Unraveling quinoa domestication using wild ancestors

Daniel Bertero, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina
Adriana Alercia, Bioversity International, Rome, Italy
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Topics of this session

- What do we know about quinoa genetic structure, relations and phylogenetics?

- What is known about its wild ancestor?

- How can research on *C. hircinum* contribute to understand quinoa domestication process and breeding?
What do we know about quinoa?

...Traditionally cultivated in

- Central Andes: Valleys; Altiplano (highlands) and Yungas (humid valleys)
- Central & Southern Chile

(Tapia, 1979)
Quinoa genetic groups
(based on G x E interaction patterns for yield)
Related species (subsection *Cellulata*)

Five genetic groups identified

- **T1**: Dry valley: NWA and Sucre & Tarija (Bolivia);
- **T2**: Highland: NWA; S Bolivia highlands and N Chile
- **T3**: Transition: High and humid environment (NWA: Salta-Jujuy and Titicaca coast);
- **T4**: Oriental humid valley: NWA (Sta. Victoria) and Tarija Valleys, central Peru and Colombia;
- **T5**: Sea level: Central and Southern Chile (most differentiated group)
Clear differentiation between Chilean and Andean germplasm

SRR Loci QAAT001, QAAT022, KGA03, QAAT062 y QGA03 are the most influential examples

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Main hypothesis about quinoa origin

(1) Tetraploids originated in North America, people or migratory birds carried seeds to South America. Origin of *C. hircinum*

(2) Domestication from *C. hircinum* (around Titicaca lake)

(3) Early migration of populations to central and Southern Chile: founder effect, lower variability than in the Andes, absence of ‘*ajaras*’ (weedy relatives), common in the Central Andes).

More recent genetic studies
(relationships among *Chenopodium* sp.)

*Figure 1.* Genetic relationship among 19 taxa of *Chenopodium* based on molecular markers of RAPDs. The scale represents UPGMA similarity values.

Ruas et al. 1999. RAPDs Euphytica 105: 25-32
State of the art of knowledge about quinoa phylogenetics (putative diploid ancestors of *C. hircinum*)

Jellen, 2013. International Quinoa Research Symposium, Pullman, WA
Recent results about quinoa genetic structure using SSR markers

Sabrina Costa Tartara (Molecular characterization of quinoa from NW Argentina and its genetic relations with the rest of the Andes)
Structure of phenotypic variability

Puna/highlands

Humid Valleys

Transition Zone

Dry Valleys

Kilómetros

Ramiro Curti's Ph D thesis (2014)
Southern Andes whirlwind...
(distribution of the five genetic groups)
What is known about C. hircinum?

Quinoa and C. hircinum

Quinuas from the Central Andes and ‘ajaran’ (weedy forms)

Sea level quinoa
Variability in *C. hircinum* from central Argentina

Collection in progress (~ 15 accessions), 1 undetermined accession with white & big seeds, high difficulties to access populations in the Central Andean countries
In this collection we already found..

Variation in:
✓ seed size and colour
✓ plant growth habit
✓ plant colour (red and green)
✓ leaf morphology
✓ root growth (probably induced by environment)
✓ two cycles per year (winter/spring and late summer/mid winter) in a very hot environment (heat escape?)
How can research on *C. hircinum* contribute to:

- Understand quinoa domestication process;
- Quinoa breeding for adaptation to new challenges (i.e. high temperature tolerance, others...)
- Needed:
  - creation of a representative collection
  - development of species-specific markers
  - identification of "domestication traits alleles"
  ......
¡GRACIAS! THANK YOU!

Marta Treuquil, Mapuche quinoa farmer, Cholila, Patagonia, Argentina