**MS\_ EEA-2023-0149**

Dear Dr. Chia,  
   
Experts in the field have carefully reviewed your manuscript,  
submitted to Entomologia Experimentalis et Applicata:  
  
Reference Number: EEA-2023-0149  
Title: Effects of frass from larvae of black soldier fly (Hermetia illucens) and yellow mealworm (Tenebrio molitor) on growth and insect resistance in field mustard (Brassica rapa): differences between insect species and frass treatments.  
   
The Reviewers' comments are available to you following the signature, below. As you will see, the reviewers are positive about your manuscript I have therefore decided that your manuscript is acceptable, pending a minor revision.  
  
I will add a few comments to those of the reviewers:

Line 44, use of the word “protective” here creates ambiguity Protective might imply to some readers that plants were protected from herbivores under this treatment, which was not the case. We have revised the sentence to ensure that readers do not misinterpret the intended meaning of our statement.  
Line 65, move the definition of PGPR to line 61, after first mention?  I think this would make the paragraph flow better. Thank you. We have moved the definition to enhance the flow of the paragraph.  
Line 122, delete comma. Done  
Lines 142-143, it would be extremely helpful to know something about the soil (e.g., pH, organic content, N, P, K levels, soil type) used in the experiments. We have included a reference to a previous study that reports the physical and chemical properties of the soil used in our study.  
Line 202, :”after” instead of “since”; insert “and” after the comma. Done  
Line 211, delete comma. Done  
Figure 2, in the third and fourth panels, the letters designating the Tukey results appear to be in error – shouldn’t BSFF be accompanied by a “b” and both “NoFrass” and “MWF” have “a”’s?. You are right, and we have corrected it, though the conclusion remains unchanged in the current format.  
Line 382, were patterns similar in second experiment. Yes, the patterns were similar. We have revised the sentence to clarify that there was no significant difference among treatments.  
Line 416, were patterns similar in the two experiments? Yes, the patterns were similar. We have revised the sentence to clarify that there was no significant difference among treatments.  
Lines 514-515 – again, any information about the base soil used in the experiments would be helpful – also, 2 g frass per kg of soil does not seem to be an inordinate amount to me – how feasible is it that the frass led to soil compaction or waterlogging? We agree with you that the amount of frass used might have been too small to cause soil compaction or waterlogging. However, we cannot rule out the possibilities of these issues, as they have been indicated in the literature, even though we did not specifically measure them in our study.  
Line 525, when what was “introduced to the frass”? Unclear. We are sorry for the oversight. We have revised the paragraph to clarify the confusion.  
Line 533, italicize species name. Done  
  
  
  
  
In order to revise your manuscript, log on to the journal's ScholarOne Manuscripts site:  
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We expect to hear from you within 1 month, otherwise we will presume you have withdrawn the manuscript from consideration by Entomologia Experimentalis et Applicata.  
  
  
Yours sincerely,  
  
Dr. Michael J. Stout  
Associate Editor EEA

Reviewer: 1  
  
Comments to the Author  
GENERAL ASPECTS:  
- Both the Introduction and the Discussion manifest an excellent domain of the research topic.  
- A very interesting, novel and original document. Congratulations for the great work done.  
Thank you  
KEYWORDS:  
- Reduce the number of keywords by half. Now it is excessive. Done  
  
ABSTRACT:  
- Very well explained and complete. Thank you  
  
INTRODUCTION:  
- L61: why are only bacteria considered and not also fungi? Added information about fungi  
- L64-73: Rewriting information. It's confusing right now. We have simplified the text by breaking down complex sentences and providing a clearer flow of information. The revised text emphasizes the relationship between frass, soil, beneficial microorganisms, and plant resistance to insect herbivores.  
- L74-75: order cites conologically. The current format follows an alphabetical order of the authors’ names as is the case for the rest of the manuscript.  
- L94-96: add updated production data according to FAOSTAT. We appreciate your valuable feedback. We have addressed your comment by updating the production data in the paragraph about field mustard. The revised paragraph now includes the latest available information on production. Thank you for your guidance.  
- L98-99: repeated citation. Thank you for your feedback. Repeated citation has been deleted  
  
MATERIALS AND METHODS:  
- L139, 149, 150, 170, 171, 179, 180, 186, 187, 188 y 244: The full scientific name has already been written above. Reduce. We have abbreviated the scientific names  
- L142-143: Is the chemical analysis of the soil known? The nutritional one would be very interesting and could be added to the paper as supplementary material. We have included a reference to a previous study that reports the physical and chemical properties of the soil used in our study.  
  
RESULTS:  
- L332, 366, 384, 393, 406, 411, 418, 427  and inside the figures: The full scientific name has already been written above. Reduce. Done   
- Throughout the section, it is not considered necessary to put so much information from the statistical analysis in the text. However, it is very positive to put information of mean data between different treatments, which help the fluent understanding of the text and the study. We have reduced the statistical information in the text, emphasized data visualization through figures. This should help streamline the text and enhance the reader's understanding of the study.  
- L468-469: spacing problem. corrected  
  
DISCUSSION:  
- L538-539: The full scientific name has already been written above. Reduce. We have abbreviated the full name.  
- L526-527: scientific names in italics. Done  
  
  
Reviewer: 2  
  
Comments to the Author  
Despite the amount of work that has been done already in the case of insect frass, the overall idea is unique and the methodological approach very interesting. Thank you.

The ms can be accepted for publication, but there are some parts that need to be revised.

Thank you. We have revised the ms by addressing the concerns raised.  
97-8 and elsewhere. Use authorities in full in the first time that a scientific name appears on the ms. Done  
109. There are additional data gaps that are not addressed by Wantulla et al. (2022), which can be illustrated here. We have highlighted additional knowledge gaps that were not addressed by Wantulla et al. (2022) and that are investigated in the current study.  
133. Expand this general scope with more text. Not sure if there is need for expansion or if this is the right line number!  
Not clear how many replicates and subreplicates were used, clarify. Not clear which section this fits in, but we have clarified that ten plants per treatment and control were inoculated to assess the effect of raw-frass-exposed plants on the performance of *Plutella xylostella* larvae .  
524. This is the standard procedure of the authorization of frass, regardless of the overall effects of the thermal treatments. This can be further clarified. As already stated, our samples were oven-dried for much longer period of time than the standard procedure of the authorization of frass, which may have affected the population of beneficial microbes.  
531-3. Why- perhaps due to their increased conductance? We have expanded thi=e discussion by highlighting that the negative effects observed of raw BSFF or MWF on *B. rapa* could be due to a combination of factors including salinity of frass.  
552. Merge with the next paragraph. Thank you, we have merged the sections as indicated.  
607. No need to have a separate conclusion section, use this text as the closing paragraph in the discussion. Thank you, we have eliminated the heading: “Conclusion”.