Machine learning-based breeding

Alencar Xavier
Breeding Analyst at Corteva
Adjunct professor at Purdue

Outline

1. **Introduction**
   - More data
   - Branching ML
2. **Machines**
   - Filters
   - Engines
3. **Analytics**
   - Target G x E x M
   - Validation
   - Cases of study
4. **Conclusion**

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Quantitative Geneticist, Breeding Analyst LAAF

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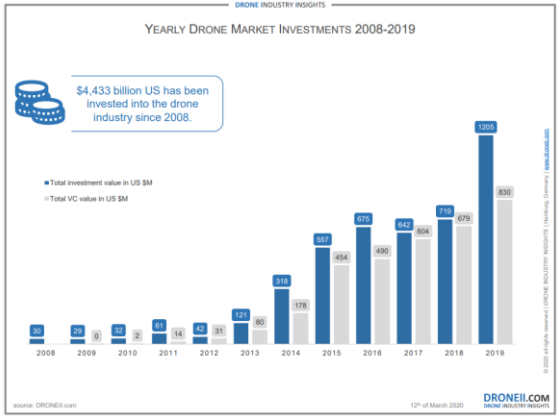
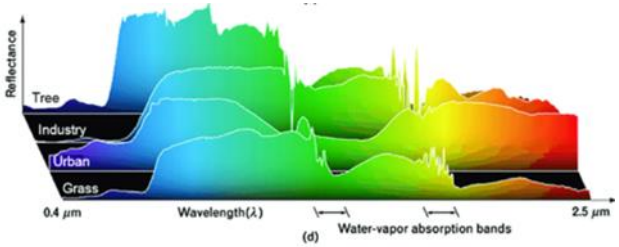
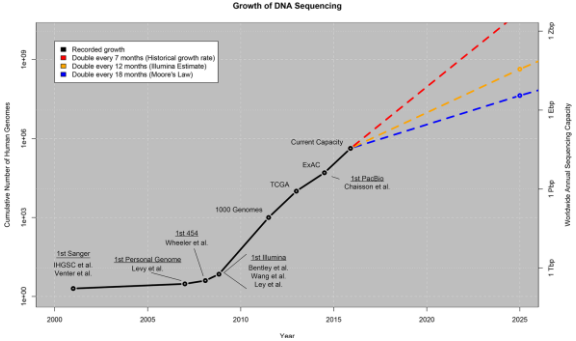
More Pheno



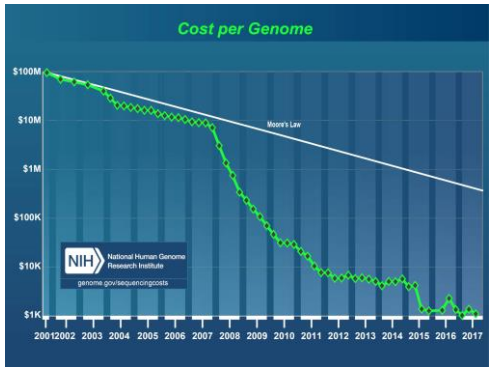


https://www.mdpi.com/2076-3417/12/5/2570

More Geno



The Cost of Sequencing a Human Genome. NIH.
https://www.genome.gov/27565109/the-cost-of-sequencing-a-human-genome/

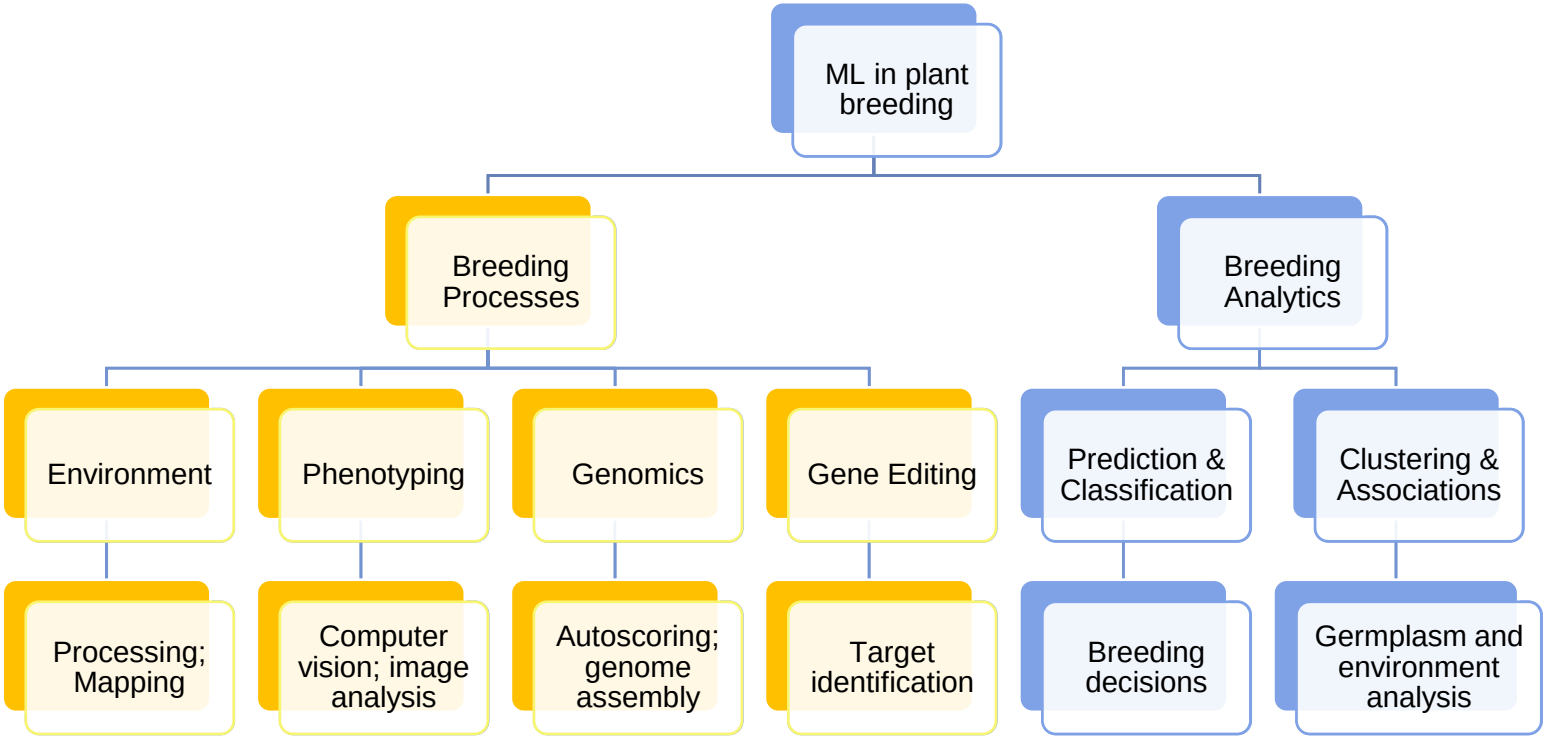


Stephens, Z. D.et al. (2015). Big data: astronomical or genomical? *PLoS biology*, *13*(7), e1002195.

More Env

- **UC Merced GridMET**
- **NWS NOAA**
- **NASA GISS, NASA power**
- **Harmonized SoilDB**
- **USDA SSURGO**

More Computing

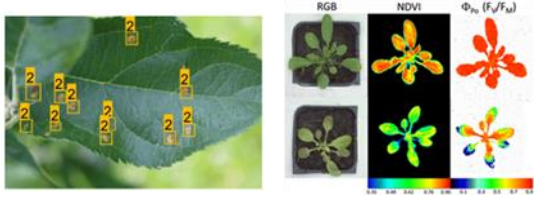

ML in plant breeding
Breeding Processes
Breeding Analytics
Environment
Phenotyping
Genomics
Gene Editing
Prediction & Classification
Clustering & Associations
Processing; Mapping
Computer vision; image analysis
Autoscoring; genome assembly
Target identification
Breeding decisions
Germplasm and environment analysis

ML in breeding processes

Enhancing databases, automating lab tasks field work

phenotyping

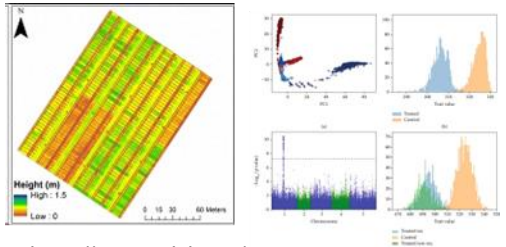
Disease, stress scoring



https://www.mdpi.com/2673-2688/2/3/26
https://www.biomedcentral.com/collections/phenomics

Phenotype automation

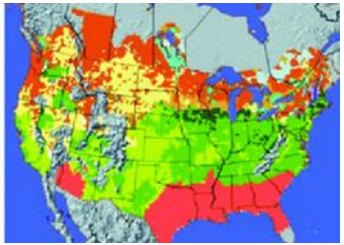
(e.g., plant height, identify new traits)



https://www.mdpi.com/2072-4292/8/12/1031
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7706325/

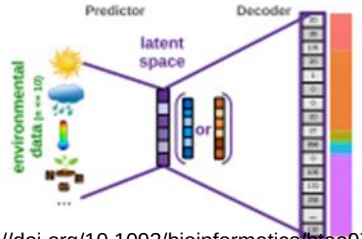
environment

Mapping / zoning



https://www.publish.csiro.au/cp/CP14007

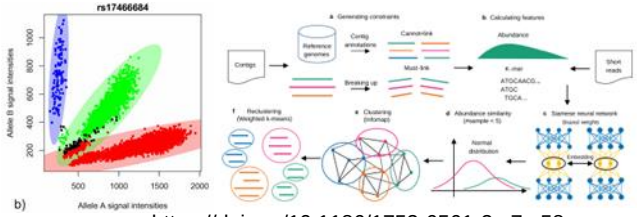
Latent weather, soil



https://doi.org/10.1093/bioinformatics/btaa971

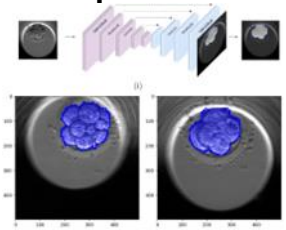
biotech

SNP calls, genome assembly



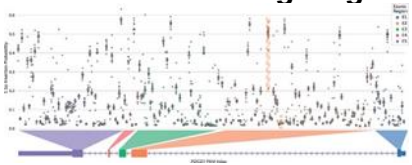
https://doi.org/10.1186/1753-6561-3-s7-s58
https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-022-29843-y

Embryo rescue DH production

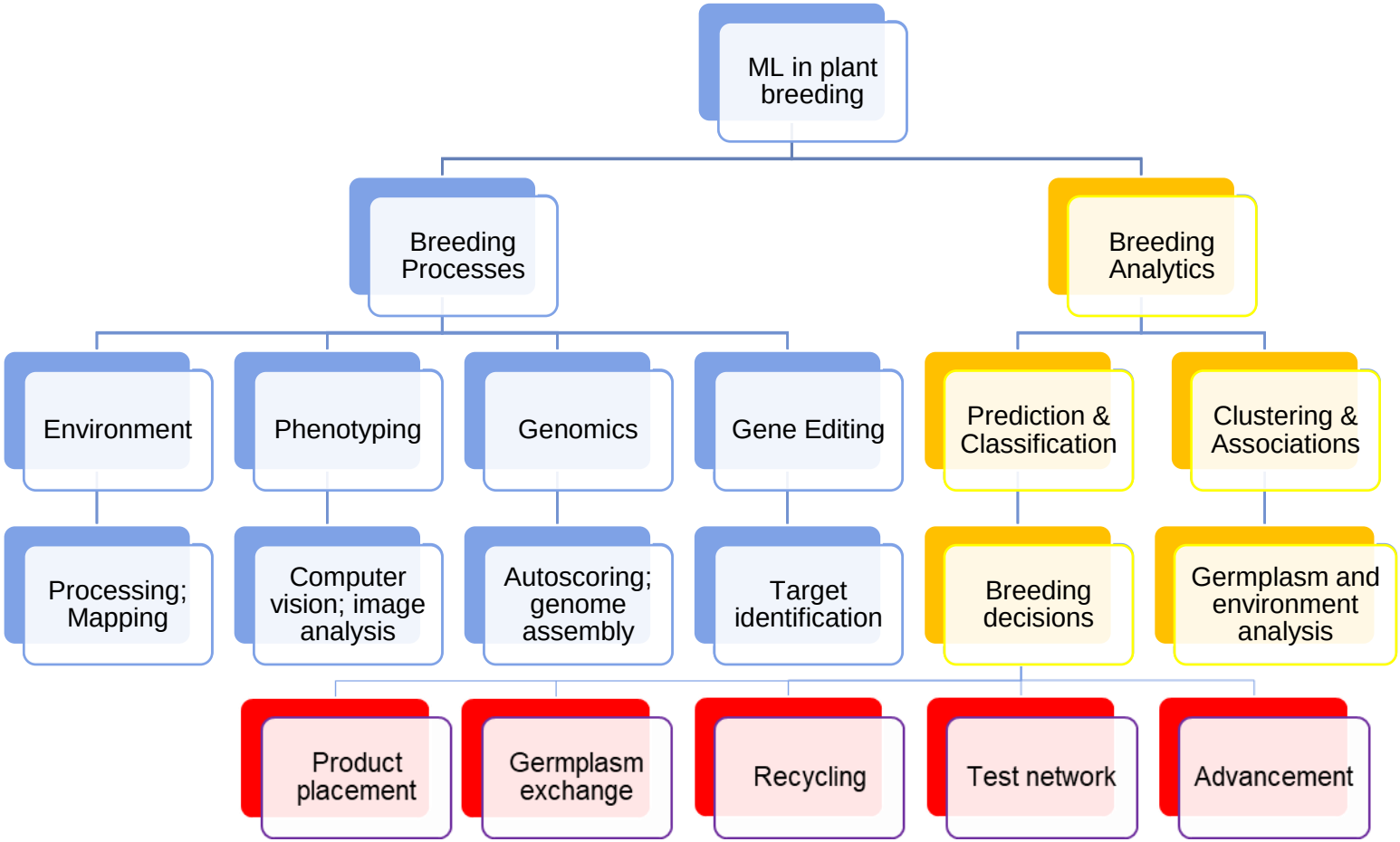


https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-06336-y

Gene editing targets



https://doi.org/10.1093/bioinformatics/btab268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Breeding Processes
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Phenotyping
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Prediction & Classification
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Processing; Mapping
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Breeding decisions
Germplasm and environment analysis
Product placement
Germplasm exchange
Recycling
Test network
Advancement

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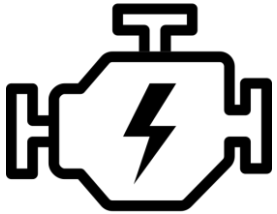
Machine Learning Engines



A new approach fits multivariate genomic prediction models efficiently

Alencar Xavier[1,2*] and David Habier[1+]

Walking through the statistical black boxes of plant breeding

Alencar Xavier[1] · William M. Muir[2] · Bruce Craig[3] · Katy Martin Rainey[1]

Efficient Estimation of Marker Effects in Plant Breeding

Alencar Xavier[*,+]

Technical nuances of machine learning: implementation and validation of supervised methods for genomic prediction in plant breeding

Alencar Xavier [1*]

Impact of Genomic Prediction Model, Selection Intensity, and Breeding Strategy on the Long-Term Genetic Gain and Genetic Erosion in Soybean Breeding

Éder David Borges da Silva[1+], Alencar Xavier[1,2] and Marcos Ventura Faria[1]

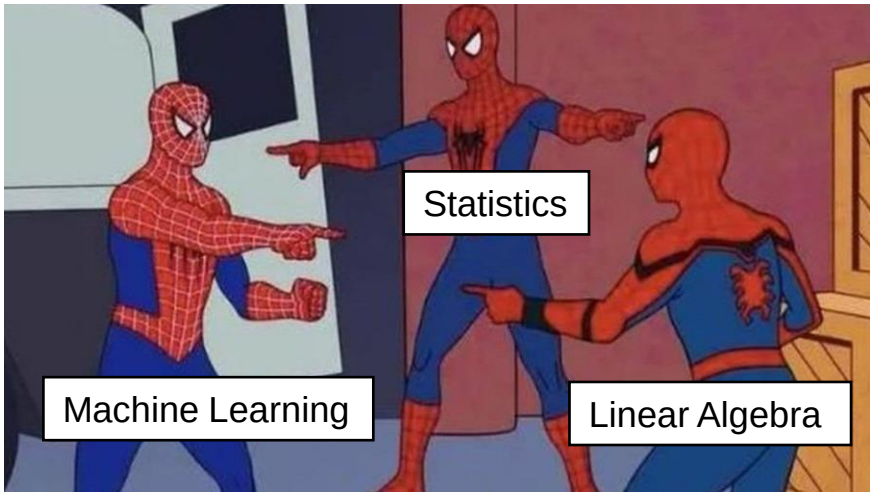
Using unsupervised learning techniques to assess interactions among complex traits in soybeans

Alencar Xavier · Benjamin Hall · Shaun Casteel · William Muir · Katy Martin Rainey

Article

Joint Modeling of Genetics and Field Variation in Plant Breeding Trials Using Relationship and Different Spatial Methods: A Simulation Study of Accuracy and Bias

Éder David Borges da Silva [1,2,*], Alencar Xavier [3,4] and Marcos Ventura Faria [2]


Statistics
Machine Learning
Linear Algebra

Key idea of supervised learning: FILTERING

Simple filter

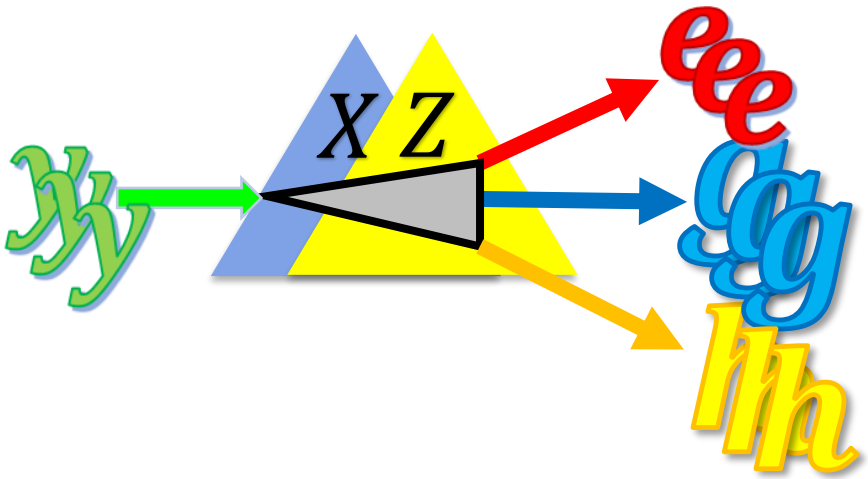
$$y = g + e$$

Multiple filters

$$y = g + h + e$$

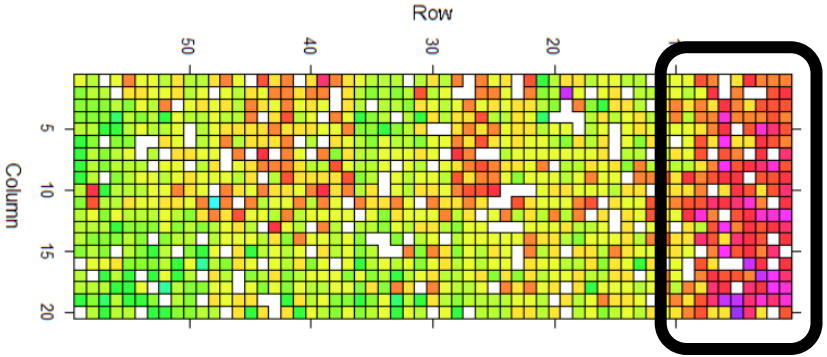
Multi-task filter

$$Y = G + H + E$$

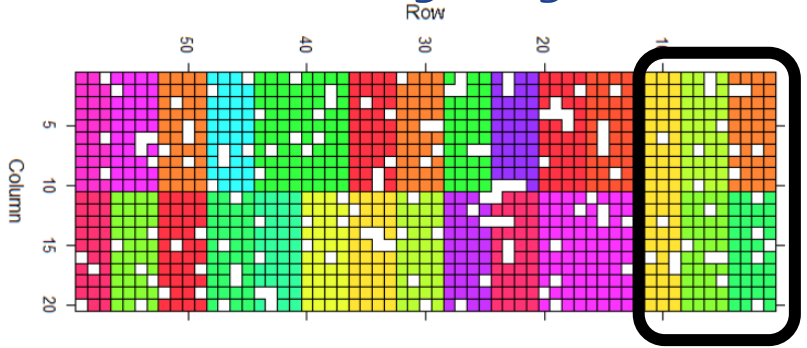


Why bother with multiple filters?

Field variation



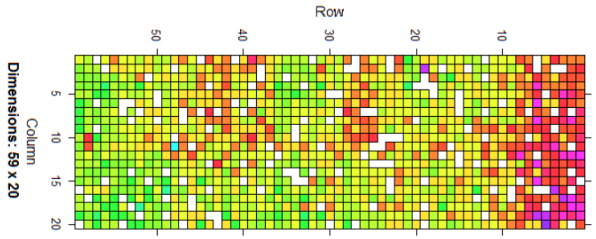
Family layout



Some families were placed on unfavorable side of the field…

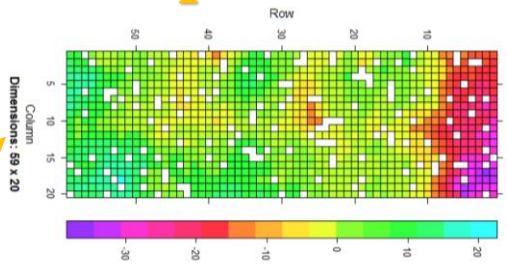
SoyNAM field,
Indiana 2014

Pheno

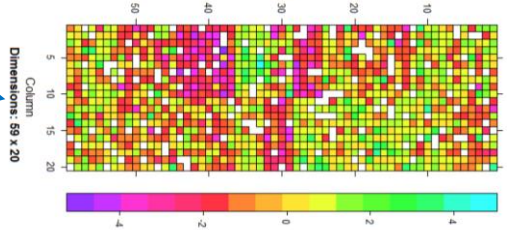


G, R

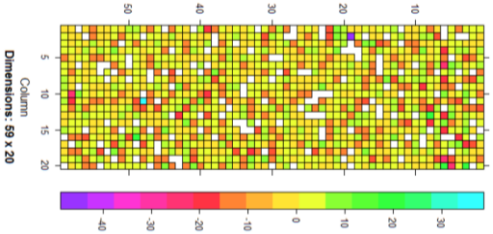
Spatial



Genetics



Residuals



Separation of tangled signals!

Why bother with multi-task filters?

Simple (bivariate) model:

INFORMATION GAIN

$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{g} + \mathbf{e}$$

$$Var\begin{bmatrix} y_1 \\ y_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \sigma^2_{a_1} & \sigma_{a_{12}} \\ \sigma_{a_{12}} & \sigma^2_{a_2} \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} \sigma^2_{e_1} & \sigma_{e_{12}} \\ \sigma_{e_{12}} & \sigma^2_{e_2} \end{bmatrix}$$

Why bother with multi-task filters?

$$y = Zg + e, \qquad y \sim N(0, V)$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} y_1 \\ y_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} Z_1 & 0 \\ 0 & Z_2 \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} g_1 \\ g_2 \end{bmatrix} + \begin{bmatrix} e_1 \\ e_2 \end{bmatrix}$$

- Covariance structure

$$V = G \otimes \Sigma_a + I \otimes \Sigma_e = G \otimes \begin{bmatrix} \sigma^2_{a_1} & \sigma_{a_{12}} \\ \sigma_{a_{12}} & \sigma^2_{a_2} \end{bmatrix} + I \otimes \begin{bmatrix} \sigma^2_{e_1} & \sigma_{e_{12}} \\ \sigma_{e_{12}} & \sigma^2_{e_2} \end{bmatrix}$$

- Model equation

$$\begin{bmatrix} Z_1'\Sigma_e^{11}Z_1 + G^{-1}\Sigma_a^{11} & Z_1'\Sigma_e^{12}Z_2 + G^{-1}\Sigma_a^{12} \\ Z_2'\Sigma_e^{12}Z_1 + G^{-1}\Sigma_a^{12} & Z_2'\Sigma_e^{22}Z_2 + G^{-1}\Sigma_a^{22} \end{bmatrix} \begin{bmatrix} g_1 \\ g_2 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} Z_1'(\Sigma_e^{11}y_1 + \Sigma_e^{12}y_2) \\ Z_2'(\Sigma_e^{22}y_2 + \Sigma_e^{12}y_1) \end{bmatrix}$$

- **Univariate vs bivariate**

INFORMATION GAIN

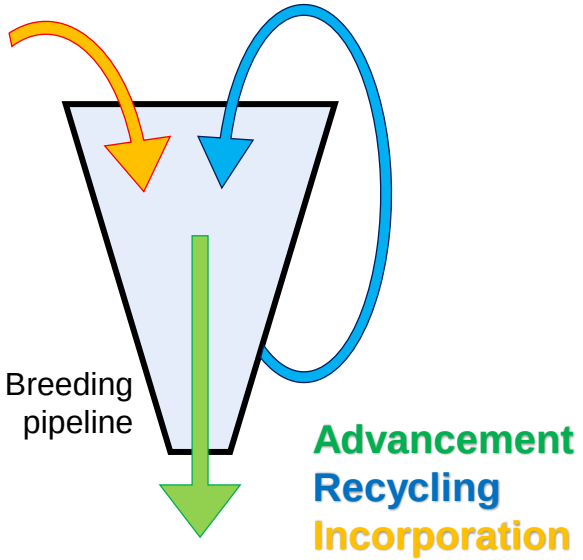
$$g_1 = (Z_1'\Sigma_e^{11}Z_1 + G^{-1}\Sigma_a^{11})^{-1}(Z_1'\Sigma_e^{11}y_1)$$

$$g_1|g_2 = (Z_1'\Sigma_e^{11}Z_1 + G^{-1}\Sigma_a^{11})^{-1}(Z_1'(\Sigma_e^{11}y_1 + \Sigma_e^{12}y_2) - (Z_1'\Sigma_e^{12}Z_2 + G^{-1}\Sigma_a^{12})g_2)$$

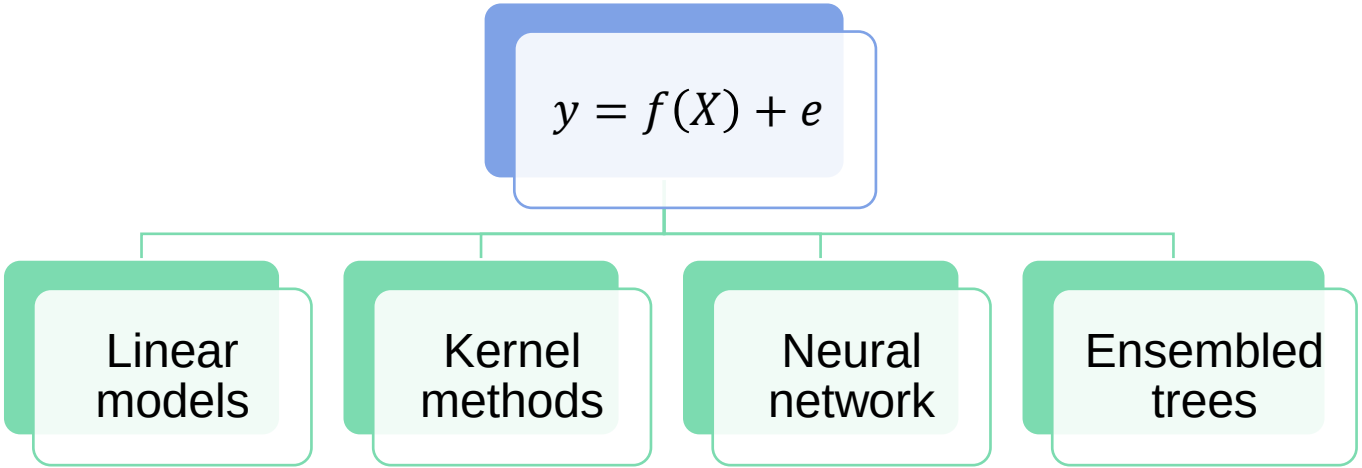
Does the choice of filter matter?

- **ADDITIVE LINEAR FILTERS (GEBV)**
  - *Pattern*: ADDITIVE GENETICS - ***heritable***
  - *Method*: GBLUP, RIDGE, LASSO
  - *Suits*: **RECYCLING**, **ADVANCEMENT**

- **NON-LINEAR FILTERS (EGV)**
  - *Pattern*: ANY GENETIC SIGNAL
  - *Method*: RKHS, DNN, Random Forest
  - *Suits*: **ADVANCEMENT, PRODUCT PLACEMENT**

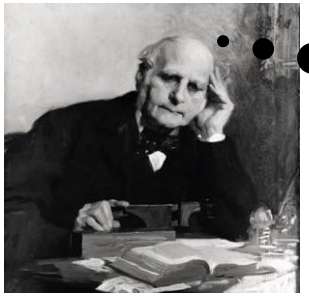


Main classes of learners



Solving: $\mathbf{y = Xb + e}$

$$Finding \rightarrow argmin(e'e + \lambda b'b)$$



I've created a monster!!

- Coordinate descent

  (Use diagonals of LHS)

$$\hat{b}_j^{t+1} = \frac{x_j'(y - X_{-j}\hat{b}_{-j})}{x_j'x_j + \lambda}$$

Used for p>>n solvers

glmnet, BGLR, bWGR, GS3

- Gradient descent

  (Does not build LHS)

$$\hat{b}^{t+1} = b^t - \frac{2r}{n}\left[X'(y - X\hat{b}^t) + \lambda\hat{b}^t\right]$$

Used for Deep Neural Nets

TensorFlow Keras, PyTorch, MXNet

- Second order

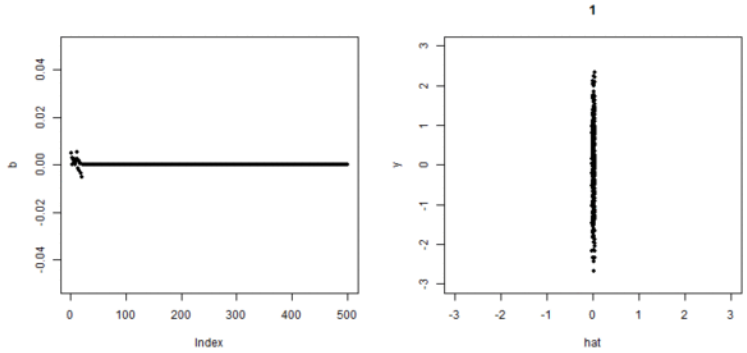
  (Builds entire LHS)

$$\hat{b} = (X'X + \lambda)^{-1}(X'y)$$

Used for everything else

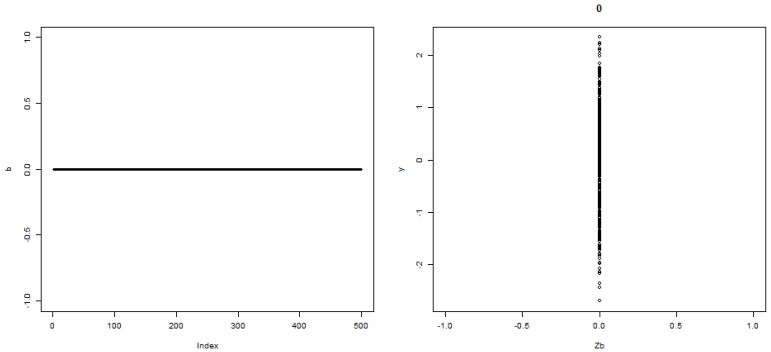
ASREML, lme4, SAS

Coordinate descent



$$\hat{b}_j^{t+1} = \frac{x_j'(y - X_{-j}\hat{b}_{-j})}{x_j'x_j + \lambda}$$

Gradient descent



$$\hat{b}^{t+1} = b^t - \frac{2r}{n}\left[X'(y - X\hat{b}^t) + \lambda\hat{b}^t\right]$$

What about the deep learning? 🤔

$$y = \alpha(\alpha(XB_1)B_2)b_3 + e$$

i.e., stack of solvers

CORTEVA™ agriscience

Alencar.Xavier@Corteva.com
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Data > Method

Unnecessarily complex analysis should not be used as a foil to disguise lower quality datasets

Kruuk (2004 *apud* Walsh and Lynch 2018)

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Analytics

“Breeding objective”

- Set of traits of interest (**TOI**)

bred into a

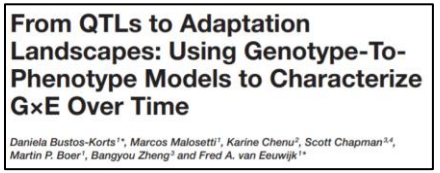
- Target population of genotypes (**TPG**)

for a given

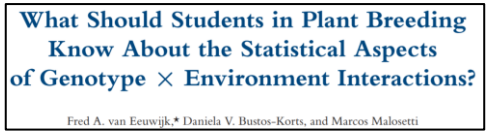
- Target population of environments (**TPE**)

TPE, TPG, TPM

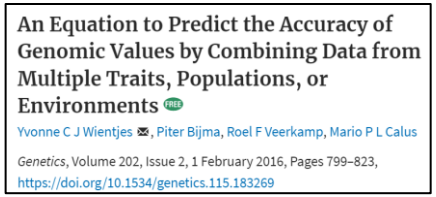
- **Target population of environments (TPE)**
  - Influences accuracies via GxE correlation
  - Which environments should I be able to predict?
- **Target population of genotypes (TPG)**
  - Influences accuracies via genetic relationship
  - Which genetics should I be able to predict?
- **Target population of management (TPM)**
  - Herein nested in TPE


From QTLs to Adaptation Landscapes: Using Genotype-To-Phenotype Models to Characterize G×E Over Time

Daniela Bustos-Korts[1*], Marcos Malosetti[1], Karine Chenu[2], Scott Chapman[3,4], Martin P. Boer[1], Bangyou Zheng[3] and Fred A. van Eeuwijk[1*]


What Should Students in Plant Breeding Know About the Statistical Aspects of Genotype × Environment Interactions?

Fred A. van Eeuwijk,* Daniela V. Bustos-Korts, and Marcos Malosetti


An Equation to Predict the Accuracy of Genomic Values by Combining Data from Multiple Traits, Populations, or Environments

Yvonne C J Wientjes, Piter Bijma, Roel F Veerkamp, Mario P L Calus

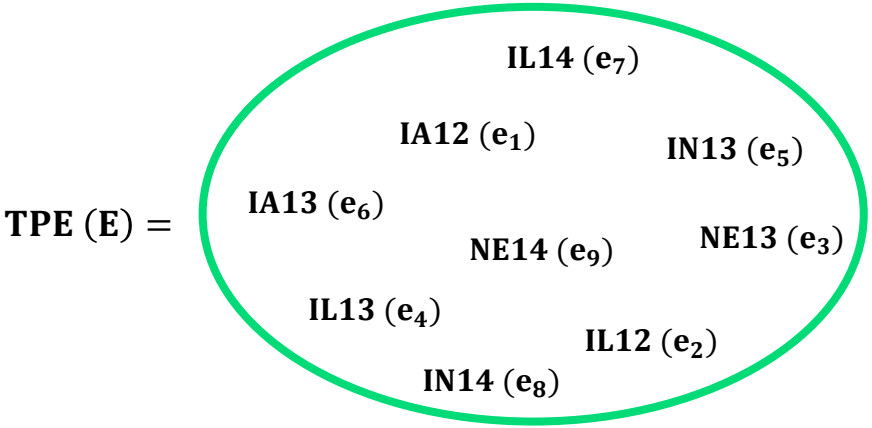
Genetics, Volume 202, Issue 2, 1 February 2016, Pages 799–823, https://doi.org/10.1534/genetics.115.183269

TPE

- Any given trial happens in each environment-management combination, that is sample of much larger population:

$$e_i \in E$$

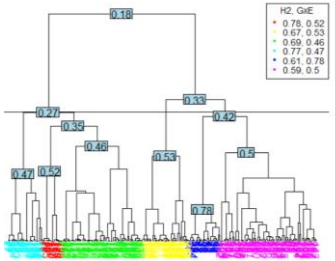
That is:

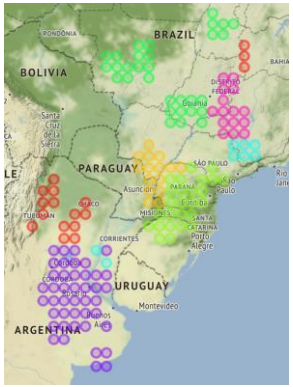


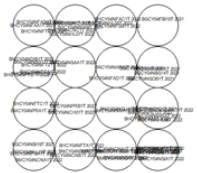
E[MET] = E[TPE]?

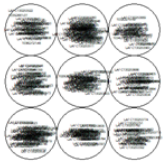
$$\begin{bmatrix} y_{e_i} \\ y_{e_j} \\ g_E \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \sigma^2_{g(e_i)} + \sigma^2_{\epsilon(e_i)} & \sigma_{g(e_i,e_j)} & \sigma_{g(e_i,E)} \\ \sigma_{g(e_j,e_i)} & \sigma^2_{g(e_j)} + \sigma^2_{\epsilon(e_j)} & \sigma_{g(e_j,E)} \\ \sigma_{g(E,e_i)} & \sigma_{g(E,e_j)} & \sigma^2_{g(E)} \end{bmatrix}$$

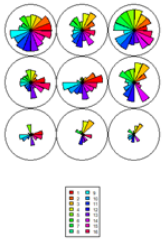
NOTE: GxExM patterns within TPE are largely assessed using different methods of ML

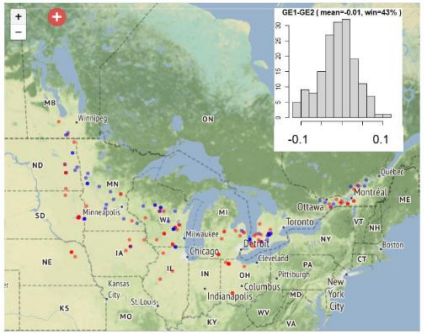


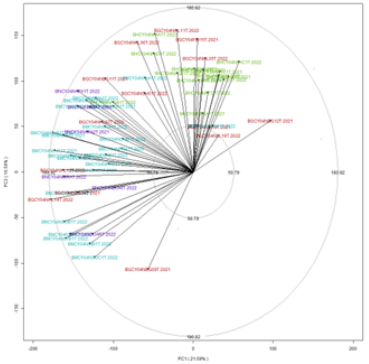


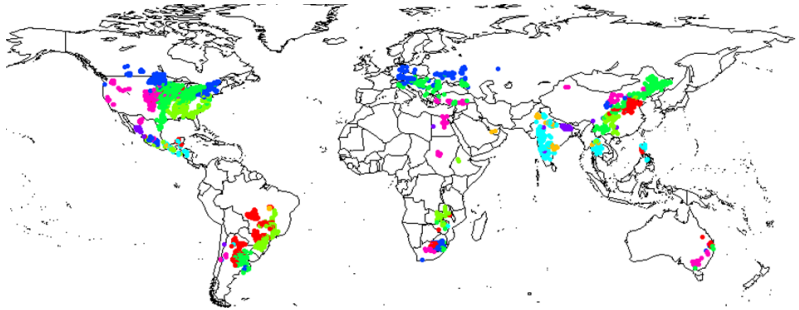












TPG + TPE

- Accuracy (Wientjes et al 2016) = correlation(true signal, estimated signal),
- It is a function of heritability, GxE, representativeness of the calibration set
- For:

$$y = g + e,$$
$$var(y) = V, \qquad var(g) = G$$

Then accuracy is

$$a_i = cor(g_i, \hat{g}_i) = \frac{cov(g_i, \hat{g}_i)}{var(g_i)var(\hat{g}_i)} = \frac{var(\hat{g}_i)\, r^2_{GxE}}{var(g_i)var(\hat{g}_i)} = r^2_{GxE}\sqrt{\frac{G_{i,y}V^{-1}G_{y,i}}{G_{i,i}}}$$

Thus, we **know** how much signal to expect in any given prediction

Validation schemes

1) CV type – Test intent

- **Random CV** = Upper-bound predictive potential
- **Leave-one-out** = Assess structured scenarios (e.g., geography-out, year-out)
- **Holdout** = Reproduce true applications (e.g., predict individuals from upcoming)

2) TPE/TPG relation

	Genotype	Environment	Difficulty
CV00	New	New	*****
CV0	Observed	New	***
CV1	New	Observed	***
CV2	Observed	Observed	*

Adapted from Crossa et al. (2017) doi.org/10.1016/j.tplants.2017.08.011

3) Signal availability

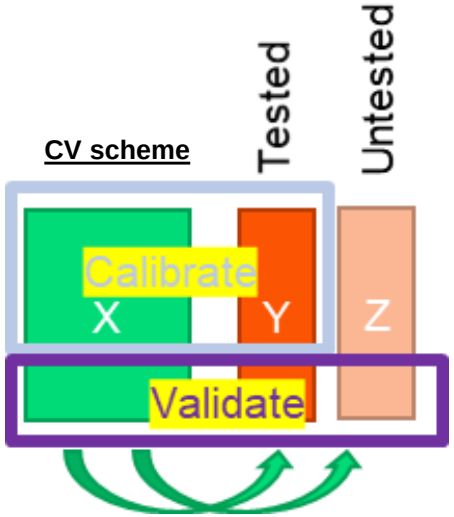
Genetic information available in different cross-validation setups

- ***Intra-family***: Linkage*
- ***Within-family***: Linkage and LD
- ***Across-family***: Relationships**, Linkage and LD
- ***Leave-family-out***: Relationships and LD
- ***Untested environments***: Same as above x (GxE)

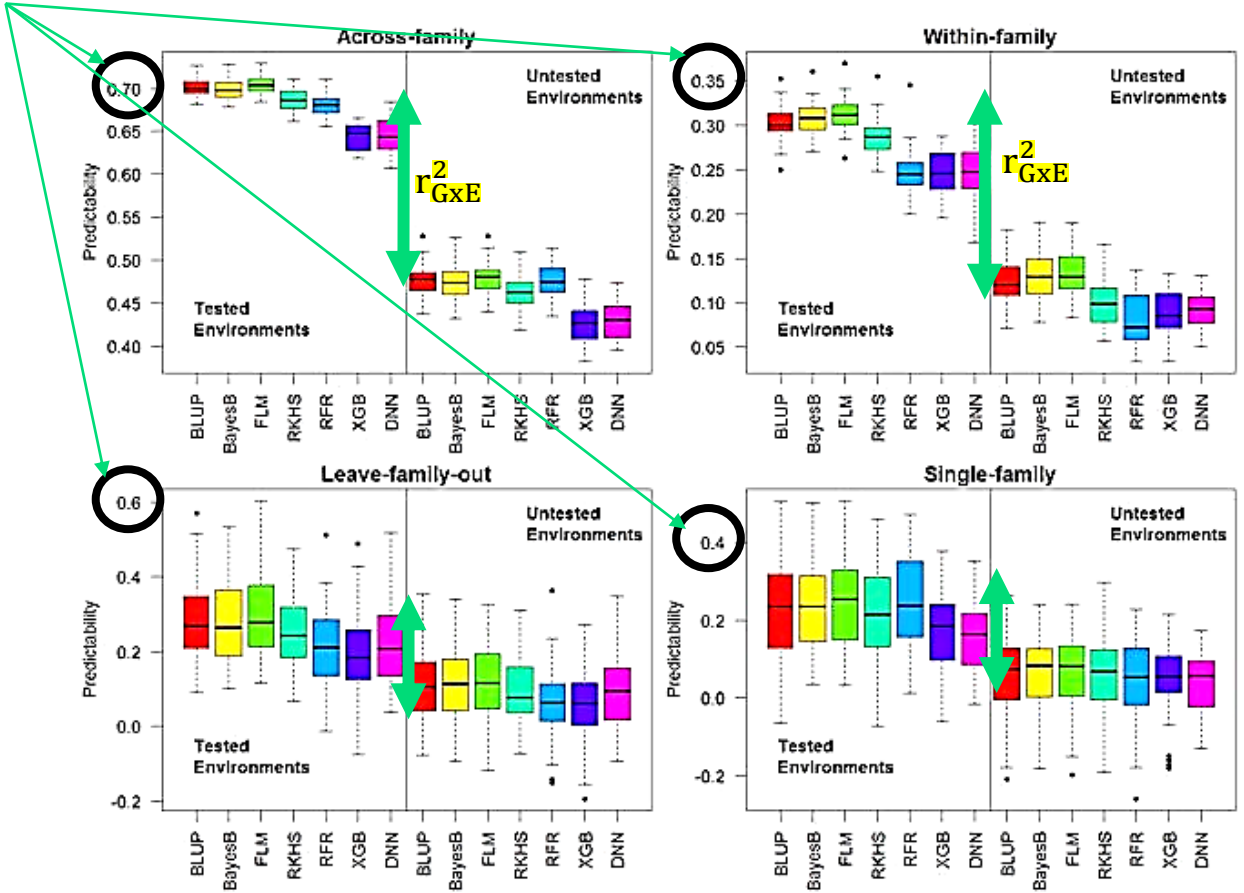
Validation metrics

- **Correlations**
  - Most common metrics in breeding (e.g., predictability)
  - Pertinent to ranking and selection of complex traits
- **Prediction error**
  - Utilized when the predicted values must be as close as possible to original scale
  - Pertinent to risk prediction (e.g., disease risk)
- **Success**
  - Accommodate complex or subjective criteria, independent or otherwise
  - Pertinent to decision involving data from multiple sources (e.g., advancement)

Amount of signal that can be captured in different structures

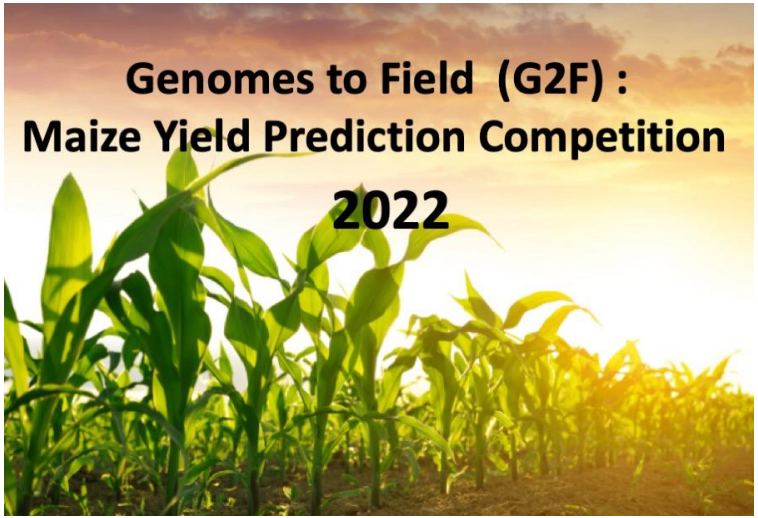


SoyNAM data
ES: 2012 (7 loc)
PS: 2013 (4 loc)
#Fam = 40
Genos = 5600
SNPs = 4300
Obs: 3k-5k obs/loc

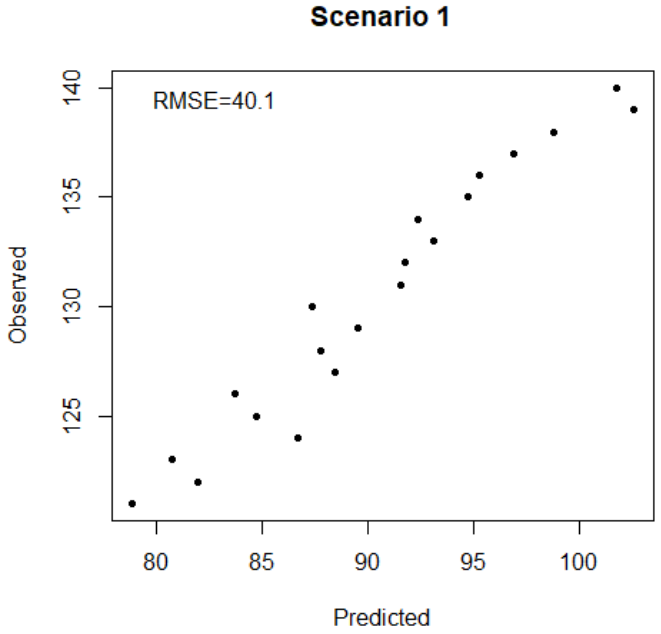


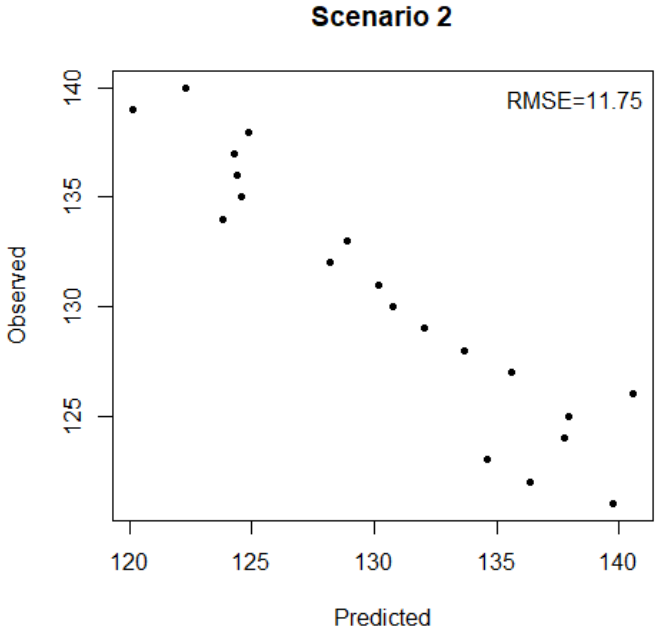
Alencar.Xavier@Corteva.com
Quantitative Geneticist, Breeding Analyst LAAF

Case of study



Evaluation criterion





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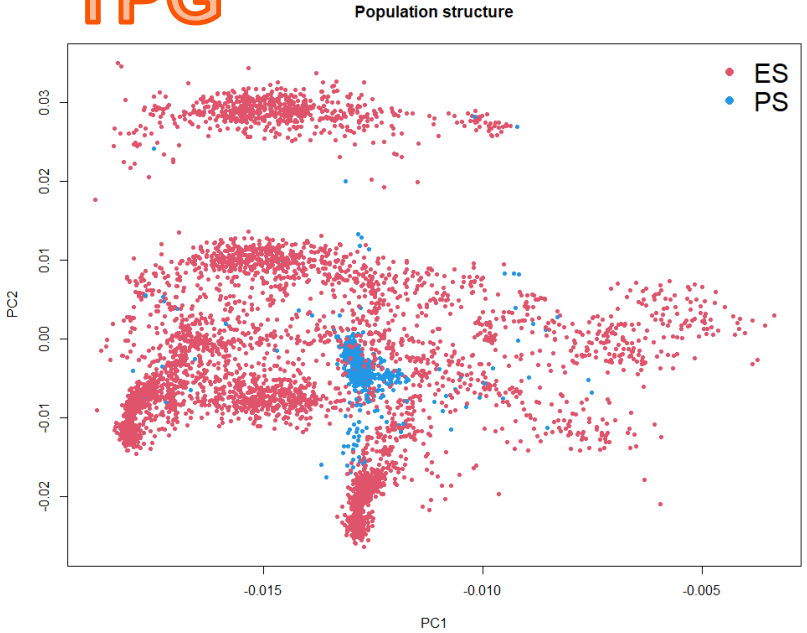
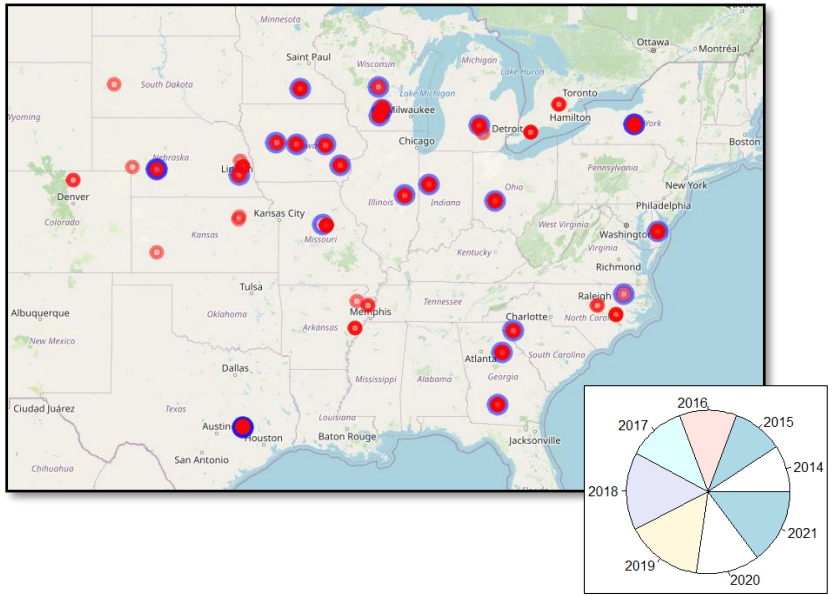
Alencar.Xavier@Corteva.com
Quantitative Geneticist, Breeding Analyst LAAF

2022 G2F GxE prediction competition

TPG



TPE



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What was modeled?

$$y|E_i = \mu_i + g|E_i \quad \text{(Two FILTERS)}$$

$$\text{Phenotype @ i}^{\text{th}}\text{ Loc} = \text{i}^{\text{th}}\text{ Loc Mean} + \text{Genetic effect @ i}^{\text{th}}\text{ Loc}$$

- The winning approach:
  - Predict location means using mixed models and random forest
  - Predict genetics using **TPE/TPG** index, multi-response filter (mt-GBLUP)

Alencar.Xavier@Corteva.com
Quantitative Geneticist, Breeding Analyst LAAF

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Realized results

Team Name	Within RMSE
CLAC	2.329
igorkf	2.345
phenomaize	2.374
UCD_MegaLMM	2.387
CGM	2.391
breedingteam	2.398
Purdue	2.402
SmAL	2.425
ML_APT	2.472
MPB_Group	2.544

Ranking with alternative metrics

Team Name	Cor Within Loc
CLAC	0.357
CGM	0.353
MPB_Group	0.342
UCD_MegaLMM	0.338
SmAL	0.285
DeepCropVision	0.281
CropEnthusiast	0.279
AllModelsAreWrong	0.272
DataJanitors	0.256
supermanwasd	0.243

Team Name	Cor Across Loc
breedingteam	0.650
DataJanitors	0.644
CLAC	0.631
Purdue	0.631
UCD_MegaLMM	0.628
phenomaize	0.617
igorkf	0.600
CGM	0.587
SmAL	0.586
AllModelsAreWrong	0.575

Source: Jacob Washburn, Jose Ignacio Varela, Alencar Xavier

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Alencar.Xavier@Corteva.com
Quantitative Geneticist, Breeding Analyst LAAF

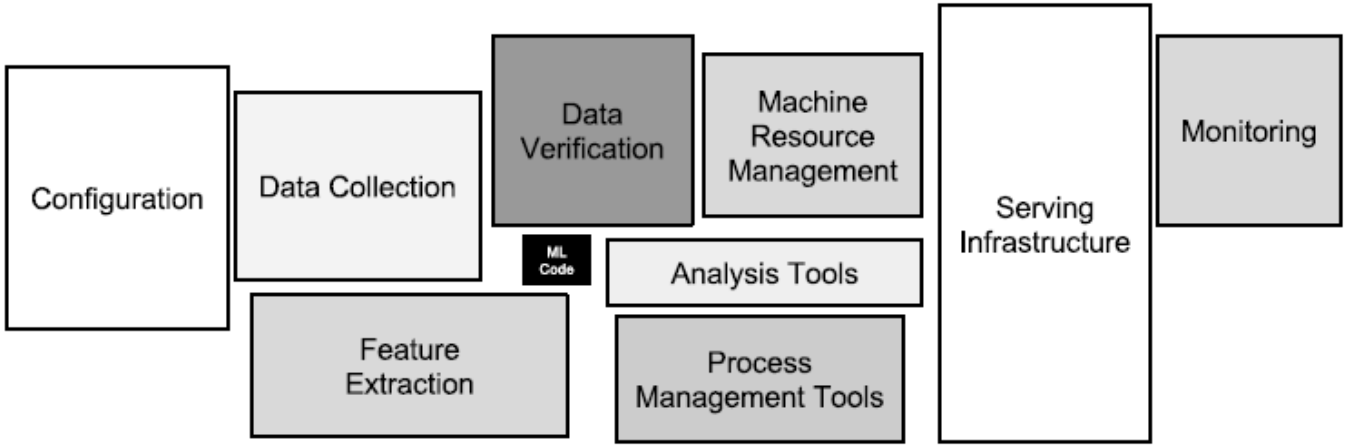
1. **Introduction**
   - More data
   - Branching ML
2. **Machines**
   - Filters
   - Engines
3. **Analytics**
   - Target G x E x M
   - Validation
   - Cases of study
4. **Conclusion**

Alencar.Xavier@Corteva.com
Quantitative Geneticist, Breeding Analyst LAAF

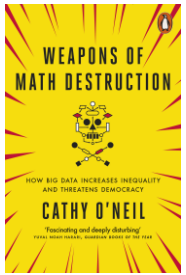
There is more to ML than proof of concepts using cross-validations

Hidden Technical Debt in Machine Learning Systems

doi/10.5555/2969442.2969519



- How easily can an entirely new algorithmic approach be tested at full scale?
- What is the transitive closure of all data dependencies?
- How precisely can the impact of a new change to the system be measured?
- Does improving one model or signal degrade others?
- How quickly can new members of the team be brought up to speed?



Thank you for your attention!

Final remarks:

1) Plant breeding uses machine learning for multiple purposes in processes and analytics
2) Filter settings are important to maximize signal, but it is less important than data
3) Validation metrics and validation schemes matter to design meaningful models

Questions??

Alencar Xavier

Alencar.Xavier@Corteva.com