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[PDF (940K)] [References]

Scratch method for simple, rapid diagnosis of citrus huanglongbing using iodine to detect high accumulation of starch in the citrus leaves

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ABSTRACT

We demonstrated a rapid and simple diagnostic method (scratch method) for citrus huanglongbing (HLB) by detecting high accumulation of starch in the citrus leaves with the iodine-starch reaction. The average quantity of starch was 514.2 mg/kg in HLB-infected citrus leaves and 85.6 mg/kg in healthy leaves (Welch's *t*-test *p*<0.01), a significant difference in starch levels between diseased and healthy leaves. Based on this result, we devised a scratch method using abrasive paper for HLB diagnosis. Scratch the surface of a citrus leaf at least 20 times with abrasive paper, put the abrasive paper into 1 ml water in a vinyl pack, add to about 25 µl iodine solution 50 mM for dyeing starch. Iodine-reacted solutions show mostly 'dark brown or black' and 'yellow or orange' which are HLB-positive and negative, respectively. The scratch method and PCR assay of field samples showed more than 90% agreement. In addition, the scratch method did not give false HLB-positive reactions for healthy, nutrient-deficient or other disease leaves infected with *Citrus tatter leaf virus* and *Hop stunt viroid*. Therefore, the scratch method will be useful for rapid, simple detection of HLB in the field.

Key words: citrus huanglongbing, iodine-starch reaction, starch, scratch method

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