

## 1 "Erva-baleeira" secondary metabolism under elicitation

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3 **Lucas Vinicius Dallacorte<sup>1</sup>, Carolina Hoppen Tonial<sup>2</sup>, Emanuelli Pereira da Silva<sup>1</sup>,**  
4 **Alexia Kozelinski<sup>1</sup>, Bárbara Nicole Daboit<sup>1</sup>, José Abramo Marchese<sup>1</sup>**

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6 <sup>1</sup>UTFPR – Universidade Tecnológica Federal do Paraná, Pato Branco. Via do Conhecimento, Km 1 -  
7 CEP 85503-390 - Pato Branco - PR - Brasil, lucasdallacorte@alunos.utfpr.edu.br, ,  
8 eps.emanueli@gmail.com alexiakozelinski@alunos.utfpr.edu.br, barbaradaboit@alunos.utfpr.edu.br, ,  
9 abramo@utfpr.edu.br

10 <sup>2</sup>IFPR. Instituto Federal Do Paraná, Campus Palmas. Av. Bento Munhoz da Rocha Neto s/nº,  
11 PRT 280, CEP: 85555000 - Palmas, PR - Brasil,  
12

### 13 ABSTRACT

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15 Leaves of *Varonia curassavica* Jack. are the commercial source  $\alpha$ -humulene and  $\beta$ -  
16 caryophyllene, sesquiterpenes with anti-inflammatory properties. The objective of this  
17 study was to evaluate the effect of two natural elicitors on the sesquiterpene content of  
18 *V. curassavica* in order to induce resistance. For this purpose, *V. curassavica* plant  
19 material was obtained from CPQBA/Unicamp selection and breeding program. The  
20 plant-voucher is deposited in the Unicamp herbarium, number UEC 112744. Field-  
21 based plants received the application of acibenzolar-S-methyl [ASM, commercial  
22 product Bion® (500 mg L<sup>-1</sup>)], 1,6 -D-glucan (GLUCAN, 50 mg L<sup>-1</sup>) and distilled water  
23 (DW, as a control). Gas exchange rate, terpene enzymes such as phenylalanine  
24 ammonia-lyase (PAL), superoxide dismutase (SOD), guaiacol peroxidase (POX) and  
25 catalase (CAT) activity and essential oil content in leaves were measured. ASM reduced  
26 significantly the net carbon assimilation rate and the intercellular CO<sub>2</sub> concentration,  
27 while GLUCAN reduced significantly only the intercellular CO<sub>2</sub> concentration. Total  
28 protein content, PAL, SOD and CAT had no significant difference by statistical test  
29 when elicited, only POX was stimulated by the use of elicitors. For essential oil yield,  
30 there was no significant difference between the treatments. However, the highest value  
31 was obtained when with ASM (0.82%) followed by GLUCAN (0.8%) and DW  
32 (0.75%). The relative proportions (%) and quantification (mg.100g DW<sup>-1</sup>) of  $\alpha$ -  
33 humulene and (E)- $\beta$ -caryophyllene did not differ among treatments; however the  
34 elicitors provided a significant increase in guaiacol peroxidase activity.  
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36 **KEYWORDS:** *Varronia curassavica* Jacq., Systemic acquired resistance, essential oil,  
37 enzymes.  
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