

1 **New insights on “bois noir” epidemiology in the Chianti Classico area**
2 **(Tuscany, central Italy)**

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18 **Running Title:** New insights on bois noir epidemiology

19 **SUMMARY**

20 Bois noir (BN), a disease of the grapevine yellows complex associated with ‘*Candidatus*
21 *Phytoplasma solani*’ (*CaPso*l), represents a great threat in all wine growing areas worldwide. Several
22 studies revealed that BN epidemiology is extremely complex, including multiple insect vectors and
23 plant hosts. In the present work, a survey on putative *CaPso*l insect vectors along with molecular
24 typing of *CaPso*l strains was conducted ~~to in-depth investigate the BN epidemiology~~ in a BN-affected
25 vineyard in ~~Greve in Chianti (the Chianti Classico area, the Tuscany region), where the role of~~
26 ~~*Reptalus artemisiae* in transmitting *CaPso*l to grapevine was previously hypothesized~~. No *Hyalesthes*
27 *obsoletus* specimens were captured, while ~~*Reptalus*~~ *artemisiae* and ~~*Neoliturus*~~ *fenestratus* were
28 found largely prevalent. Real-time PCR assay detected *CaPso*l in 41% and 37.5% of *N. fenestratus*
29 and *R. artemisiae* specimens, respectively. Molecular typing evidenced that *R. artemisiae* and *N.*
30 *fenestratus* are infected by *CaPso*l strains carrying mainly the *stamp* sequence variant St10 and St5,
31 respectively. Other insects ~~(*Philaenus spumarius*, *Dietyophara europaea*, *Psammotettix* spp.)~~,
32 reported as *CaPso*l vectors to grapevine in North Italy and poorly present in ~~Greve in Chianti~~
33 ~~examined vineyard~~, was found infected by *CaPso*l strains carrying mainly the *stamp* sequence variant
34 St5. In a recent study, these strains were found as the most abundant in grapevines (St5 and St10) and
35 weeds (St10) in the ~~examined vineyard~~ Chianti Classico area. Such results were reinforced by
36 nucleotide sequence analyses of *secY* gene. Based on this and previous evidence, reporting the *CaPso*l
37 vectoring activity of both *R. artemisiae* and *N. fenestratus*, it is reasonable to suggest ~~that two main~~
38 ~~role of such insects~~ cycles can be involved in BN epidemiology in the Chianti Classico area. ~~:(i)~~
39 ~~grapevine *R. artemisiae* weeds for *CaPso*l strains carrying the *stamp* variant St10; (ii) grapevine~~
40 ~~*N. fenestratus* (plus other insects with a minor role) for *CaPso*l strains carrying the *stamp* variant St5.~~
41 Thus, F further studies are necessary to prove the vectoring activity of *CaPso*l by *R. artemisiae* and
42 *N. fenestratus* to grapevine and understand their ecological and epidemiological role in the vineyard
43 agroecosystem, including *CaPso*l source plants (insect host plants), ~~investigate the role of weeds in~~

44 ~~CaPsol transmission routes to grapevine, clarify if grapevine can act as reservoir plant for CaPsol~~
45 ~~acquisition for these putative vectors.~~

46
47 **Keywords:** phytoplasmas; grapevine; insect vectors; weeds; *stamp*; *secY*

48
49 **1 INTRODUCTION**

50 Bois noir (BN), a disease of the grapevine yellows (GY) complex, represents a great threat in
51 all major vine-growing areas in Europe, Mediterranean basin, Chile, South Africa, Middle East, and
52 China (Bertaccini et al., 2018; Pierro et al., 2019). BN is associated with ‘*Candidatus* Phytoplasma
53 solani’ (*CaPsol*), taxonomic subgroup 16SrXII-A (Quaglino et al., 2013). *CaPsol* strains are mainly
54 transmitted to grapevine by the insect vector *Hyalesthes obsoletus* Signoret, a polyphagous cixiid
55 living preferentially on *Urtica dioica* L. (nettle), *Convolvulus arvensis* L. (bindweed), *Artemisia*
56 *vulgaris* L., *Vitex agnus-castus* L., and *Crepis foetida* L., and erratically feeding on grapevine (Langer
57 and Maixner, 2004; Sharon et al., 2005; Kosovac et al., 2019). In the last years, the utilization of
58 variable (*secY*) and hyper-variable genes (*stamp*, *vmp1*) allowed more in-depth characterization of
59 *CaPsol* strain populations unveiling that alternative insect vectors and additional herbaceous plant
60 hosts can play a role in the spreading of BN (Orenstein et al., 2003; Battle et al., 2008; Cvrković et
61 al., 2014; Jakovljević et al., 2020; Mitrovic et al., 2019; Quaglino et al., 2019).

62 Interestingly, recent studies conducted in a BN-affected vineyard in Greve in Chianti (Chianti
63 Classico area, Tuscany region) revealed the large prevalence of a *CaPsol* strain carrying the *stamp*
64 sequence variant St10, previously found mainly in Solanaceae hosts and in insect vectors in France
65 and central Italy (Cimerman et al., 2009; Murolo & Romanazzi, 2015; Landi et al., 2015; Chuche et
66 al., 2016), but never in grapevines outside of Tuscany (Pierro et al., 2018a, 2019). Epidemiological
67 investigation carried out in the same vineyard, where *H. obsoletus* was not caught, showed the
68 massive occurrence of *Reptalus artemisiae* (Becker), formerly know as *Reptalus quinquecostatus*
69 (Duf.) (Emeljanov, 2020). *R. artemisiae* specimens were found infected by *CaPsol* strains carrying

70 exclusively the *stamp* sequence variant St10, identified as prevalent also in grapevines and in most
71 weeds (reservoir plants) for three consecutive years, suggesting the existence of a new BN
72 epidemiological pattern related to these *CaPsol* strains in which *R. artemisiae* can play a pivotal role
73 (Pierro et al., 2020). Furthermore, the identification in grapevines and weeds of *CaPsol* strains
74 harboring *stamp* and *secY* sequence variants different from those detected in *R. artemisiae* can suggest
75 the presence of further insect vectors involved in alternative BN epidemiological patterns in the
76 studied vineyard (Pierro et al., 2020).

77 In the present work, a survey on putative *CaPsol* insect vectors along with molecular typing
78 of *CaPsol* strains was conducted to improve the knowledge on alternative BN epidemiological
79 patterns in Chianti Classico area.

80

81 **2 MATERIALS AND METHODS**

82 **2.1 Insect survey**

83 Survey on putative *CaPsol* insect vectors was conducted in Greve in Chianti (Chianti Classico
84 area, Florence district) inside an organic Sangiovese vineyard planted in 1997, with a density of 2.3
85 m between the rows and 0.8 m on the row. Ground cover was typical of the local area (Pierro et al.,
86 2018). In previous studies carried out in this vineyard, *CaPsol* strains carrying the *stamp* gene
87 sequence variant St10 was found prevalent in BN-affected grapevines and in the putative vector *R.*
88 *artemisiae*. From June to August 2019, a total of 9 yellow sticky traps were placed inside (6 traps)
89 and at the vineyard borders (3 traps). The traps were positioned at the grapevine canopy level, 60 cm
90 away from the ground, and replaced every 2 weeks. The insect identification was based on
91 stereomicroscope observation of phenotypic characters and male genitalia after their dissection and
92 clarification in a 10% potassium hydroxide solution. Specimens of putative insect vectors (phloem
93 feeders) were kept at -20°C in ethanol 90% until DNA extraction.

94

95 **2.2 DNA extraction and phytoplasma detection**

96 Insect DNA was extracted from individual specimens with cetyltrimethylammonium bromide
97 (CTAB) 2.5%, as described by Marzachi et al. (1998) with some modification. Briefly, each insect
98 specimen was macerated using sterile sand in tube contain CTAB solution. The suspension was
99 incubated for 20 min at 65°C, then extracted with chloroform-isoamyl alcohol (24:1). DNA was
100 precipitated by adding 1 volume of cold isopropanol, recovered by centrifugation, washed with 70%
101 ethanol and dried *in vacuo*. Obtained Pellets were dissolved in 50 µL of sterile water and stored in at
102 -20°C until their use.

103 Detection of *CaPsol* and phytoplasmas associated with Flavescence dorée (FD, taxonomic
104 group 16SrV), and Aster Yellows (AY, taxonomic group 16SrI) was executed amplifying 16S rRNA
105 gene through TaqMan assay (Angelini et al., 2007), using the Rotor-Gene Q (Qiagen, Germany).
106 DNA extracted from the leaf veins of a healthy Sangiovese grapevine plant, maintained in the
107 greenhouse of the Department of Agriculture, Food and Environment (University of Pisa, Italy), and
108 reaction mixture devoid of DNA were used as negative controls.

109

110 **2.3 Molecular typing and phylogenetic analyses of *CaPsol* strains**

111 *CaPsol* strains, detected in the analyzed insect specimens, were characterized by nucleotide
112 sequence analyses of the genes *stamp* and *secY*.

113 *Stamp* gene amplification was conducted by nested PCR using the primer pair
114 *StampF/StampR0* followed by *StampF1/StampR1*; reaction mixtures and PCR parameters were as
115 described by Fabre et al. (2011). *SecY* gene amplification was performed in nested PCR using the
116 primer pair *PosecF1/PosecR1* followed by *PosecF3/PosecR3*; reaction mixtures and PCR parameters
117 were as described by Fialovà et al. (2009). PCRs, carried out in the automated thermal cycler C1000
118 Cycler Touch (Bio-Rad), included the same controls described above for TaqMan assay.
119 Amplification of the target genes was verified through electrophoresis on 1% agarose gel in Tris-
120 borate-EDTA buffer and visualized under UV transilluminator.

121 Nested PCR amplicons of *stamp* and *secY* genes, representative of *CaPsol* strains detected in
122 insects, were sequenced in both strands (Sanger methods, 5x coverage per base position) by a
123 commercial service (Eurofins Genomics, Germany). Nucleotide sequences were assembled by the
124 Contig Assembling Program, trimmed to the annealing sites of the nested PCR primer pairs, aligned
125 by ClustalW Multiple Alignment, and analyzed by Sequence Identity Matrix in the software BioEdit
126 version 7.2.6 (Hall, 1999). Unique *stamp* and *secY* nucleotide sequences, identified in this study, were
127 attributed to sequence variants (100% sequence identity) by their comparison with sequences
128 previously deposited in GenBank and listed in reference Datasets previously published (Table S1,
129 S2) (Pierro et al., 2018, 2019). Representative *stamp* and *secY* nucleotide sequences, identified in
130 *CaPsol* strains examined in the present study, were submitted to NCBI GenBank.

131 Representative *stamp* and *secY* sequence variants, identified in this and previous studies, were
132 aligned for generating unrooted phylogenetic trees by Neighbour-Joining method performed using
133 the Jukes–Cantor model and bootstrap replicated 1,000 times in the MEGA X software (Kumar et al.,
134 2018).

135

136 **3 RESULTS**

137 **3.1 *CaPsol* detection in collected putative insect vectors**

138 During the field survey carried out in the examined vineyard from June to August 2019, 179
139 *Auchenorrhyncha* adult insects were collected and distinguished, based on stereomicroscope
140 analyses, in 8 taxonomic groups defined at species (5) and genus (3) level. Such insects belong to the
141 family Cicadellidae (97 specimens), Cixiidae (56), Aphrophoridae (13), and Dictyopharidae (13)
142 (Table 1). The most abundant insect species were *Neoliturus fenestratus* (Herrich-Schaffer) (78
143 specimens; 43.6%), *R. artemisiae* (56 specimens; 31.3%), and *Dictyophara europaea* (Linnaeus)
144 (7.3%) (Table 1).

145 TaqMan assay detected *CaPsol* in 60 out of 179 collected insect specimens. In detail, *CaPsol*
146 was detected in five insect taxa with different infection rate: 41% in *N. fenestratus*, 37.5% in *R.*
147 *artemisiae*, 30% in *Philaenus spumarius* Linnaeus, 20% in *Psammotettix* sp., and 15% in *D.*
148 *europaea*. No phytoplasmas were found in *Neophilaenus* sp., *Macrosteles* sp., and *Zygina rhamni*
149 (Ferrari) (Table 1). Phytoplasmas associated with AY and FD were not identified in any insect. Real-
150 time PCR analysis gave no amplification in negative controls (healthy grapevine control plant and
151 reaction mixtures devoid of nucleic acids). The 60 *CaPsol* strains detected in insect specimens were
152 furtherly characterized by nucleotide sequence analyses of *stamp* and *secY* genes.

153

154 **3.2 *CaPsol* strain molecular typing**

155 *Stamp* gene amplicons of the expected size (around 600 nt) were obtained in 50 out of 60
156 insect specimens infected by *CaPsol*. Nucleotide sequence alignments and comparison with the
157 updated dataset of *stamp* sequence variants (Table S1) allowed the identification of four distinct
158 *stamp* sequence variants in *CaPsol* strains infecting insects. The two prevalent variants, carried by
159 37 out of 50 *CaPsol* strains, shared 100% of sequence homology with variants St5 (22 strains) and
160 St10 (15 strains); the remaining two *stamp* variants were firstly reported in this study and named St60
161 and St61 (Table 2; Table S3). These new *stamp* variants shared the best sequence identity with
162 previously described variants: St60 showed 98.73% (6 single nucleotide polymorphisms, SNP) of
163 sequence identity compared with St10, while St61 98.73% (5 SNPs) of sequence identity compared
164 with St5. Prevalence of *CaPsol* strains carrying distinct *stamp* variants was different in phytoplasma-
165 infected insects. *N. fenestratus* was found infected by *CaPsol* strains characterized by the *stamp*
166 variants St5 (18 specimens out of 23), St61 (3), and St60 (2); *R. artemisiae* by *CaPsol* strains
167 characterized by the *stamp* variants St10 (15 out of 20) and St60 (5); *P. spumarius* by *CaPsol* strains
168 characterized by the *stamp* variant St61 (3); *Psammotettix* sp. (2 specimens) and *D. europaea* (2) by
169 strains carrying the variant St5 (Table 3; Table S3).

170 *SecY* gene amplicons of the expected size (around 950 nt) were obtained in 31 out of 60 insect
171 specimens infected by *CaPsoI*. Nucleotide sequence alignments and comparison with the updated
172 dataset of *secY* sequence variants (Table S2) allowed the identification of five distinct *secY* sequence
173 variants in *CaPsoI* strains infecting insects. Four *secY* variants, identified in 14 out of 31 *CaPsoI*
174 strains, shared 100% of sequence homology with the variants SecY1 (4 strains), ecY6 (4 strains),
175 SecY9 (one strain), and SecY33 (5 strains). The remnant sequence variant (named SecY35), firstly
176 reported in this study and identified in 17 *CaPsoI* strains, shared 99.8% (3 SNPs) of sequence
177 homology with the variant *secY6*. Prevalence of *CaPsoI* strains carrying distinct *secY* variants was
178 different in phytoplasma-infected insects. *N. fenestratus* was found infected by *CaPsoI* strains
179 characterized by the *secY* variants SecY35 (8 specimens out of 11), SecY33 (2), and SecY9 (1); *R.*
180 *artemisiae* by *CaPsoI* strains characterized by the *secY* variants SecY35 (9 out of 16), SecY6 (4), and
181 SecY33 (3); *P. spumarius* (2 strains) and *D. europaea* (2 strains) by *CaPsoI* strains characterized by
182 the SecY1 (Table 3).

183

184 **3.3 Phylogenetic analyses**

185 Two main bindweed-related sub-clusters were identified in the phylogenetic tree generated by
186 the analysis of the *stamp* sequence variants found in the present study and those reported in the dataset
187 (Table S1). St5 and St60 grouped in the cluster b-II, along with other *CaPsoI* strains previously
188 identified in different European countries and Balkans. St10 and St61 grouped in the cluster b-I, along
189 with other *CaPsoI* strains previously identified in Italy and France (Figure 1).

190 Three main clusters were identified in the phylogenetic tree generated by the analysis of the
191 *secY* sequence variants identified in this study and those reported in the dataset (Table S2). *CaPsoI*
192 strains carrying the SecY1 variant grouped within the cluster *SecY-1*; the variants SecY9 and SecY33
193 in the cluster *SecY-2*; the variants SecY6 and SecY35 grouped within the cluster *SecY-3* (Figure 2).
194 No specific variant groupings were correlated with geographical origin.

195

196 4 DISCUSSION

197 In Italy and other European countries, *CaPsol* is transmitted to grapevine mainly by the vector
198 *H. obsoletus* (Bertaccini, 2018). Data obtained from the survey on BN putative vectors, carried out in
199 2019 in the examined vineyard in Greve in Chianti, showed that no *H. obsoletus* specimens were
200 captured, confirming the results obtained in previous study (Pierro et al., 2020). Considering that GY
201 incidence on the studied vineyard has been increasing through the last years and FD phytoplasmas
202 were never identified in symptomatic grapevines (Pierro et al., 2018, 2018a, 2019, 2020), it can
203 reinforce the hypothesis that other epidemiological patterns could be involved in *CaPsol* transmission
204 to grapevines in the examined vineyard. *R. artemisiae*, formerly known as *R. quinquecostatus*
205 (Emeljanov, 2020), and *N. fenestratus* were found largely prevalent among captured putative vectors.
206 Moreover, *P. spumarius*, *D. europaea*, and *Psammotettix* sp., recently reported as alternative vectors
207 of *CaPsol* to grapevine in northern Italy (Quaglino et al., 2019), were found in the examined vineyard.

208 In the last ten years, a larger genetic diversity among *CaPsol* strains was described by
209 molecular characterization of hypervariable genes (i.e., *secY*, *vmpI*, and *stamp*) (Murolo &
210 Romanazzi, 2015). Interestingly, studies focused on *stamp* gene molecular markers improved the
211 knowledge on *CaPsol* strain population structure and dynamics (Pierro et al., 2018), revealing the
212 phytoplasma transmission ways in vineyard agro-ecosystems (Kosovac et al., 2016). In particular, the
213 specific phytoplasma-vector recognition mechanism involves the binding of insect cytoskeleton
214 proteins with the antigenic membrane protein encoded by the *CaPsol stamp* gene. Thus, *stamp*-based
215 molecular typing of *CaPsol* strains has been employed to identify its insect vectors and transmission
216 routes in previous studies (Chuche et al., 2016; Kosovac et al., 2016; Quaglino et al., 2019).

217 Previous studies, conducted in the examined vineyard, highlighted that bindweed-related
218 *CaPsol* strains carrying the *stamp* sequence variants St5, St10, and St18 were largely prevalent in
219 affected grapevines throughout years (Pierro et al., 2018, 2019, 2020). In comparison with previous
220 study (Pierro et al., 2020), *CaPsol* molecular detection and typing confirmed the high infection rate

221 of *R. artemisiae* specimens carrying bindweed-related phytoplasma strains mainly characterized by
222 the *stamp* variant St10 (phylogenetic cluster b-I). Additionally, *CaPsol* strains found in *R. artemisiae*
223 carried the *secY* sequence variant SecY6, SecY33, and SecY35 (similar to SecY6), previously
224 identified in affected grapevines (Pierro et al., 2020). This result reinforced the hypothesis that a new
225 BN epidemiological pattern, involving grapevine, *R. artemisiae*, and weeds, can be present in the
226 Chianti Classico area.

227 Interestingly, *CaPsol* molecular detection and typing revealed the high infection rate of *N.*
228 *fenestratus* specimens carrying bindweed-related phytoplasma strains mainly characterized by the
229 *stamp* variant St5 (phylogenetic cluster b-II) and *secY* variants SecY35 (similar to SecY6), SecY33,
230 and SecY9, previously found in affected grapevines in Greve in Chianti (Pierro et al., 2020). *N.*
231 *fenestratus* is a polyphagous insect, living preferentially on herbaceous plants, commonly reported in
232 vineyard agroecosystems in Italy and Mediterranean countries (Bosco et al., 1997; Orenstein et al.,
233 2003; Lessio et al., 2017). It was found as *CaPsol* insect host in BN vineyards in diverse Italian
234 regions (Landi et al., 2013; Conigliaro et al., 2020), and as *CaPsol* insect vector to lettuce and carrot
235 in Serbia (Mitrovic et al., 2019). Moreover, in a recent study, *N. fenestratus* was reported as natural
236 vector of 16SrII phytoplasmas to hawkweed oxtongue (*Picris hieracioides*) affected by bushy stunt
237 in south-eastern Serbia (Mitrovic et al., 2012). Moreover, *P. spumarius*, *D. europaea*, and
238 *Psammotettix* sp., recently reported as alternative vector of *CaPsol* to grapevine in North Italy
239 (Quaglino et al., 2019) and not abundant in Greve in Chianti, were found infected by the same *CaPsol*
240 strains carrying the variant St5. Based on this evidence, it is reasonable to suggest that another
241 epidemiological cycle, including grapevine and at least *N. fenestratus*, can be present in the examined
242 vineyard for *CaPsol* strains carrying the variant St5. The fact that such *CaPsol* strain (St5) was not
243 detected in weeds in Greve in Chianti (Pierro et al., 2020) could indicate that affected grapevines can
244 be a reservoir plant for these putative vectors.

245 Based on the data obtained in this and previous study (Pierro et al., 2020), two main BN
246 epidemiological patterns are proposed for bindweed-related *CaPsol* strains in the Chianti Classico

247 area: (i) grapevine – *R. artememisiae* - weeds for strains carrying the *stamp* variant St10 (phylogenetic
248 cluster b-I); (ii) grapevine – *N. fenestratus* (minor role for *P. spumarius*, *D. europaea*, and
249 *Psammotettix* sp.) for strains carrying the variant St5 (phylogenetic cluster b-II).

250 Further studies are necessary to prove the vectoring activity of *CaPsol* by *R. artemisiae* and
251 *N. fenestratus* to grapevine, investigate the role of weeds in *CaPsol* transmission routes to grapevine,
252 clarify if grapevine can act as reservoir plant for *CaPsol* acquisition for these putative vectors.

253

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361 **Table 1.** Identification of *CaPsol* in insect specimens collected in the examined vineyard

362

Family	Species	No. of specimens		
		CaPsol-infected / collected	PCR <i>stamp</i>	PCR <i>secY</i>
			positive / infected	positive / infected
Aphrophoridae	<i>Philaenus spumarius</i>	3/10	3/3	2/3
	<i>Neophilaenus</i> spp.	0/3	-	-
Cicadellidae	<i>Neoliturus fenestratus</i>	32/78	23/32	16/32
	<i>Psammotettix</i> spp.	2/10	2/2	-
	<i>Zygina ramnhi</i>	0/8	-	-
	<i>Macrosteles</i> spp.	0/1	-	-
Cixiidae	<i>Reptalus artemisiae</i>	21/56	20/21	11/21
Dictyopharidae	<i>Dictyophara europaea</i>	2/13	2/2	2/2

363

364 **Table 2.** *stamp* sequence variants carried by *CaPsol* strains identified in insects

<i>stamp</i> sequence variant	No. of <i>CaPsol</i> strains	Insect species	Acc. No.
St5	18	<i>N. fenestratus</i>	MZ06536
St60	2	<i>N. fenestratus</i>	MZ065361
St61	3	<i>N. fenestratus</i>	MZ065360
St10	15	<i>R. artemisiae</i>	MZ065363
St60	5	<i>R. artemisiae</i>	MZ065361
St61	3	<i>P. spumarius</i>	MZ065360
St5	2	<i>Psammotettix</i> spp.	OK376608
St5	2	<i>D. europaea</i>	OK376607

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368 **Table 3.** *secY* sequence variants carried by *CaPsol* strains identified in insects

<i>secY</i> sequence variant	No. of <i>CaPsol</i> strains	Insect species	Acc. No.
SecY33	2	<i>N. fenestratus</i>	OK376614
SecY35	8	<i>N. fenestratus</i>	OK376615
SecY9	1	<i>N. fenestratus</i>	OK376612
SecY33	3	<i>R. artemisiae</i>	OK376613
SecY35	9	<i>R. artemisiae</i>	OK376616
SecY6	4	<i>R. artemisiae</i>	OK376611
SecY1	2	<i>P. spumarius</i>	OK376610
SecY1	2	<i>D. europaea</i>	OK376609

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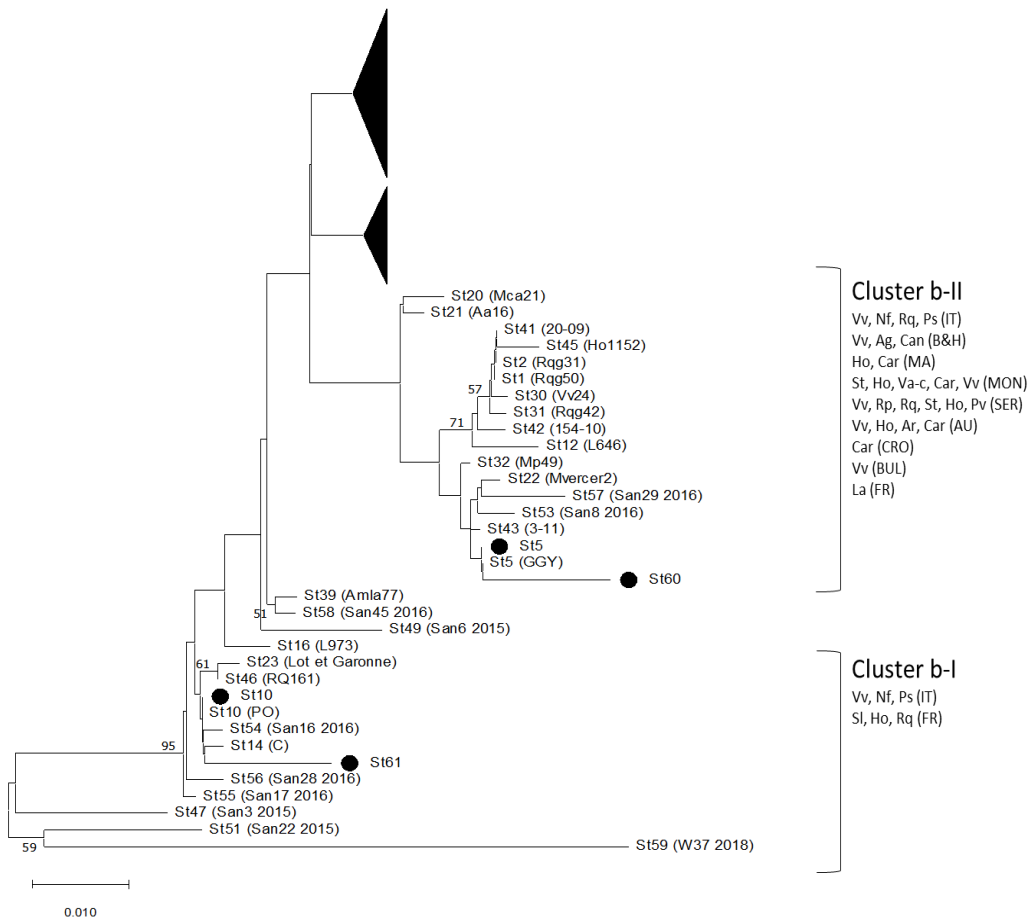
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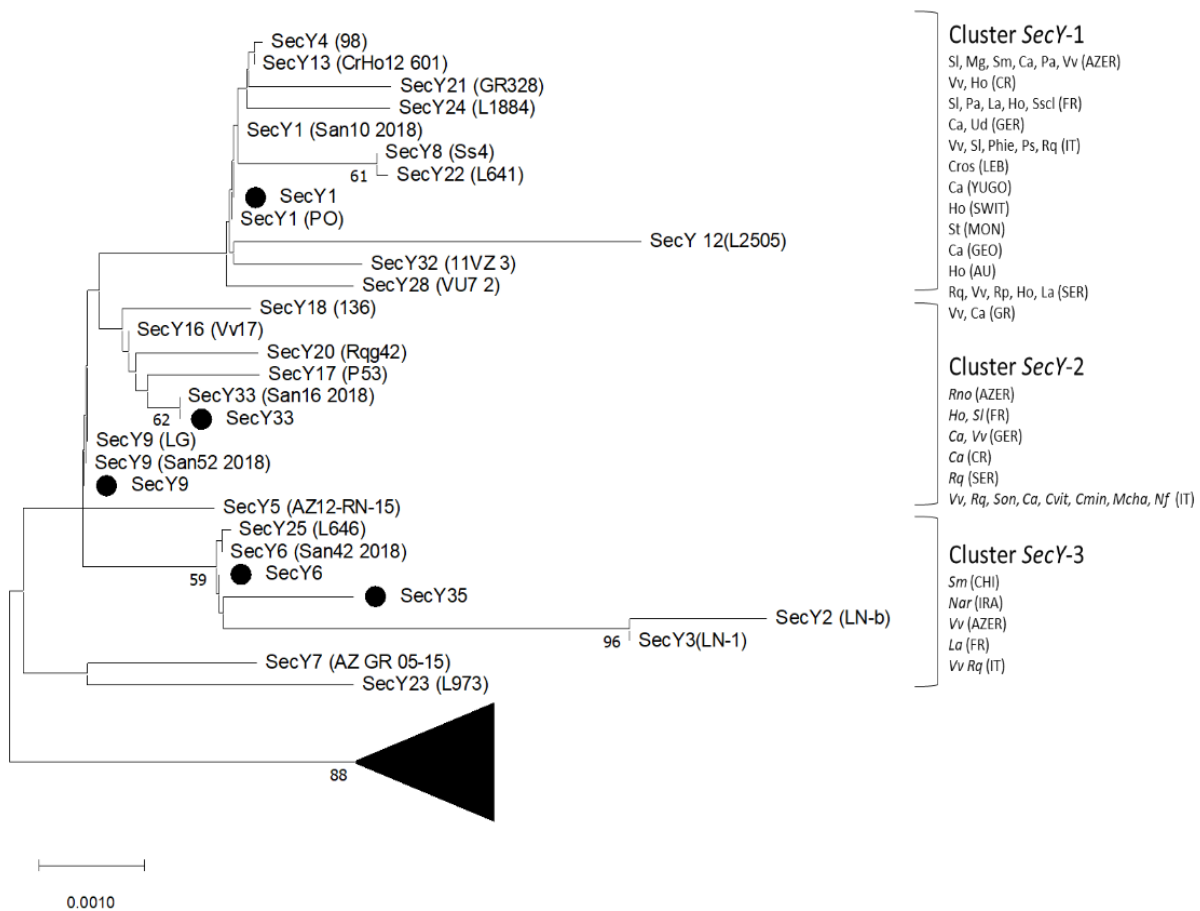
375

376 **Figure 1.** Unrooted phylogenetic tree inferred from *stamp* gene nucleotide sequences of ‘CaPsoI
 377 strains representative of stamp sequence variants previously described (Table S1) and identified in
 378 the present study (Table 2); minimum evolution analysis was performed using the neighbour-joining
 379 method and bootstrap replicated 1,000 times. Names of strains are reported on the image. GenBank
 380 accession number of each sequence is given in parenthesis; gene sequences obtained in the present
 381 study are indicated by black circle. Clusters are shown as delimited by parentheses. Acronyms
 382 within clusters indicated phytoplasma hosts and origin. Hosts: Ag, *Apium graveolens*; Ar, *Anaceratagallia*
 383 *ribauti*; Can, *Capsicum annum*; Car, *Convolvulus arvensis*; Ho, *Hyalesthes*
 384 *obsoletus*; La, *Lavandula angustifolia*; Nf, *Neoliturus fenestratus*; Ps, *Philaenus spumarius*; Pv,
 385 *Phaseolus vulgaris*; Rp, *Reptalus panzeri*; Rq, *R. quinquecostatus*; Sl, *Solanum lycopersicum*; St,
 386 *Solanum tuberosum*; Ud, *Urtica dioica*; Va-c, *Vitex agnus-castus*; Vv; *Vitis vinifera*; Zm, *Zea mays*.
 387 Origin: AU, Austria; B&H, Bosnia & Herzegovina; BU, Bulgaria; CR, Croatia; FR, France; GEO,
 388 Georgia; GER, Germany; GR, Greece; IT, Italy; MA, Republic of Macedonia; MON, Montenegro;
 389 SER, Serbia; SLO, Slovenia.



390

391 **Figure 2.** Unrooted phylogenetic tree inferred from *secY* gene nucleotide sequences of *Ca*Psol strains
 392 representative of *secY* sequence variants previously described (Table S2) and identified in this study
 393 (Table 2); minimum evolution analysis was performed using the neighbour-joining method and
 394 bootstrap replicated 1000 times. Names of strains are reported on the image and nucleotide sequences
 395 obtained in this study are in bold. Clusters are shown as delimited by parentheses. Acronyms within
 396 clusters indicated phytoplasma hosts and origin. Hosts: Ca, *Convolvulus arvensis*; Cmin, *Centaurea*
 397 *minus*; Cros, *Catharanthus roseus*; Cv, *Clematis vitalba*; Ho, *Hyalesthes obsoletus*; La, *Lavandula*
 398 *angustifolia*; Mcha, *Matricaria chamomilla*; Nar, *Narcissus* sp.; Nf, *Neoliturus fenestratus*; Phav,
 399 *Phaseolus vulgaris*; Phie, *Picris hieracioides*; Ps, *Philaenus spumarius*; Rno, *Reptalus noahi*; Rp,
 400 *Reptalus panzeri*; Rq, *Reptalus quinquecostatus*; Sl, *Solanum lycopersicum*; Sm, *Salvia miltiorrhiza*;
 401 *Son*, *Sonchus* sp.; Sscl, *Salvia sclarea*; St, *Solanum tuberosum*; Ud, *Urtica dioica*; Vitex, *Vitex agnus-*
 402 *castus*; Vv, *Vitis vinifera*; Zm, *Zea mays*. Origin: AU, Austria; AZER, Azerbaijan; CH, China; CR,
 403 Croatia; FR, France; GEO, Georgia; GER, Germany; GR, Greece; IRA, Iran; IT, Italy; LEB,
 404 Lebanon; MON, Montenegro; SER, Serbia; SLO, Slovenia; SWIT, Switzerland; YUGO, Yugoslavia.
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