between the two controls	106
Table 6.2	Time (in days) to first appearance of symptoms and 100 % disease incidence among fruit inoculated with spoilage fungi via a puncture wound and fumigated with citral at room temperature	110
Table 6.3	Number of fruit (of 18 fruit in total) displaying phytotoxicity symptoms when held at room temperature on day 2 after treatment with different concentrations of citral (2, 6 or 15%)	111
Table 6.4	Time (in days) to first appearance of symptoms and 100 % disease incidence among fruit inoculated with spoilage fungi via a puncture wound and fumigated with citral at 5°C	116
Table 6.5	Number of fruit (of 18 fruit in total) displaying phytotoxicity symptoms when held at 5°C after wounding with a sterilised nail. Fruit were counted on day 18 after treatment with different concentrations of citral (2, 6 or 15%)	117
Table 6.6	Time (in days) to first appearance of symptoms and 100 % disease incidence among fruit inoculated with spoilage fungi via abrasion and fumigated with citral at 5°C	119
Table 6.7	Comparison on the effect of wounding methods on green mould incidence for fruit inoculated with <i>P. digitatum</i> at 5°C	123
Table 6.8	Comparison on the effect of wounding methods on blue mould incidence for fruit inoculated with <i>P. italicum</i> at 5°C	124

Table 6.9	Headspace citral (sum of geranial and neral) concentration in 5-L plastic boxes containing 6 fruit and citral-soaked pads. Samples were taken 2 h after placing pads and fruit in the box for fruit stored at 5°C and after 3 h for fruit stored at 22°C.	125
Table 6.10	Representative chromatogram data of residue analysis of peel extract of fruit stored for 2 weeks at room temperature	126

List of figures

Figure 2.1	Citrus major growing regions in Australia	6
Figure 2.2	Australian export for oranges 2006/2007	7
Figure 2.3	The availability of oranges during the year in Australia	7
Figure 2.4	General structures of orange fruit.	9
Figure 2.5	Rind transection of mature orange fruit	9
Figure 2.6	Orange with green mould	12
Figure 2.7	Orange with blue mould	13
Figure 2.8	Orange with sour rot	14
Figure 2.9	Structure of citral isomers, geranial and neral and the position of α - and β -carbons	25
Figure 2.10	Condensation of citral with acetone produces α - ionone and β -ionone	26
Figure 2.11	Biogenesis of monoterpenes	28
Figure 2.12	Detection of antifungal compounds in lemon flavedo essential oil Using TLC	34
Figure 3.1	Aerobic catalytic oxidation of alcohols to aldehydes	46
Figure 3.2	Separation of reaction mixture on TLC plate	47
Figure 3.3	Arrangement of Petri dish for headspace measurement of citral	52
Figure 5.1A	The GC chromatogram of synthesised geranial in 2% (v/v) acetone and 2% (v/v) tetradecane as an internal standard	78
Figure 5.1B	The GC chromatogram of synthesised neral in 2% (v/v) acetone and 2% (v/v) tetradecane as an internal standard	79
Figure 6.1	Arrangement of (a) Supesorp pads to which citral was applied and (b) fruit in a 5-L Handy Storer container, with Supesorp pad in lid (A), Supesorp pad in box (B) and 10 g of calcium hydroxide as a carbon dioxide scavenger (C)	100

Figure 6.2	Fibre position for analysis of headspace concentration of citral in the box at each temperature when (A) positioned above the fruit and (B) positioned below the fruit	103
Figure 6.3	Phytotoxicity observed on (A) fruit in direct contact with the citral pad and (B) fruit close to the citral pad attached to the lid of the box at 15% citral	111
Figure 6.4	Disease development at the wound site of inoculated fruit stored at 5°C; (A) Brown discolouration around the wound site on control fruit in closed boxes inoculated with <i>P. italicum</i> stored at 5°C taken 14 days after wounding, and (B) Disease on citral treated fruit due to <i>P. italicum</i> stored at 5°C, 14 days after inoculation	115

Abbreviations

°C	degree Celsius
2,4 D	2,4 Dichlorophenoxy
ANOVA	analysis of variance
a_w	water activity
Ca(OH)₂	calcium hydroxide
C₂ H₂	acetylene
C₂ H₄	ethylene
cfu	colony forming units
CH₂Cl₂	dichloro methane
CO₂	carbon dioxide
CuCl	cuprous chloride
DBAD	di-tert butyl azo dicarboxilate
FID	flame ionisation detector
kg, g, mg, µg	kilogram, gram, milligram, microgram
Gcd	<i>Geotrichum candidum</i> (<i>Geotrichum citri-aurantii</i>)
GC	gas chromatography
GC/MS	gas chromatograph/mass spectrometry
h	hours
H₂O	water (dihydrogen oxide)
KPa	kilo Pascal
K₂CO₃	potassium carbonate
L, mL, µL	litre, millilitre, microlitre

LSD	least significant difference
m, mm, μm	metre, millimetre, micrometre
min	minutes
n	number of mole present
NDY	Neutral-Dox Yeast
<i>Pdg</i>	<i>Penicillium digitatum</i>
<i>Pit</i>	<i>Penicillium italicum</i>
P	pressure
PDA	potato dextrose agar
π	phi
R	gas constant (8.3143 Joules/Moles/K)
r	radius
SARDI	South Australian Research and Development Institute
SPME	solid-phase microextraction
T	temperature
TFE	tetrafluoroethylene
TLC	thin layer chromatography
V	volume
v/v	volume per volume

Glossary of terms used in this study:

2% citral	<u>In Petri dishes (<i>in vitro</i> experiment) :</u> 2 μL citral diluted to 100 μL with 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ aqueous TritonX solution <u>In box (<i>in vivo</i> experiment) :</u> 131 μL citral diluted to 6550 μL with 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ aqueous TritonX solution
6% citral	<u>In Petri dishes (<i>in vitro</i> experiment) :</u> 6 μL citral diluted to 100 μL with 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ aqueous TritonX solution <u>In box (<i>in vivo</i> experiment) :</u> 393 μL citral diluted to 6550 μL with 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ aqueous TritonX solution
15% citral	<u>In Petri dishes (<i>in vitro</i> experiment) :</u> 15 μL citral diluted to 100 μL with 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ aqueous TritonX solution <u>In box (<i>in vivo</i> experiment) :</u> 983 μL citral diluted to 6550 μL with 400 $\mu\text{L L}^{-1}$ aqueous TritonX solution
100% disease incidence	The time required for all fruit to show disease
Δ value	The time course for disease development, as a measure of the efficacy of citral in delaying the onset of disease