

A close-up photograph of a cannabis plant, showing green leaves and numerous small, white, crystalline trichomes covering the surfaces. The lighting highlights the texture and density of the trichomes.

Proteomics tools for medicinal cannabis

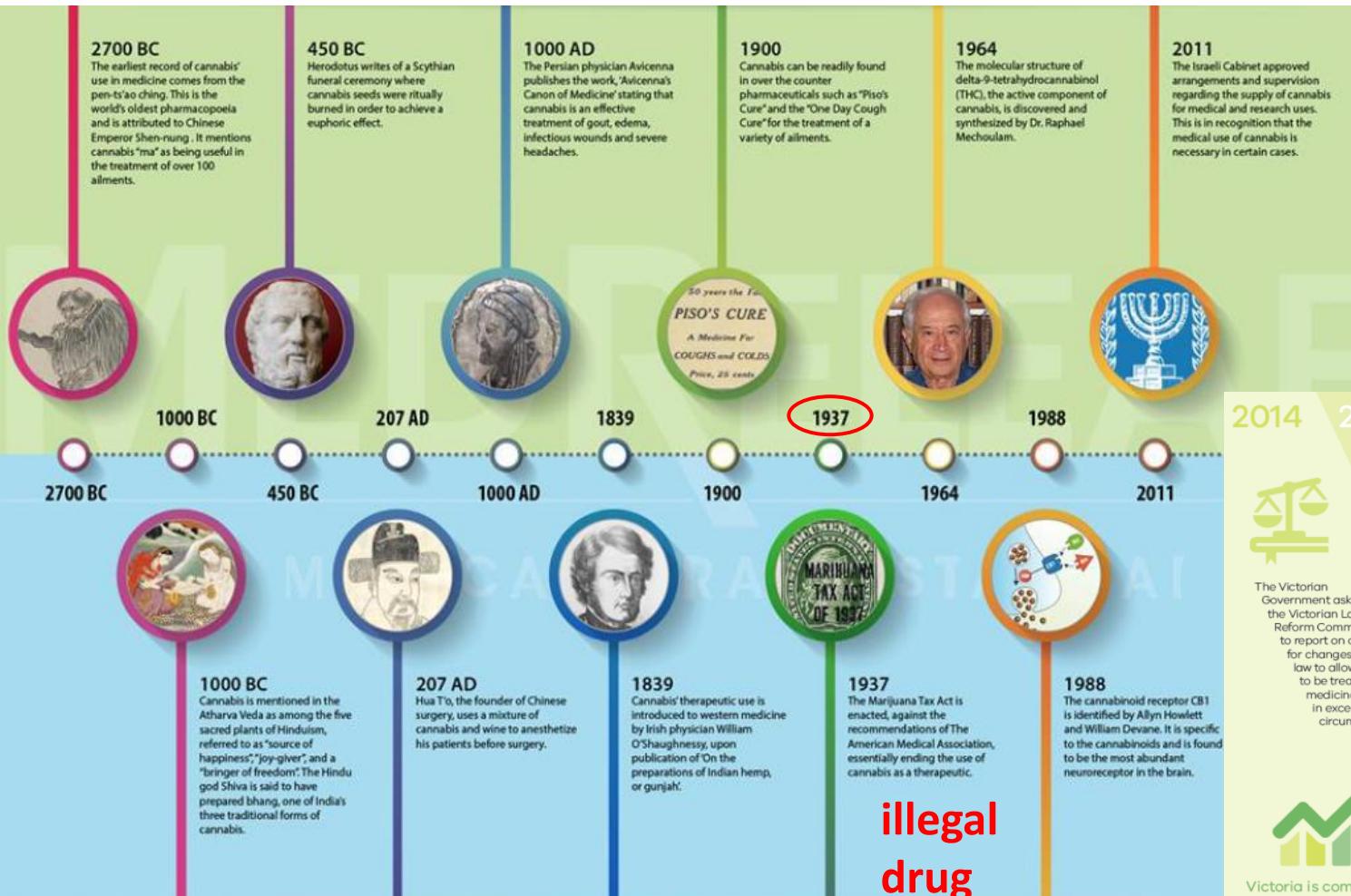
Dr Delphine Vincent

13/12/2019



Introduction

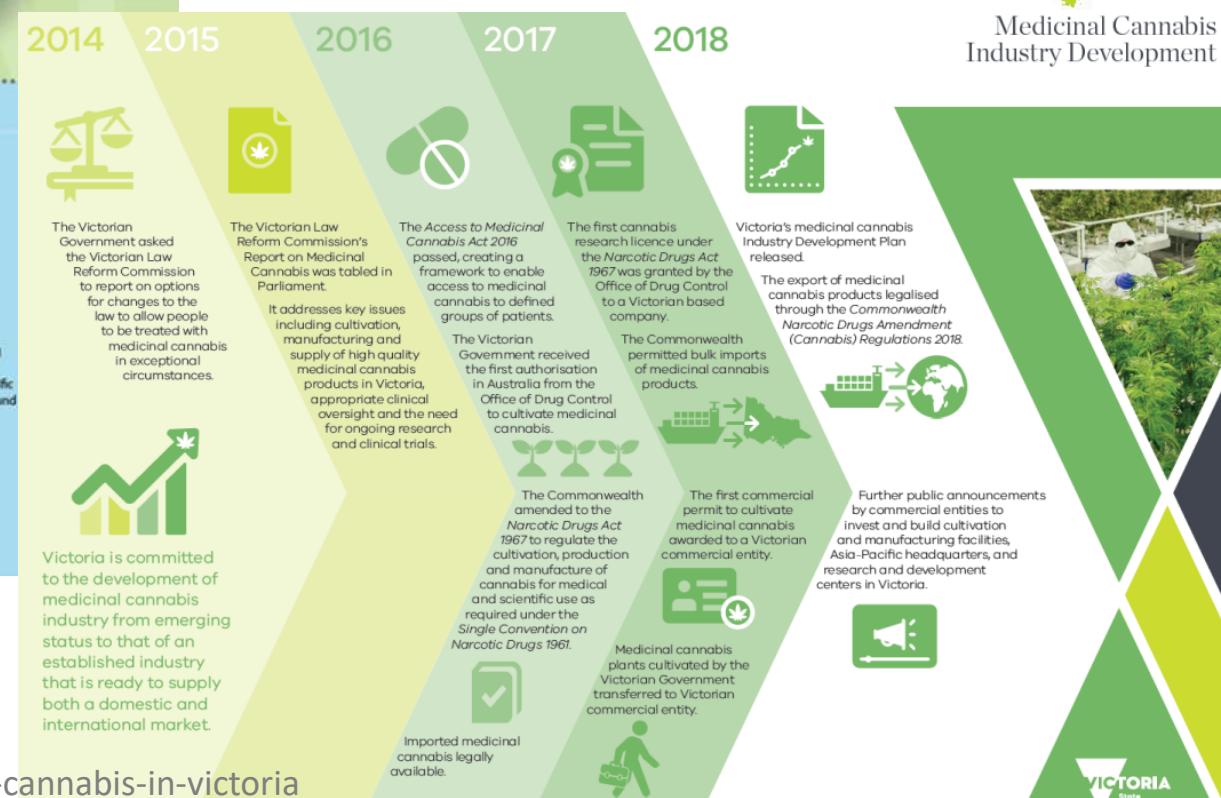
History of cannabis and legislation



Hand et al, 2016

Australia

Dec 2015: Andrews Government (VIC) introduces the Access to Medicinal Cannabis Bill 2015 (cultivation, manufacture and distribution). First Australian government to legalise medicinal cannabis.
 Priority: Children with severe epilepsy.
 (SOURCE: www.parliament.vic.gov.au)



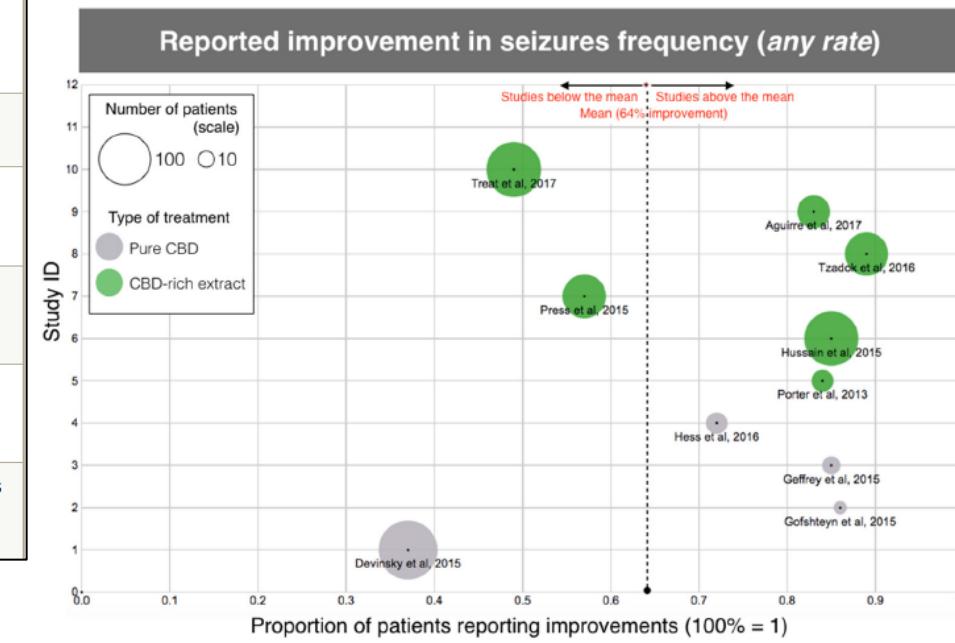
Medicinal cannabis and high CBD content for epilepsy



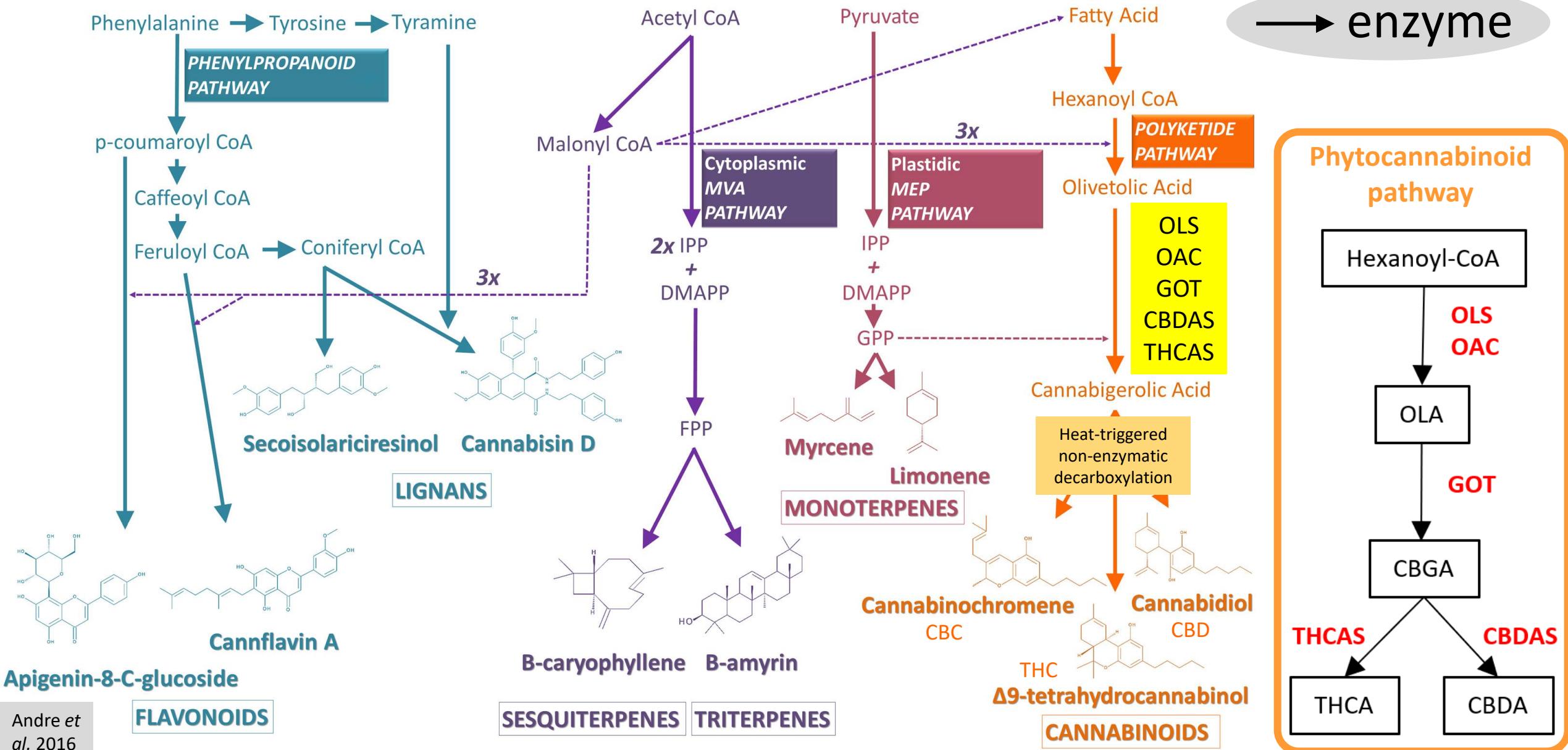
MEDICAL CONDITION	POTENTIAL MEDICAL BENEFITS
Cancer patient undergoing chemotherapy treatment.	Aids in pain management and enhances appetite.
Glaucoma caused by poor blood supply to the optic nerve fibres.	Decreases pressure inside the eye.
Epileptic seizures.	Controls seizures by binding to the brain cells responsible for controlling excitability and regulating relaxation.
Alzheimer diseases.	Slows the formation of amyloid plaques by blocking the enzyme in the brain that makes them.
Painful symptoms of multiple sclerosis.	Binds to receptors in the nerves and muscles to relieve pain.
Treatment for Hepatitis C infection (negative side effects).	Helps lessens treatment side effects such as nausea, muscle aches, loss of appetite, and depression.
Inflammatory bowel diseases like Crohn's disease.	Interacts with cells in the body that play an important role in gut function and immune responses.
Parkinson's disease.	Significantly reduces pain and tremors and improves sleep for Parkinson's disease patients.
Concussion or other traumatic injury.	Lessens the bruising of the brain and helps with healing mechanisms after a traumatic injury.

EverBlu report 2017

Treatment with cannabidiol (CBD)-based products significantly reduces epileptic seizure frequency.
(Pamplona et al, 2018)



Cannabis secondary metabolism

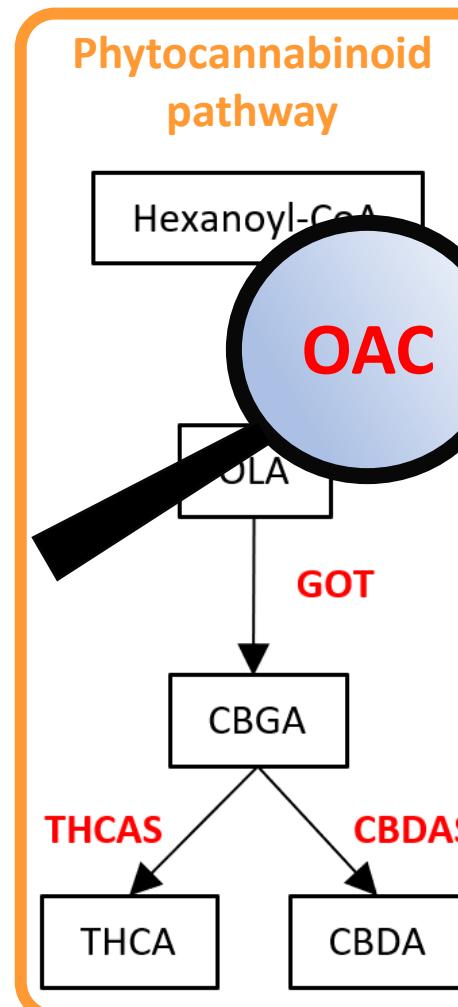
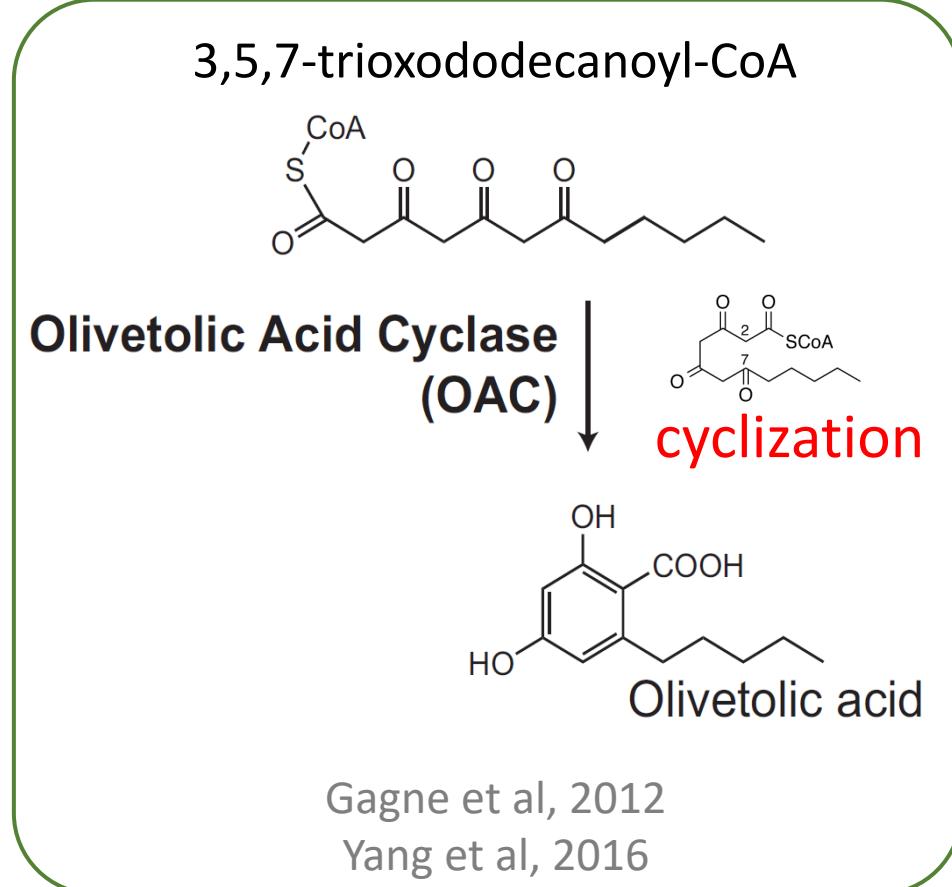
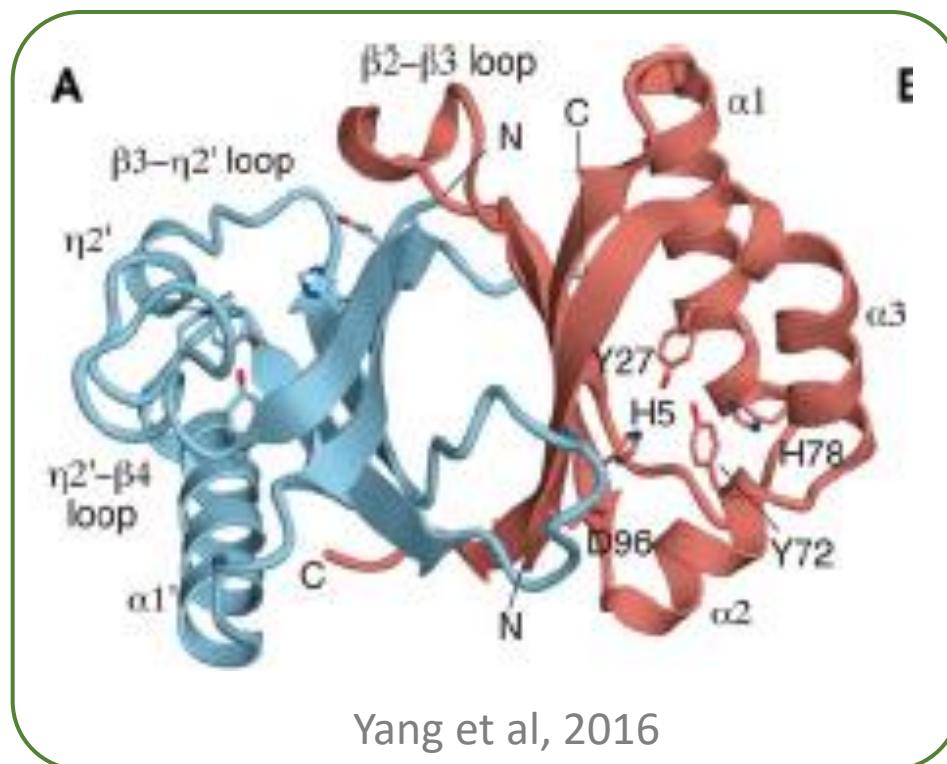


Focus on olivetolic acid cyclase (OAC UniProtKB I6WU39)

Mature sequence 1-101 AA (12kDa), homodimer.

Cytoplasmic (not secreted)

Ligands: 3 x Magnesium



Focus on THCA synthase (THCAS UniProtKB Q8GTB6)

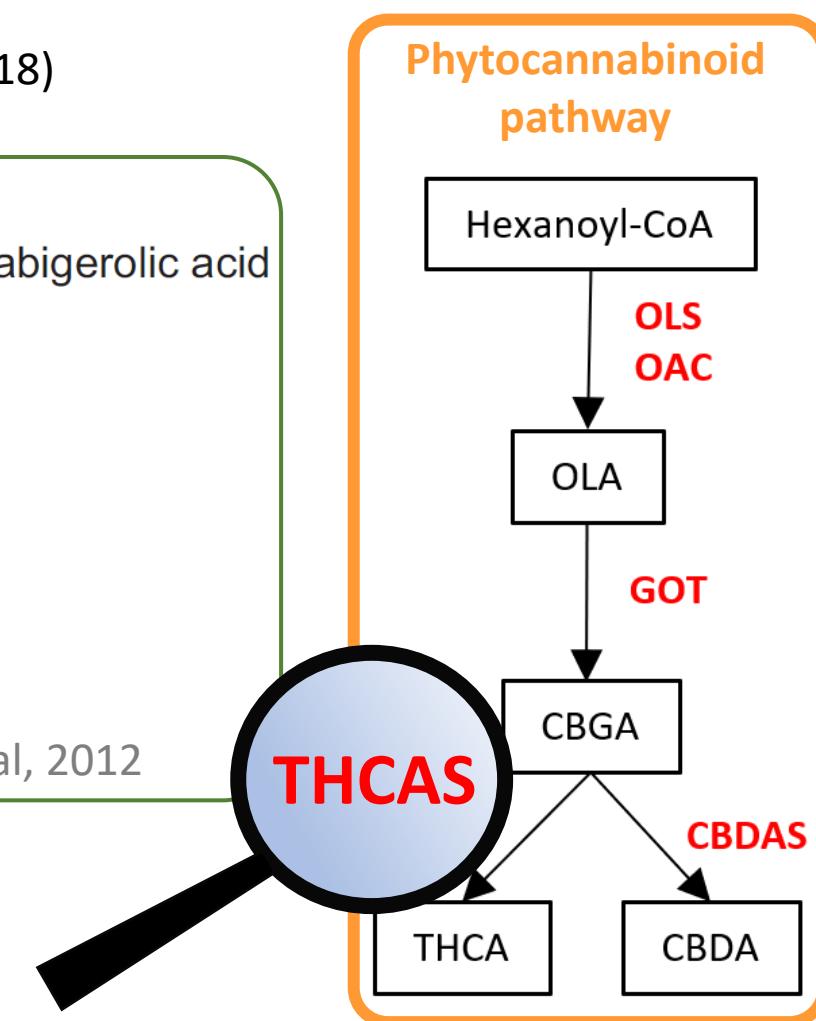
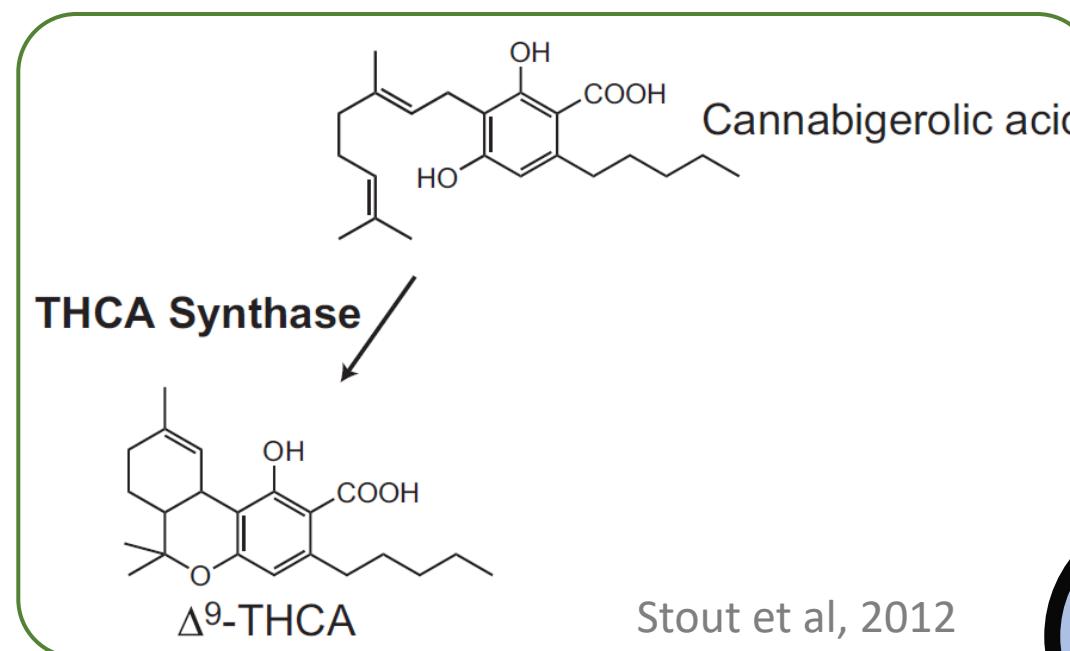
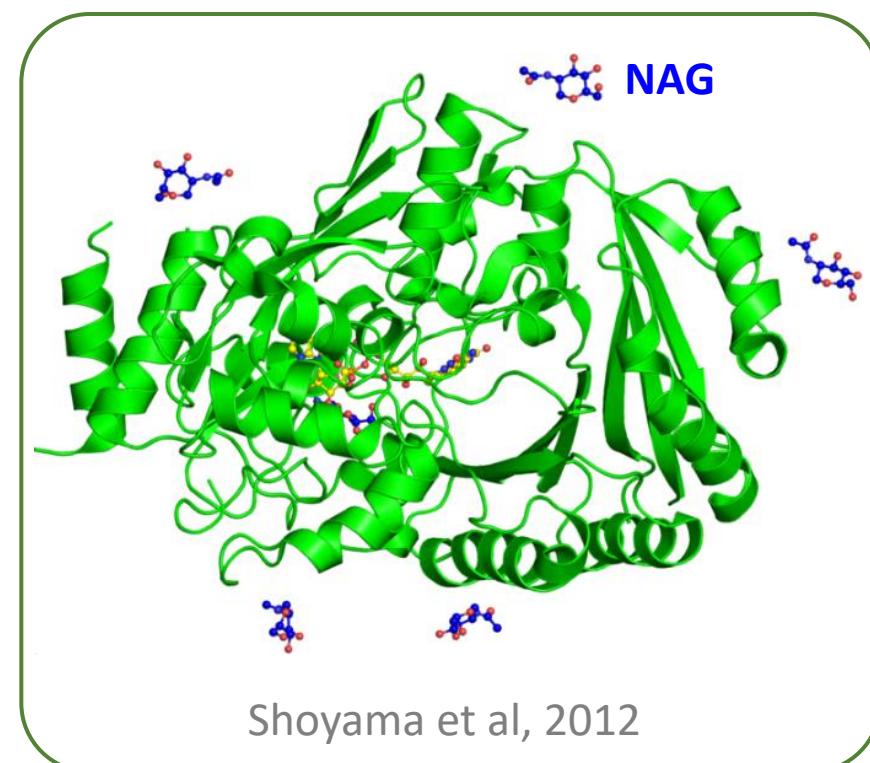
Extracellular (secreted): Signal Peptide (SP) 1-28 AA; mature sequence 29-545 AA (62kDa)

Flavoprotein Cofactor Flavin-adenosine dinucleotide (FAD), disulfide bond (C37-C99)

Ligands: 7(+1) x N-acetyl-D-glucosamine (NAG or GlcNAc, mass=221) (attached to asparagine N residues)

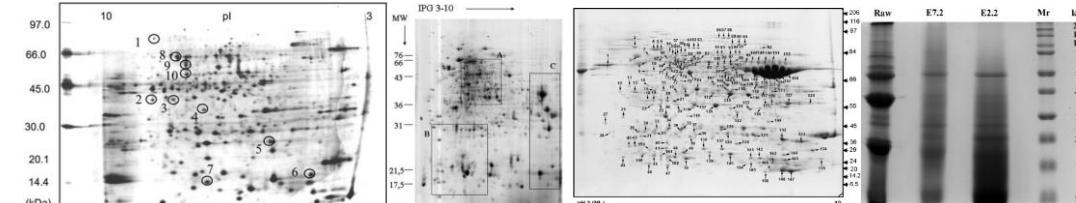
Position of NAG on AA sequence: **N2, N65, N89, N168, N297, N305, N329, N467, N499**

Some glycosylated N are not needed for enzymatic activity (N89, N499) (Zirpel et al, 2018)



Cannabis proteomics up to 2018

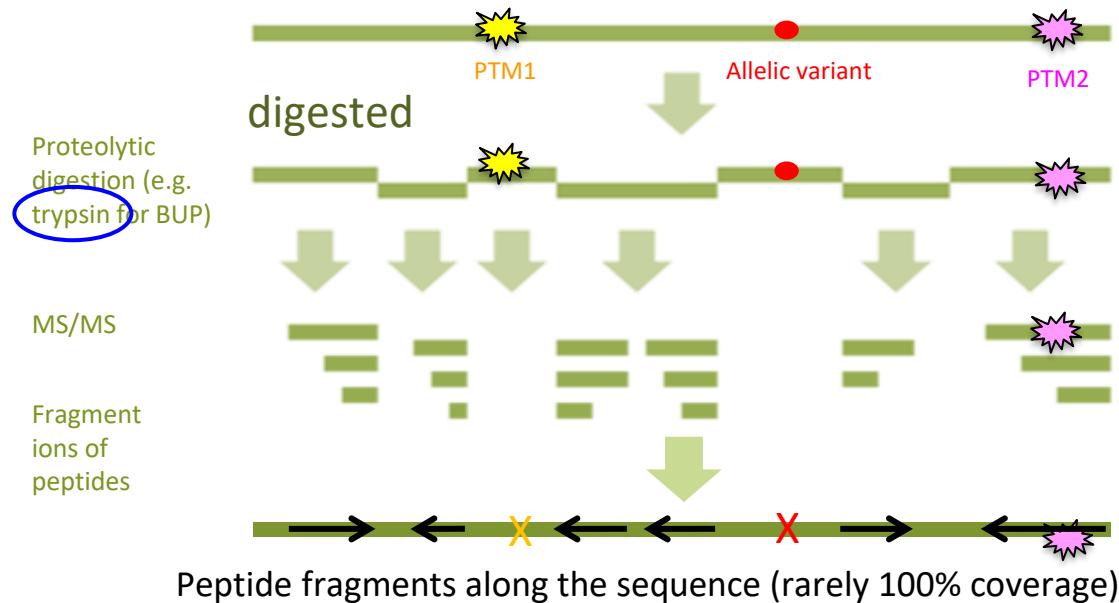
LITERATURE	Raharjo et al, 2004	Bona et al, 2007	Park et al, 2012	Aiello et al, 2016	Behr et al, 2018	SUMMARY
Tissues	leaves, flowers, trichomes	roots	hempseed flour	hempseed flour	hypocotyls	1/5 study on flowers/trichomes (where phytocannabinoids accumulate)
Powder homogenisation		Tris/sucrose/ thiourea/DTT	Sucrose/Na-phosphate	Tris/NaCl/ CHAPS		3/5, different buffers
Protein precipitation	10%TCA/2ME/ acetone		10%TCA/H2O	20%TCA/ H2O	20%/DTT/ acetone	4/5, always TCA, 2/5 with acetone
Phase partition		Phenol/NH4 acetate				1/5
Protein resuspension	Urea/CHAPS/ DTT	Urea/CHAPS/ Triton/DTT	Urea/thiourea /CHAPS/Tris/ DTE	Tris/NaCl/ CHAPS	Urea/thiourea /CHAPS/Tris	4/5 urea-based solutions, different composition
Protein separation	2-DE	2-DE	2-DE	1-DE	1-DE, 2-D DIGE	5/5 gel-based separation
Protein digestion	trypsin	trypsin	trypsin	trypsin	trypsin	5/5 trypsin
Protein identification	PMF	nLC-MS/MS	nLC-MS/MS	nLC-MS/MS	PMF	2/5 PMF, 3/5 nLC-MS/MS





Materials - Methods

Complementary proteomics strategies

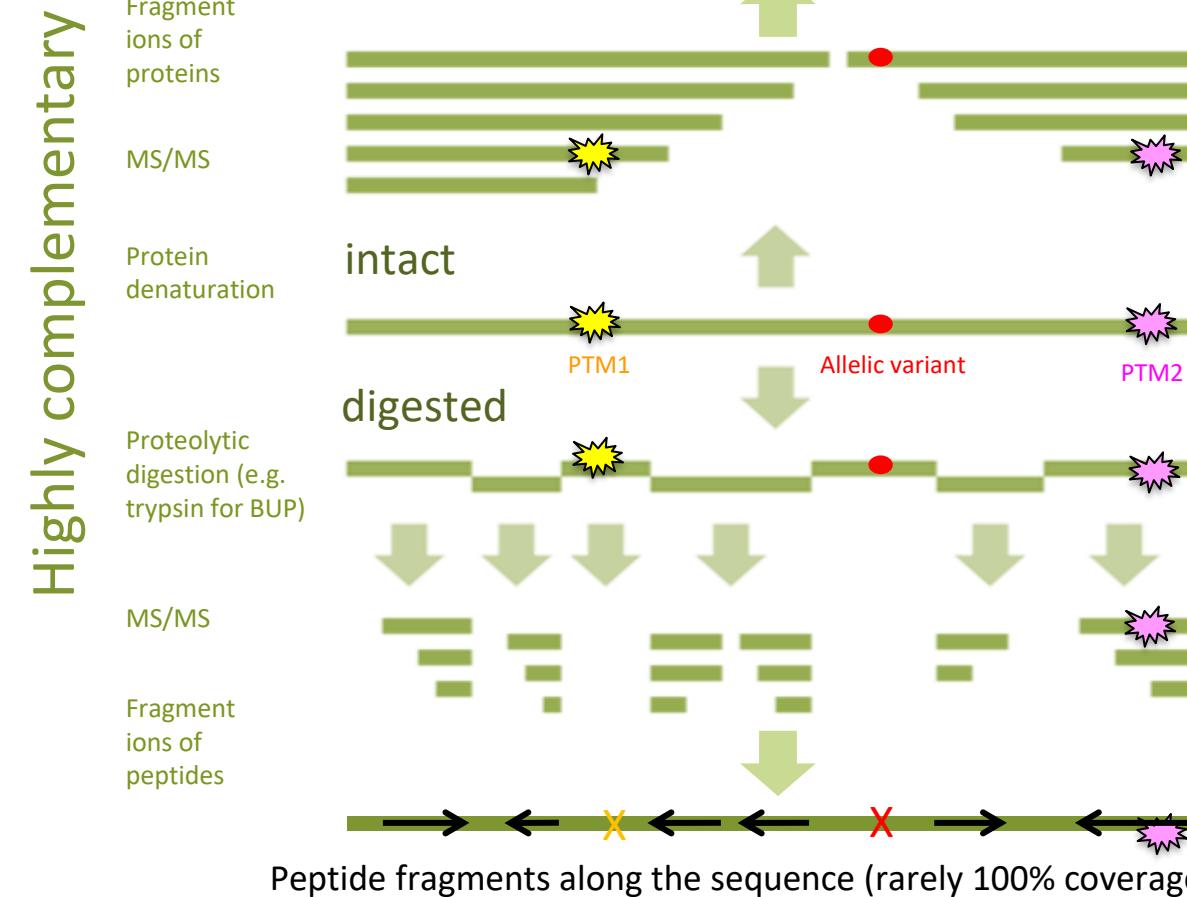


(adapted from
Wikipedia)

Complementary proteomics strategies

Top-down proteomics (TDP)

Fragmentation of whole protein from N- and C-termini (100% coverage)

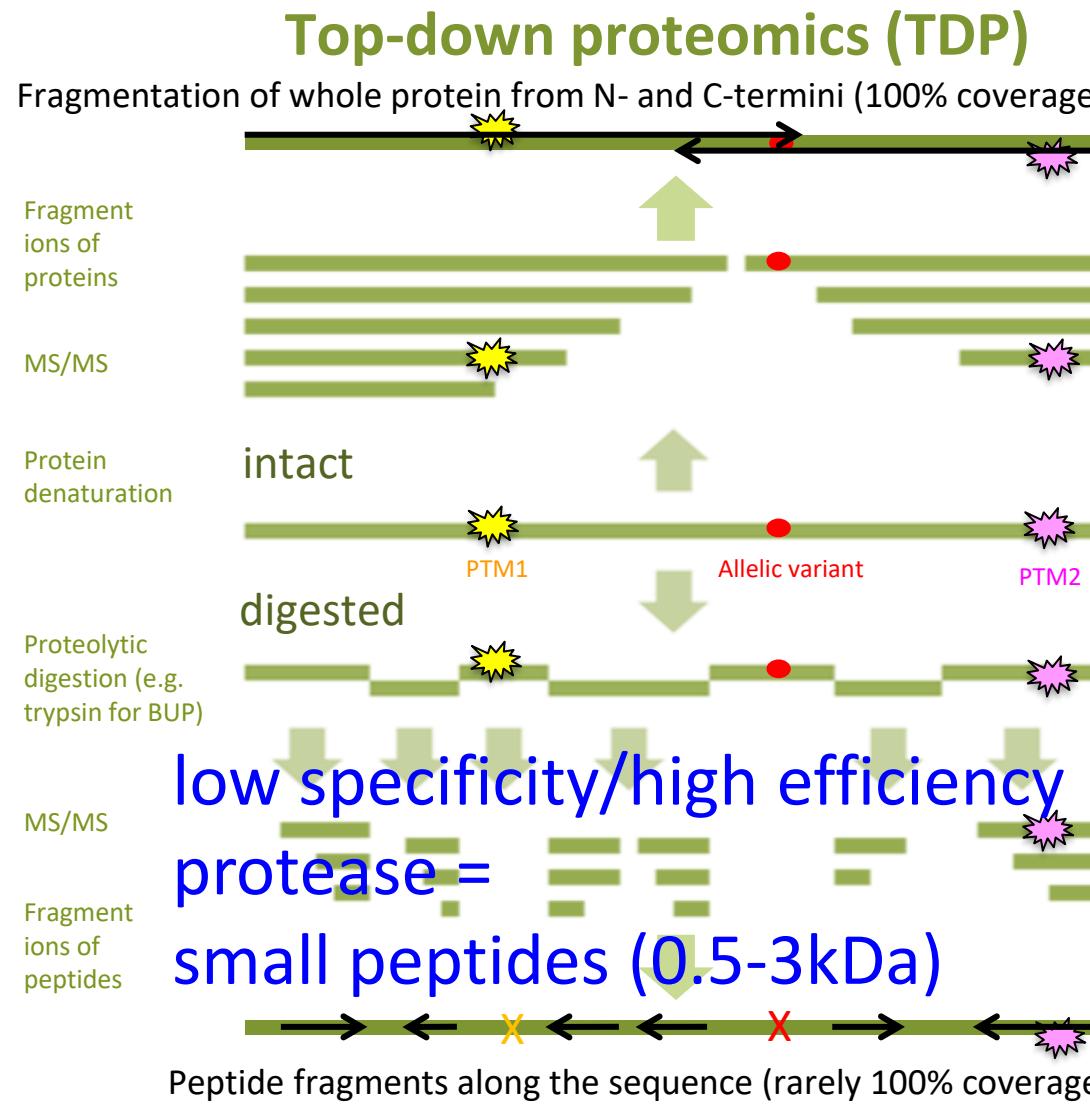


Peptide fragments along the sequence (rarely 100% coverage)

Bottom-up proteomic (BUP)

Complementary proteomics strategies

Highly complementary

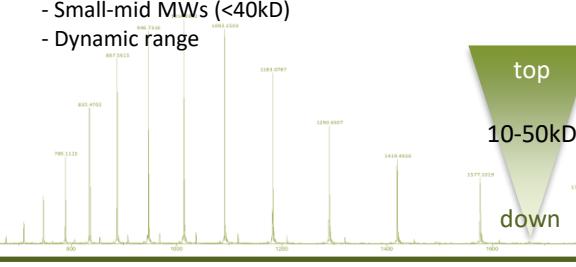


(Vincent et al; 2016, 2018, 2019; Raynes et al. 2018)
Top-down proteomics (proteins)

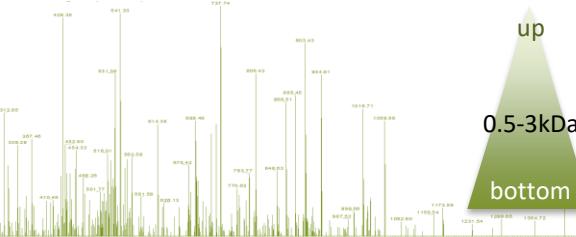
- + Protein quantitation
- + Allelic variation
- + PTM analysis
- + Protein processing

- Complexity of the sample
- Relatively new approach
- Small-mid MWs (<40kD)
- Dynamic range

proteoforms



top
10-50kD
down



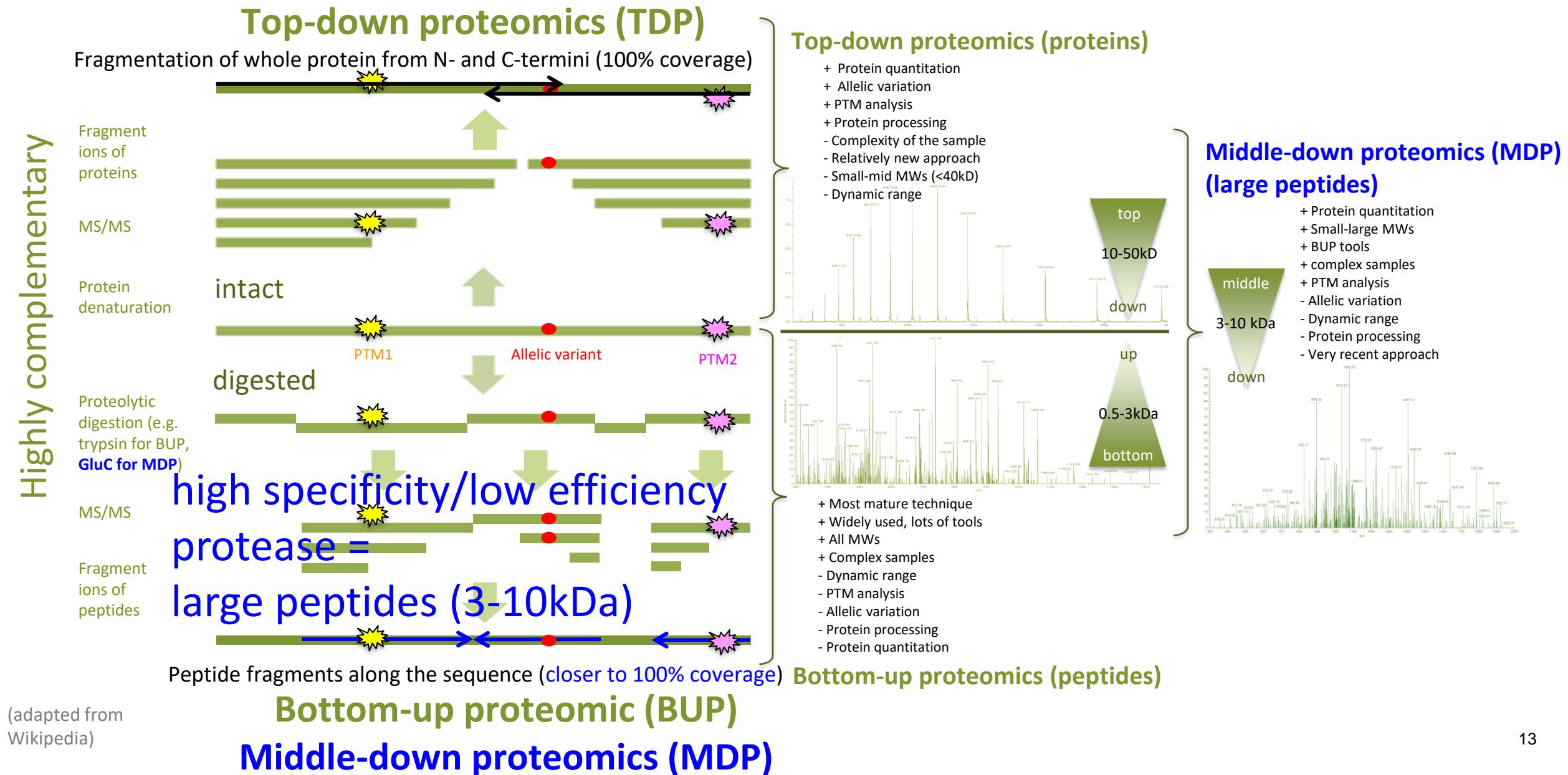
up
0.5-3kDa
bottom

- + Most mature technique
- + Widely used, lots of tools
- + All MWs
- + Complex samples
- Dynamic range
- PTM analysis
- Allelic variation
- Protein processing
- Protein quantitation

Bottom-up proteomics (peptides)

(Vincent et al; 2009; 2011; 2012; 2015, 2019)

MDP: bringing the best of both BUP and TDP worlds

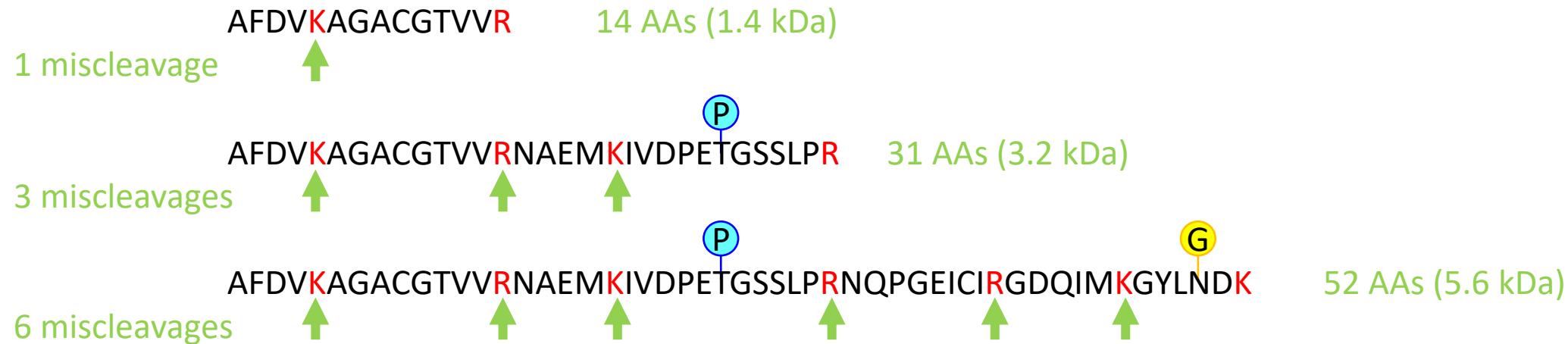


Proteases don't always get it right! Missed cleavage...

Miscleavages have been reported as a result of the protease skipping a seemingly cleavable residue.

Example: trypic digest of 4-coumarate:CoA ligase (4CL) (trypsin targets R and K residues)

...TEAGPVLTMSLAFKA**F**DVKAGACGTVVRNAEMKIVDPETGSSLPRNQPGEICIRGDQIMKGYLNDKESTKNTIDKEGWLHTGDIGVDDDD...



- Miscleavages produce longer peptides.
- Indispensable to discover PTMs.
- Very advantageous for MDP, provided your mass analyser can see them!
- Miscleavages + specific proteases that target rare AAs produce even longer peptides.
- However, a typical BUP study searches for max 2 missed cleavages. Discussed here...

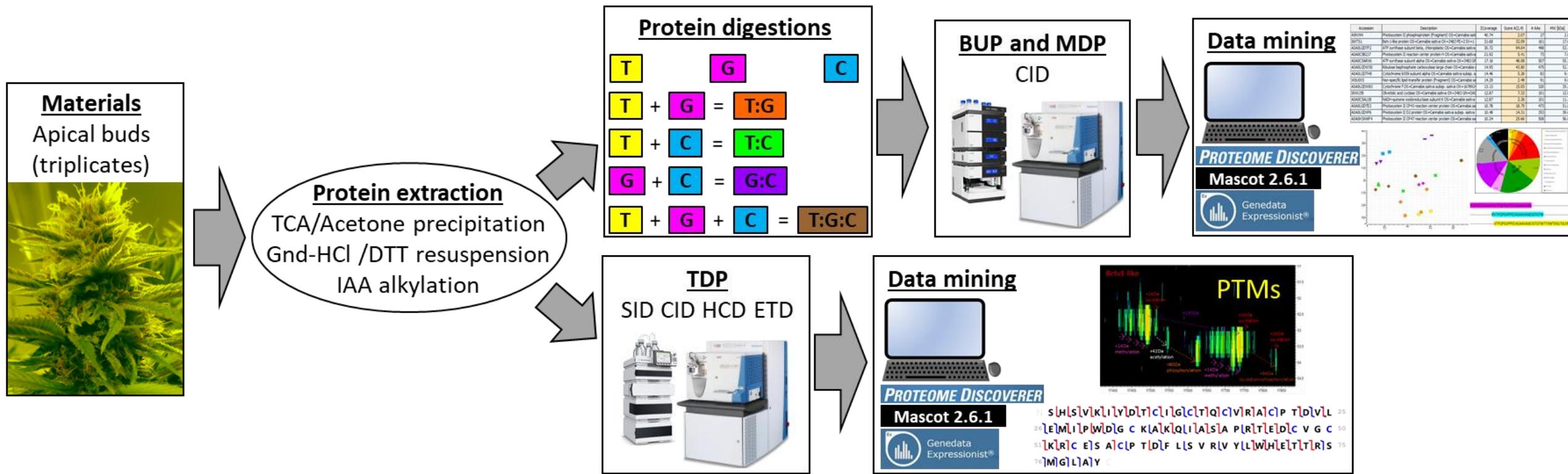
Proof-of-concept studies

- Overall experimental design

1st experiment: optimisation of protein extraction from mature buds for BUP (trypsin).

2nd experiment: optimisation of protein digestion for protein identification using BUP and MDP.

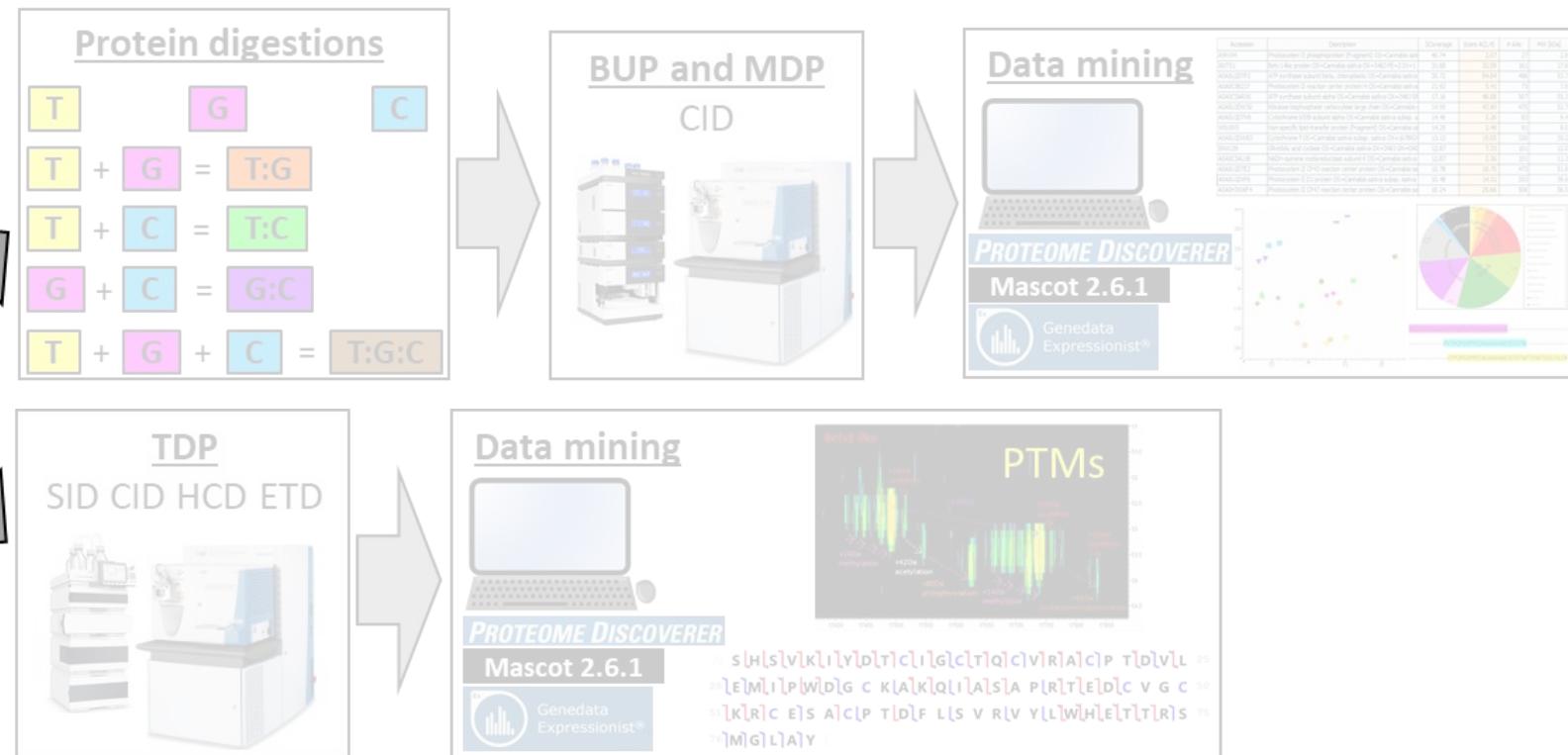
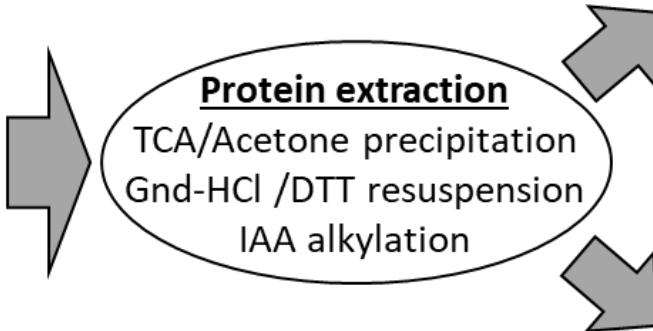
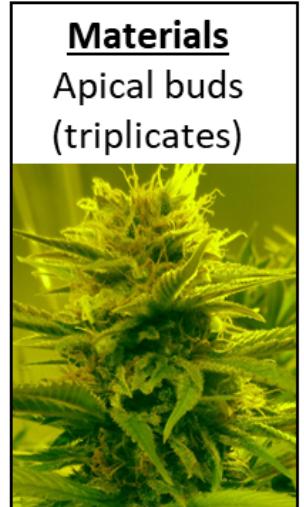
3rd experiment: optimisation of intact protein analysis and sequencing using TDP.





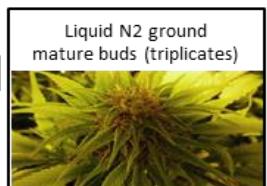
Results

Optimisation of protein extraction



1. Bottom-up proteomics (BUP)

Experimental design



Extraction Solutions	
TCA/DTT/A solution: 10% TCA 10mM DTT acetone	TCA/DTT/EtOH solution: 10% TCA 10mM DTT EtOH
Urea buffer: 6M urea, 10mM DTT, 10mM Tris-HCl pH 8.0, 75mM NaCl, 0.05% SDS.	Gnd-HCl buffer: 6M Gdn-HCl, 10mM DTT, 5.37 mM sodium citrate tribasic 2H ₂ O, 0.1 M Bis-Tris.



Extraction number	TCA/DTT/A precipitation	TCA/DTT/E precipitation	Urea buffer resuspension	Gnd-HCl buffer resuspension	Extraction Name
Extraction 1	no	no	yes	no	AB1
Extraction 2	no	no	no	yes	AB2
Extraction 3	yes	no	yes	no	AB3
Extraction 4	yes	no	no	yes	AB4
Extraction 5	no	yes	yes	no	AB5
Extraction 6	no	yes	No	yes	AB6

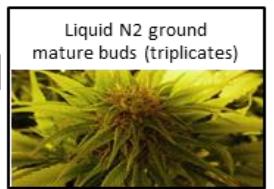
18 apical bud extracts

Extraction number	Urea buffer resuspension	Gnd-HCl buffer resuspension	Extraction Name
Extraction 1	yes	no	T1
Extraction 2	no	yes	T2

6 trichome extracts

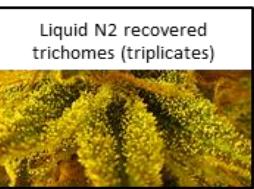
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Experimental design



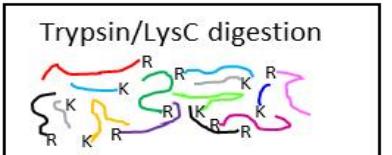
Extraction Solutions

TCA/DTT/A solution:	TCA/DTT/EtOH solution:
10% TCA 10mM DTT acetone	10% TCA 10mM DTT EtOH
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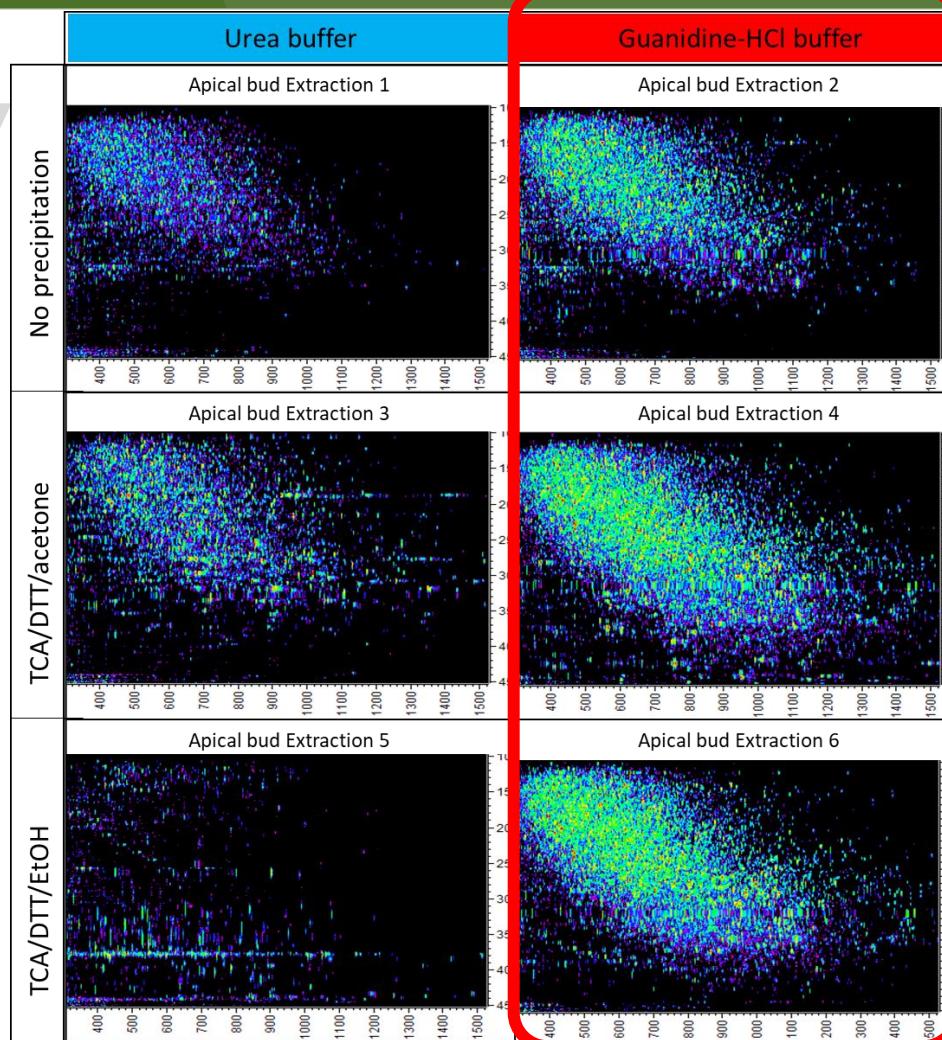
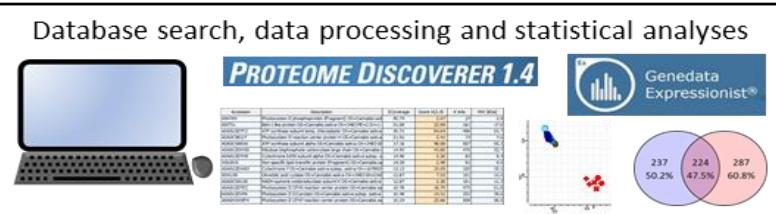
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Extraction 1	no	no	yes	no	AB1
Extraction 2	no	no	no	yes	AB2
Extraction 3	yes	no	yes	no	AB3
Extraction 4	yes	no	no	yes	AB4
Extraction 5	no	yes	yes	no	AB5
Extraction 6	no	yes	No	yes	AB6

18 apical bud extracts



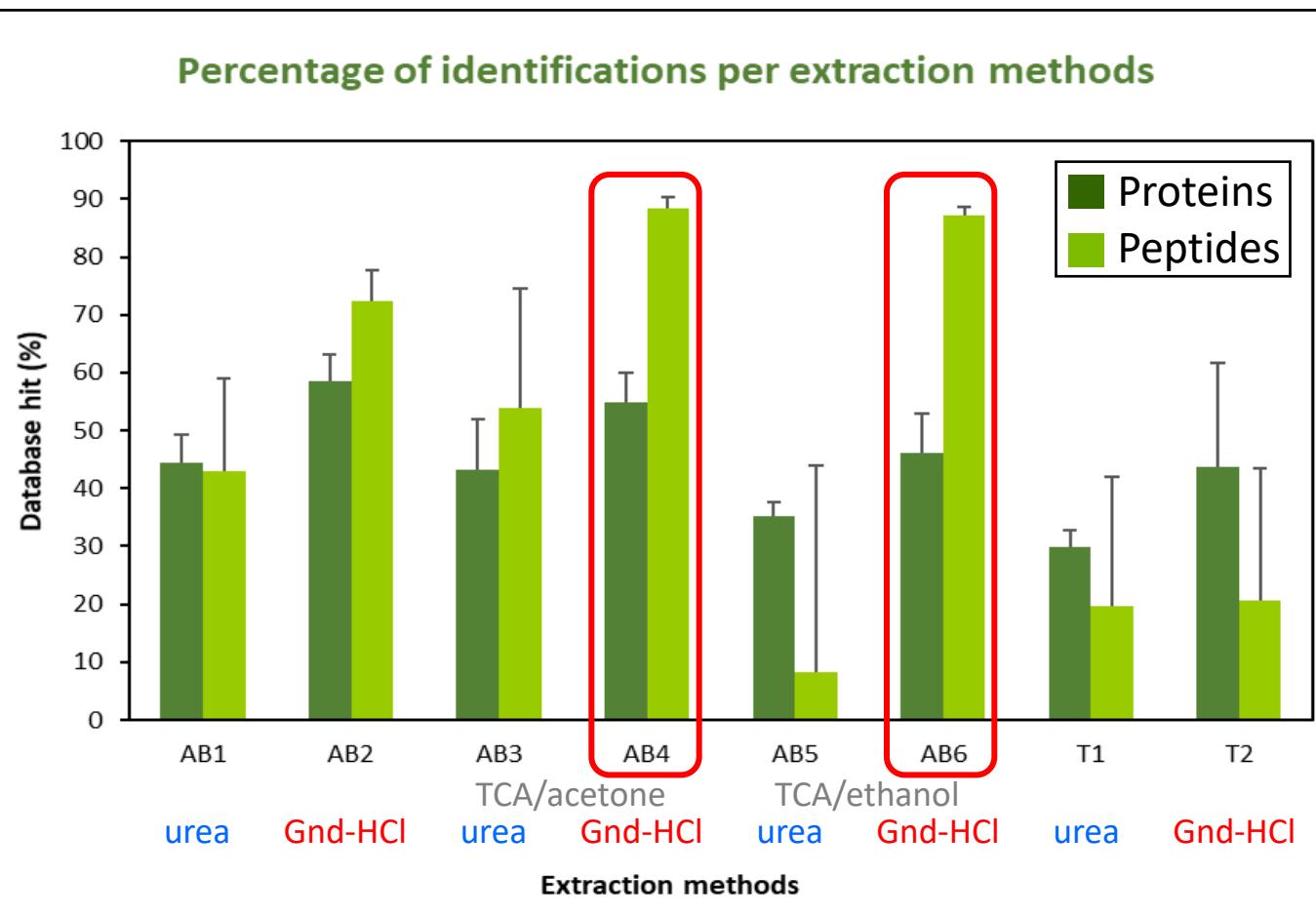
Trypsin (K,R) + LysC (K)
Medium specificity ("ms")
High efficiency ("he")

Bottom-up proteomics
Tryptic peptides analysis
nLC-MS/MS (duplicates)



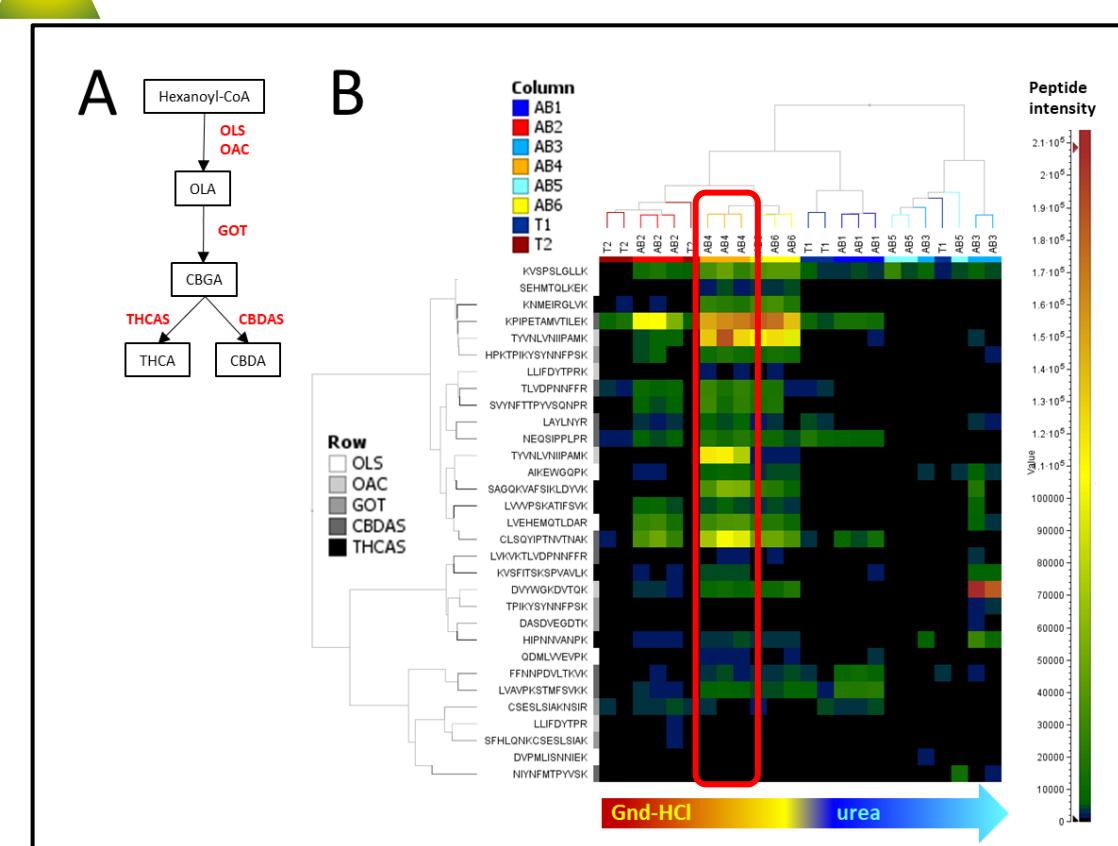
1. Bottom-up proteomics (BUP)

160 proteins identified from 5,675 peptides using BUP.



Methods AB4 and AB6 (TCA/A or TCA/E precipitation, Gnd-HCl resuspension) are the best protein extraction methods for mature buds (more identities, more reproducible).

Methods AB4 and AB6 are the only methods that recover enzymes involved in the phytocannabinoid biosynthesis.



Method chosen: AB4 (TCA/A → Gnd-HCl)

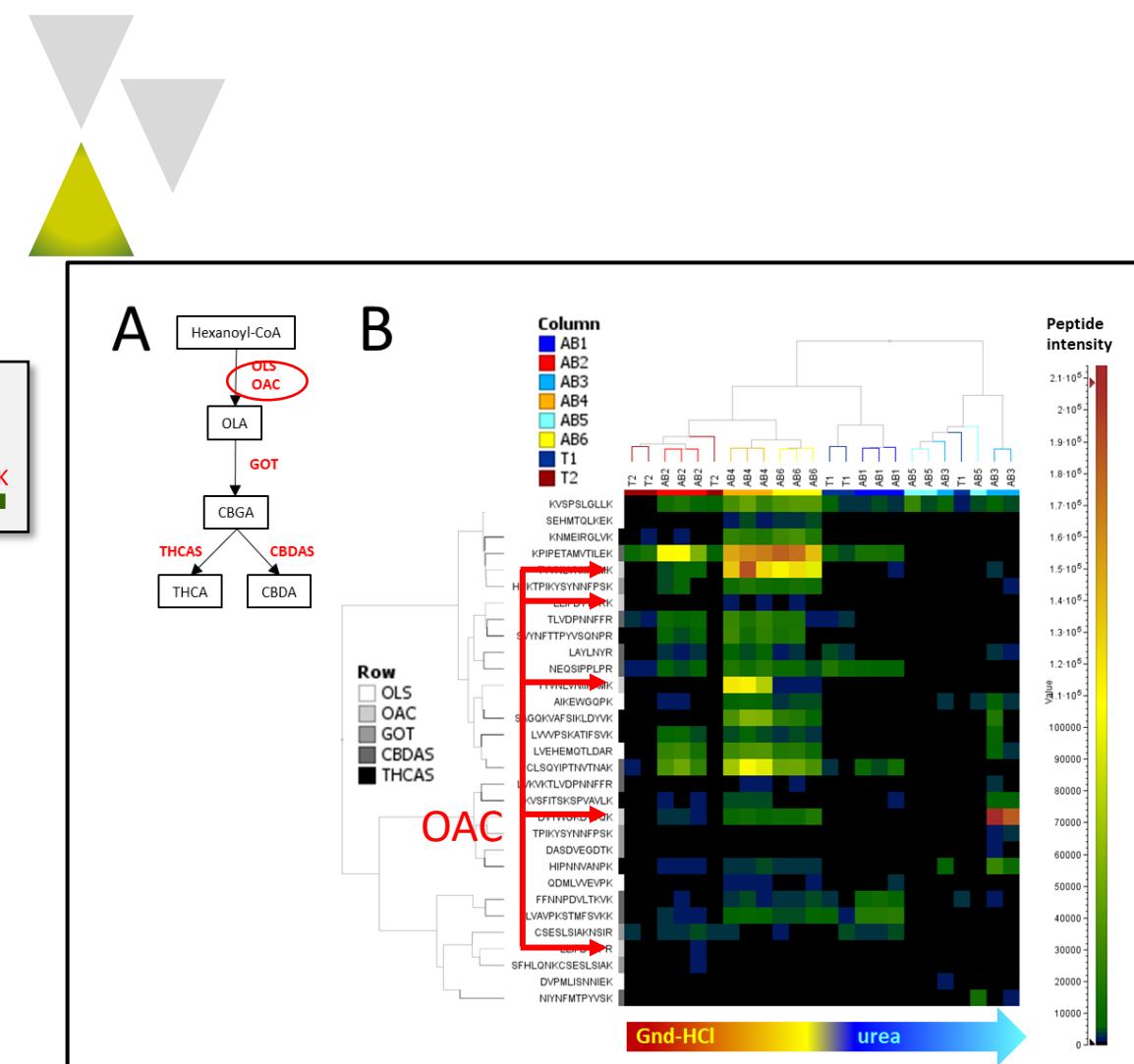
1. Bottom-up proteomics (BUP)

Focus on:

- OAC (olivetolic acid cyclase) (101 AAs, 12kDa)
- THCAS (tetrahydrocannabinolic acid synthase) (516 AAs, 59kDa)

OAC 34% coverage, no PTM (2 miscleavages)

>sp|I6WU39|OLIAC_CANSA Olivetolic acid cyclase OS=Cannabis sativa
MAVKHLIVLKFKDEITEAQKEFFK**TYVNLVNIIIPAMKDVTQK**NKEEGYTHIVEVTFESVETIQDYIIHPAHVGFGDVYRSFWEK**LLIFDYTPRK**



1. Bottom-up proteomics (BUP)

Focus on:

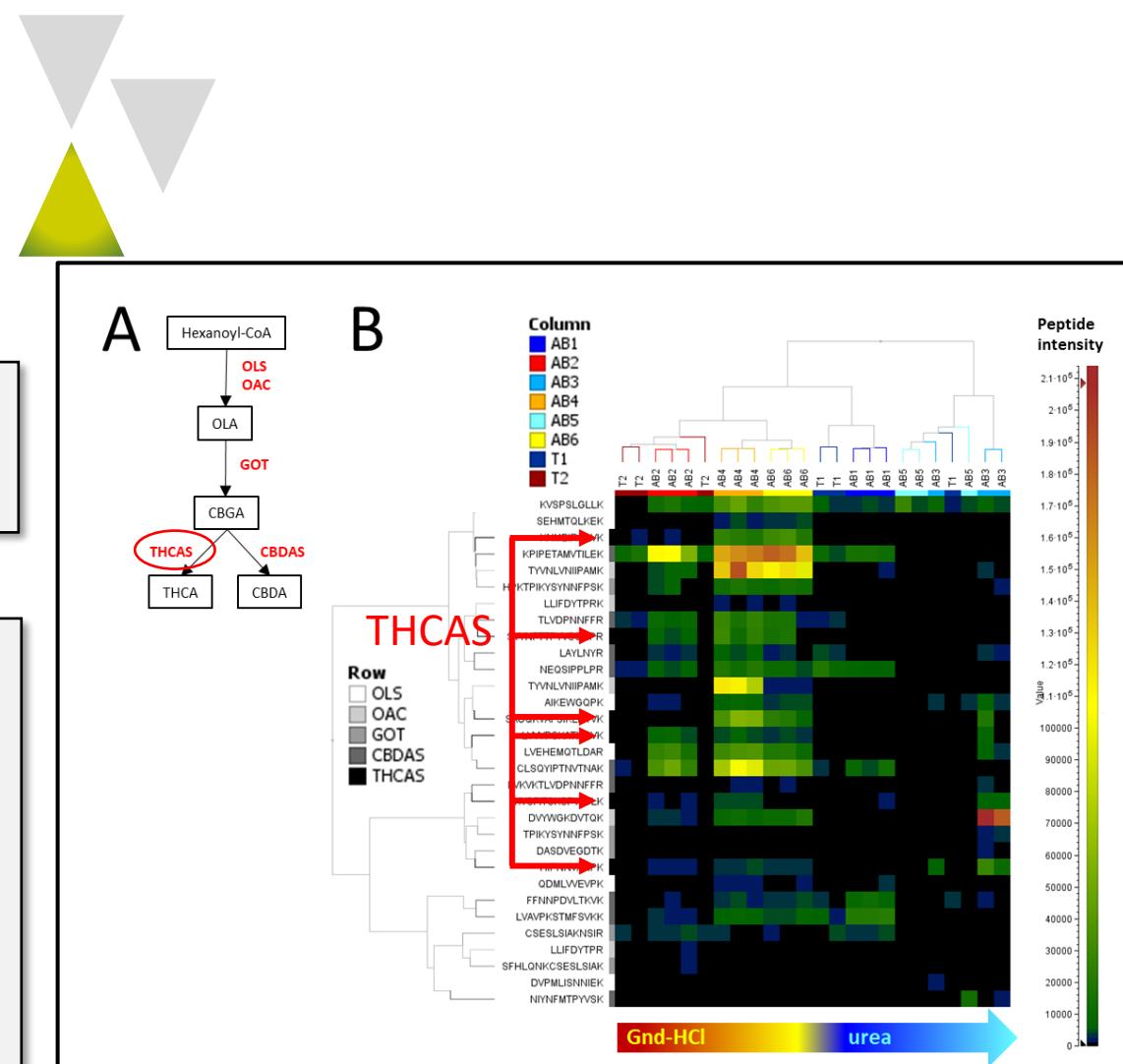
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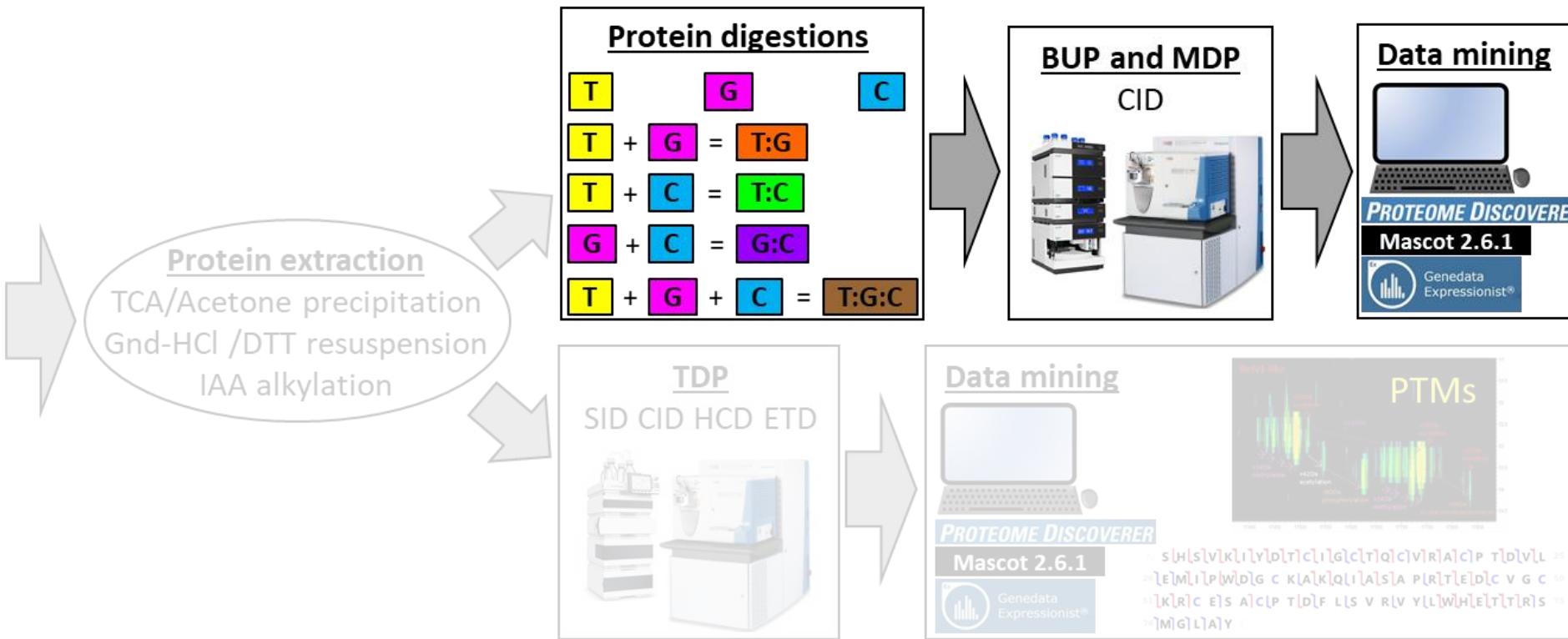
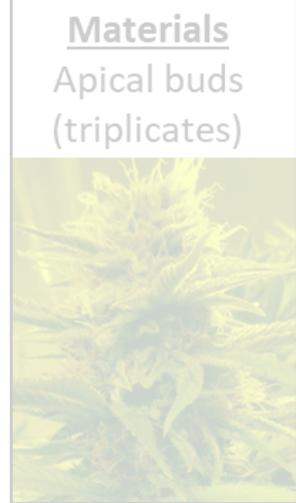
>sp|I6WU39|OLIAC_CANSA Olivetolic acid cyclase OS=Cannabis sativa
MAVKHLIVLKFKDEITEAQKEFFK**TYVNLVNIIIPAMKDVTQK**NKEEGYTHIVEVTFESVETIQDYIIHPAHVGFGDVYRSFWE**KLLIFDYTPRK**

THCAS 12% coverage, no PTM (2 miscleavages)

>sp|Q8GTB6|29-545|THCAS_CANSA Tetrahydrocannabinolic acid synthase OS=Cannabis sativa
NPRENFLKCSK**HIPNNVANPK**LVYTQHDQLYMSILNSTIQNLRFISDTPKPLIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGGHDAEGMSYISQVPFVV
VDLRNMHSIKIDVHSQTAWVEAGATLGEVYYWINEKNENLSFPGGYCPTVGVGGHFSGGGYGALMRNYGLAADNIIDAHVNVDGKVLDKSMG
EDLFWAIRGGGENFGIAAWKIK**LVAVPSKSTIFSVKKNMEIHGLVK**LFNKWQNIAYKYDKDLVLMTHFITKNITDHGKNKTTVHGYFSSIFHGGVD
SLVDMNKSFPPELGKKTDCFSWIDTTIFSGVVNFNTANFKKEILLDR**SAGKKTAFSIKLDYVK**KPIPETAMVKILEKLYEDVGAGMYVLYPYGGIME
EISESAIPFPHRAGIMYELWYTASWEKQEDNEKHINWVR**SVYNFTTPYVSQNPRLAYLNRYRDLDLGKTNHASPNNYTQARIWGEKYFGKNFNRLVKV**
KTKVDPNNFFRNEQSIPPLPHHH

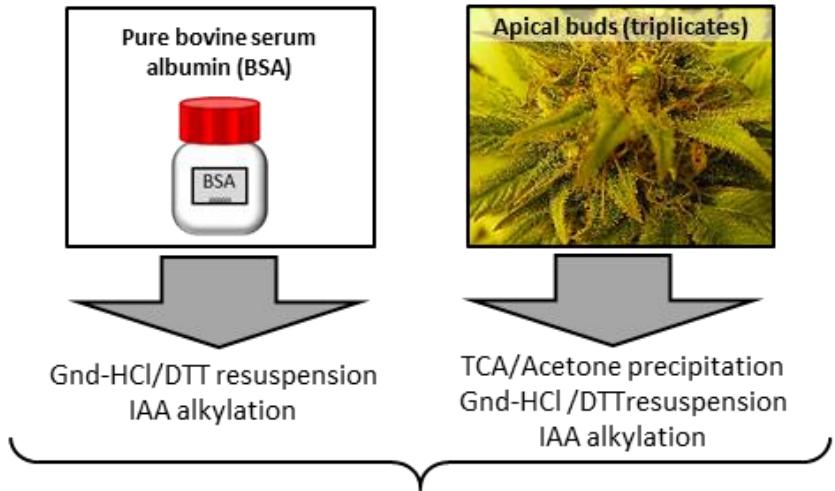


Optimisation of protein digestion



2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

Experimental design



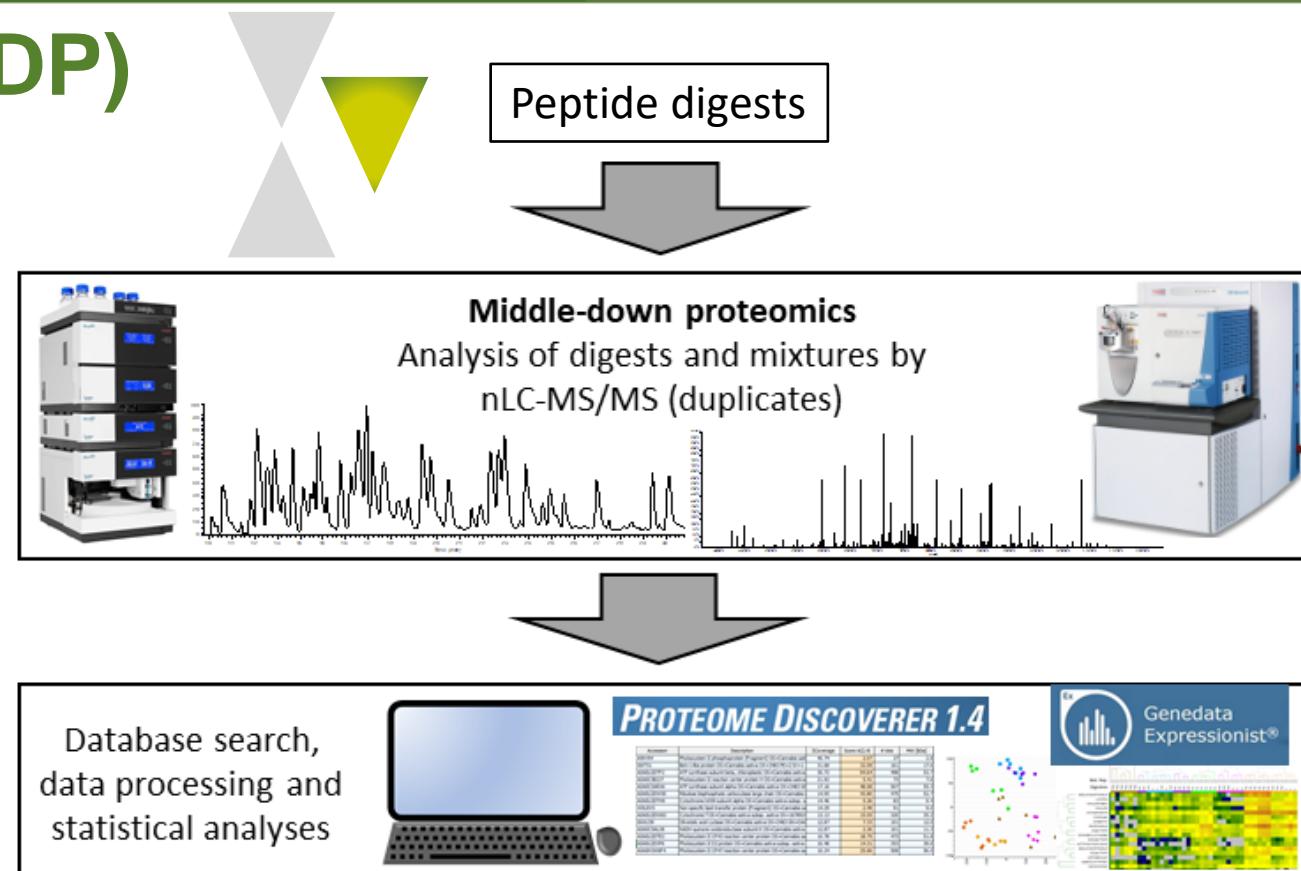
Protein digestion using 3 proteases

Enzyme code	ms\he	hs\le	ls\me	AA targeted
T	yes	no	no	R, K
G	no	yes	no	E, D
C	no	no	yes	Y, F, W, L
T->G	yes	yes	no	R, K, E, D
T->C	yes	no	yes	R, K, Y, F, W, L
G->C	no	yes	yes	E, D, Y, F, W, L
T->G->C	yes	yes	yes	R, K, E, D, Y, F, W, L

Mixture of digests (1:1 v/v or 1:1:1 v/v/v)

$$\boxed{T} + \boxed{G} = \boxed{T:G} \quad \boxed{T} + \boxed{C} = \boxed{T:C} \quad \boxed{G} + \boxed{C} = \boxed{G:C}$$

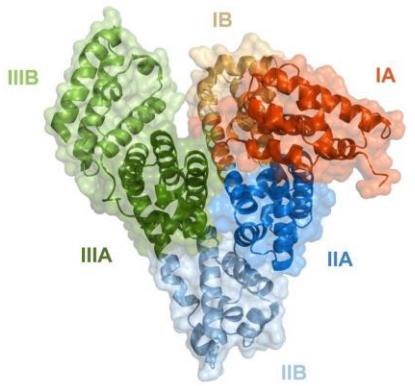
$$\boxed{T} + \boxed{G} + \boxed{C} = \boxed{T:G:C}$$



1. Digestion tests on BSA
2. Application to cannabis samples

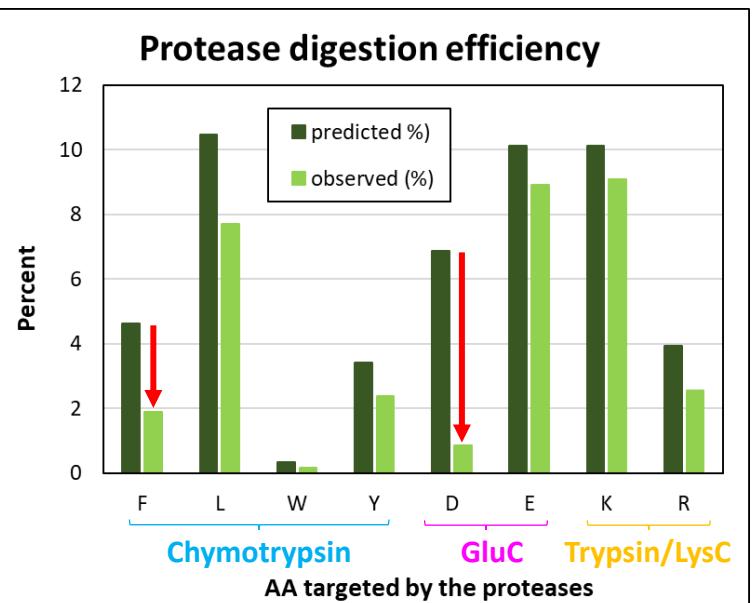
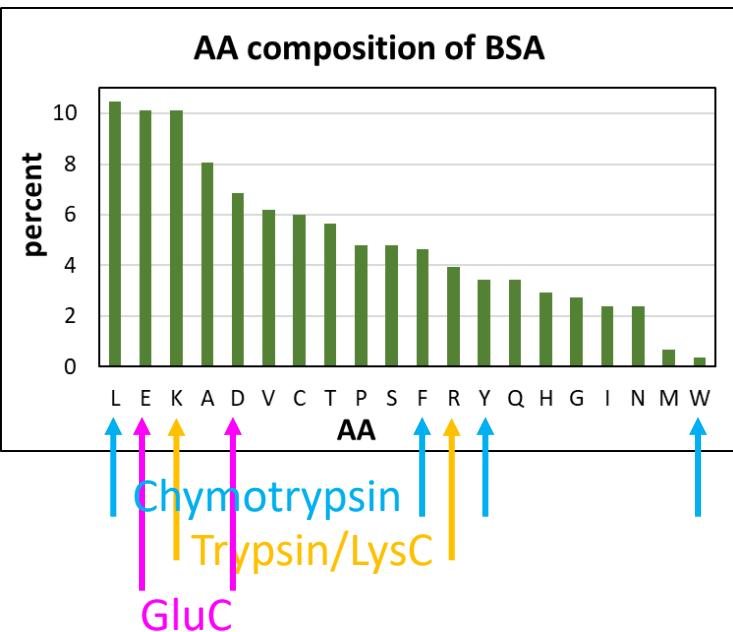
2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

1. Benchmarking using bovine serum albumin (BSA)

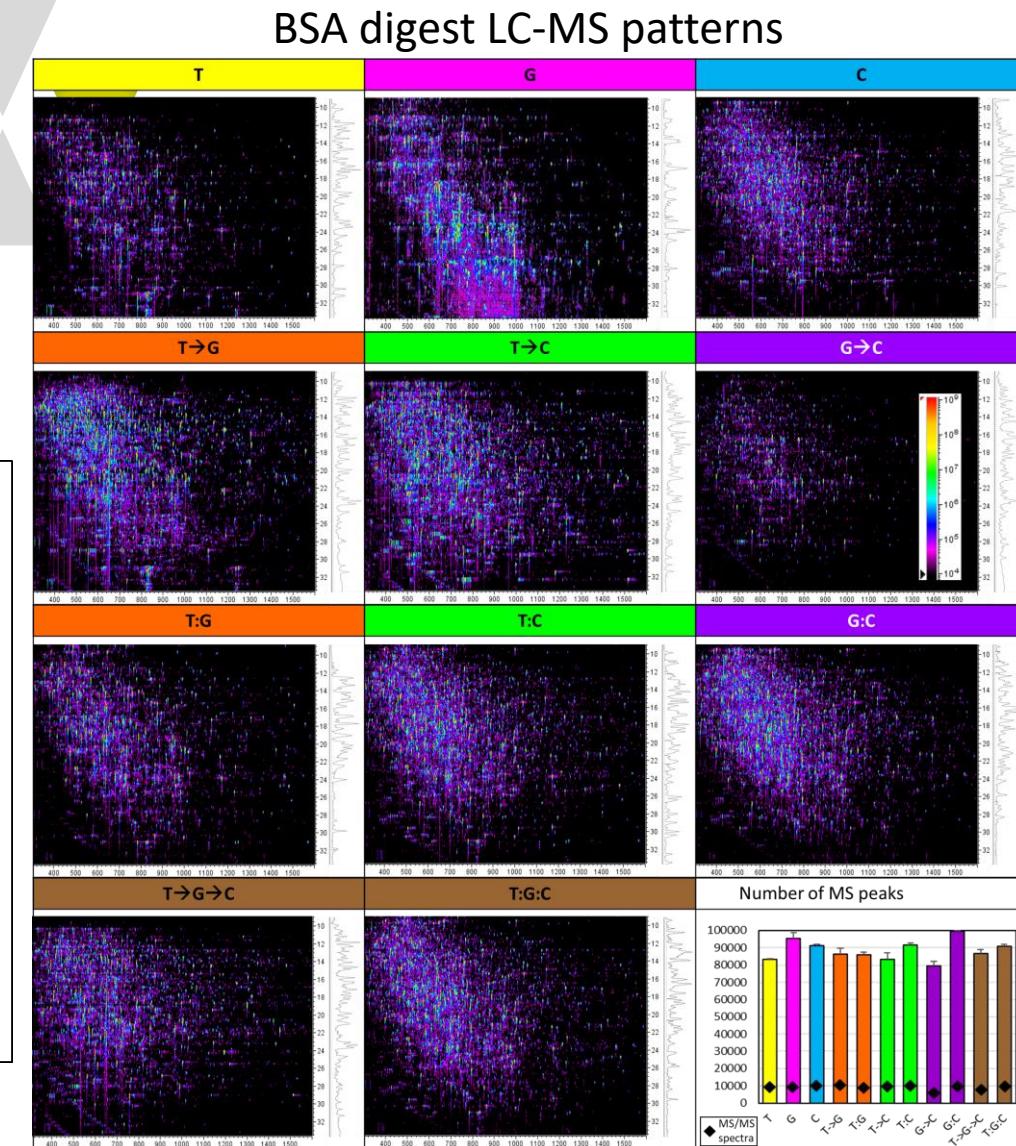


BSA structure
(Majorek et al. 2012)

Mature form:
583 AAs, 66kDa



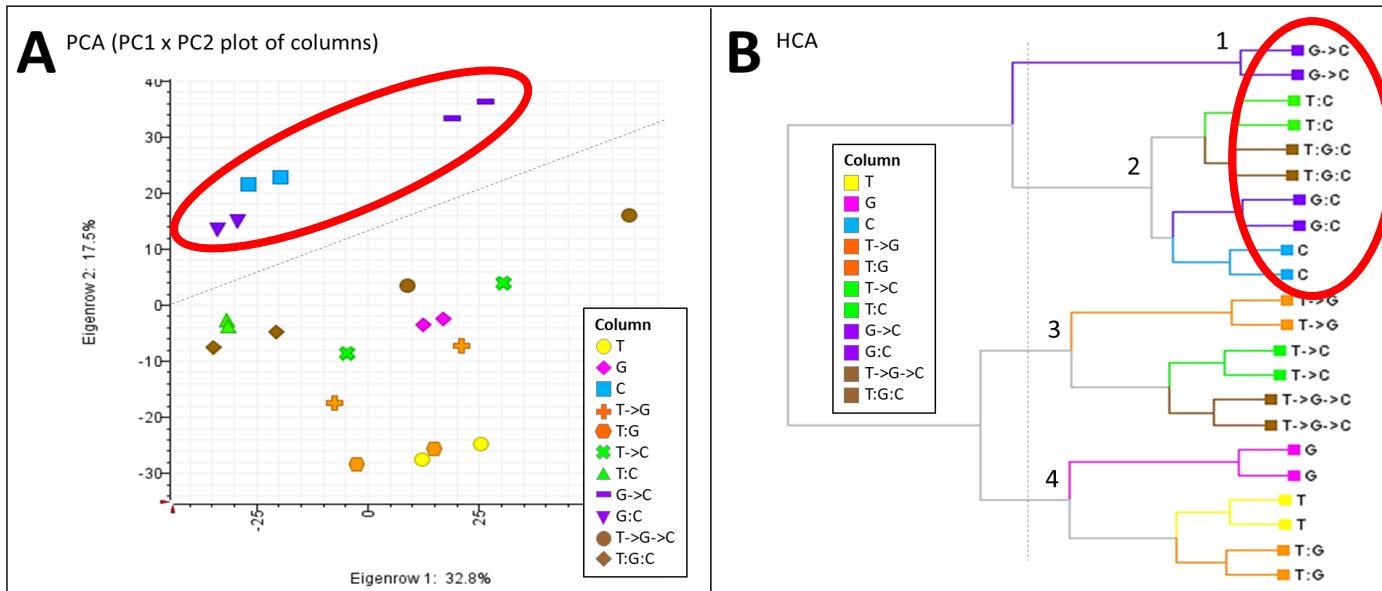
Digestion efficiency varies from one protease to another.
F and D residues often miscleaved.



BSA peptides elute from 9-39 min (9-39% ACN)
along 300-1600 m/z .

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

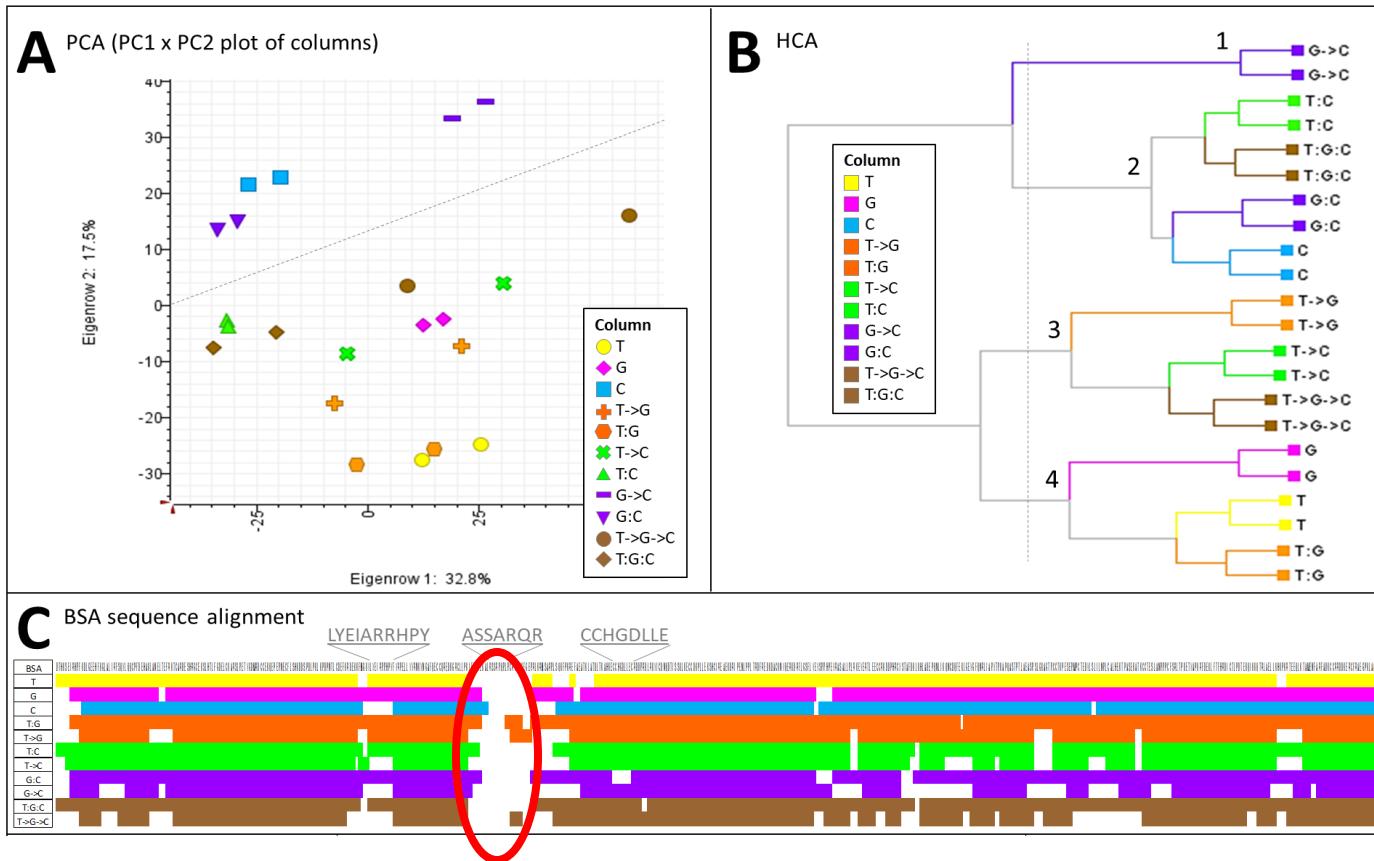
1. Benchmarking using bovine serum albumin (BSA)



- Reproducible analyses.
- Digestions with C (C, GC, TC) more orthogonal than with T and/or G.

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

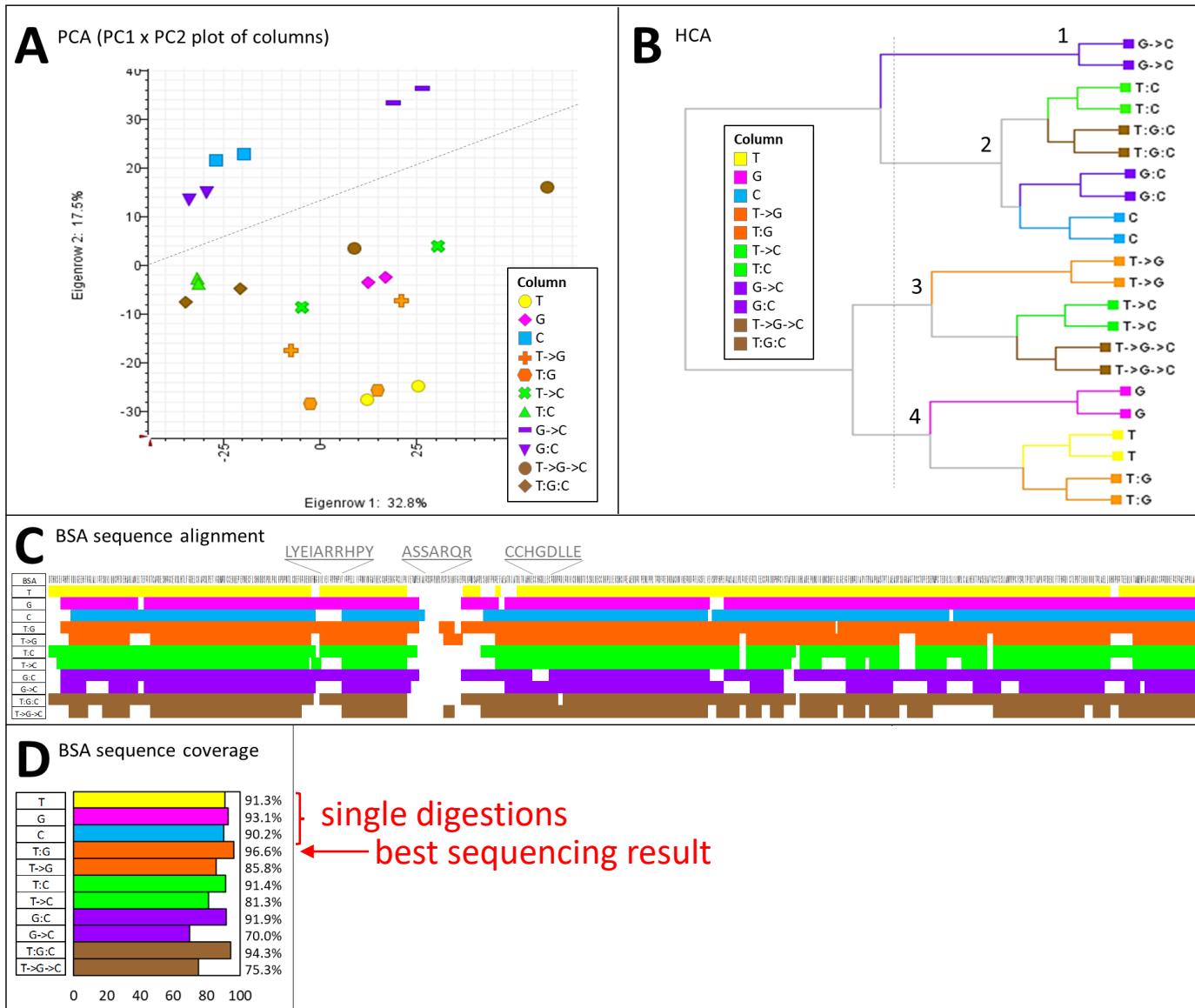
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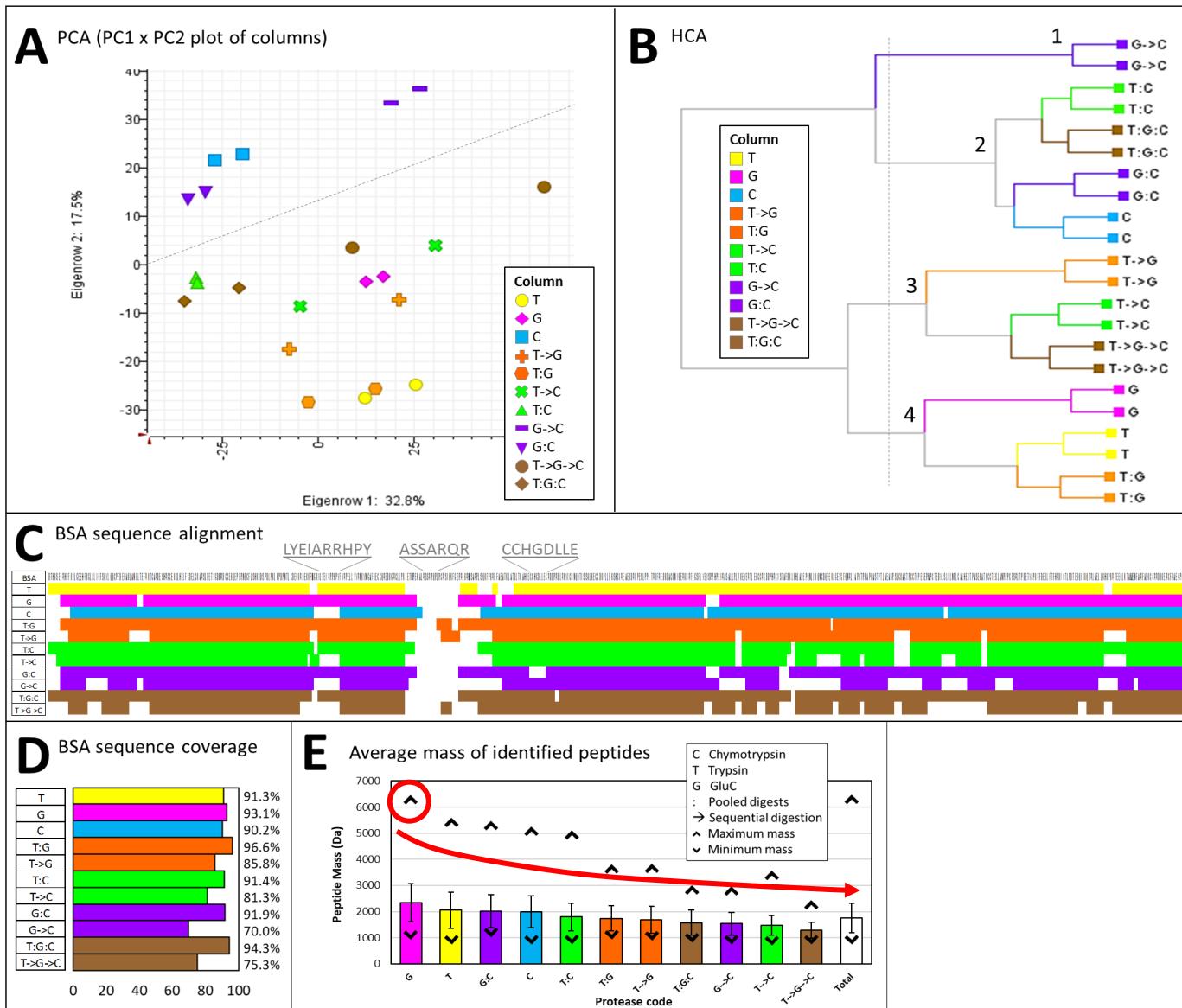
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- BSA sequence areas resisting digestion.
- Excellent coverage (>90%) using single digestions
- Best coverage using T:G (96.6%).

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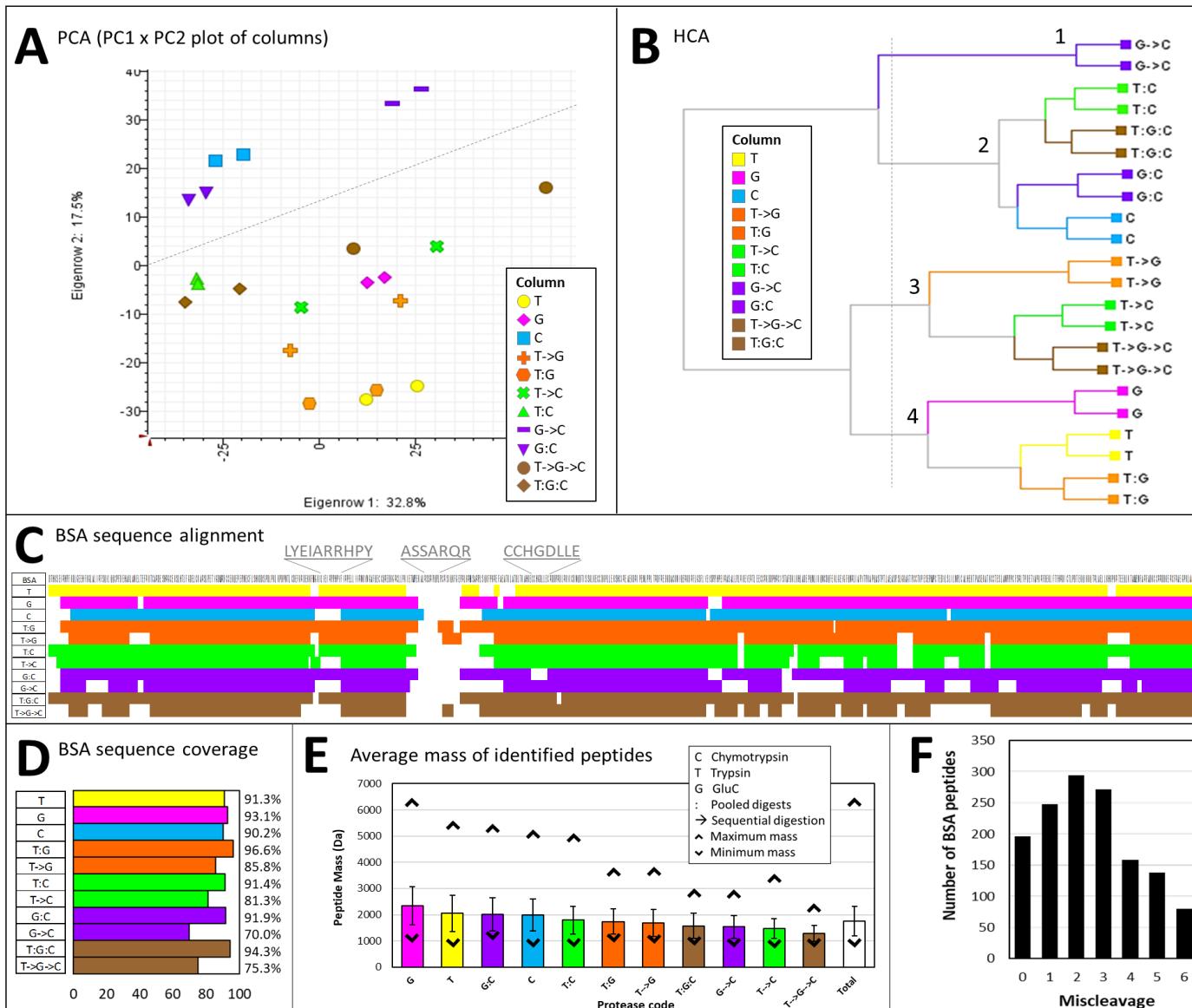
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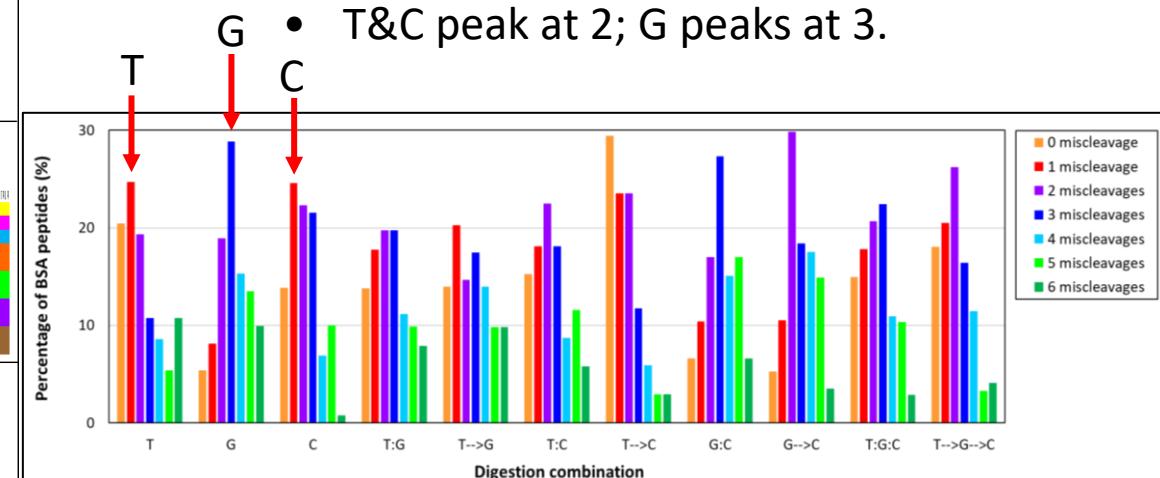
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- Peptide size decrease when proteases of I_s/he are combined
- G produced largest BSA peptides (>6KDa).

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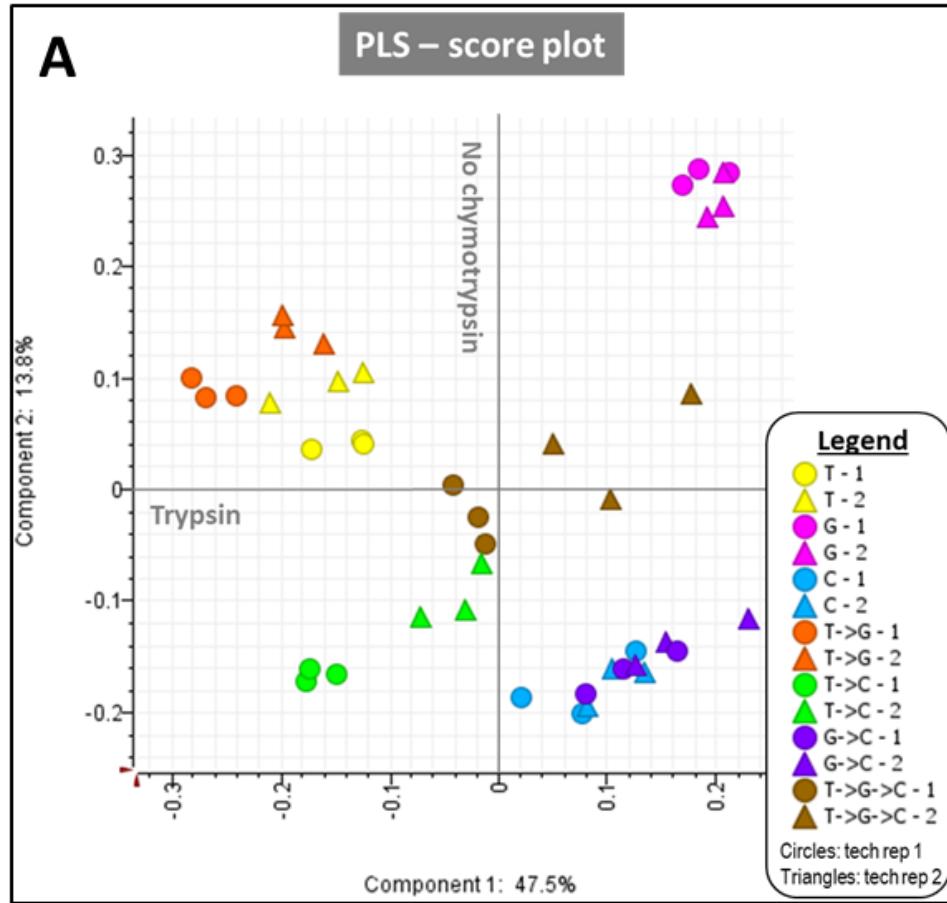
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- Best coverage using T:G (96.6%).
- Peptide size decrease when proteases of I_s/he are combined
- G produced largest BSA peptides (>6KDa).
- Up to 6 miscleavages observed.
- T&C peak at 2; G peaks at 3.



Digestions were successful on BSA therefore they could be tested on cannabis proteins.

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

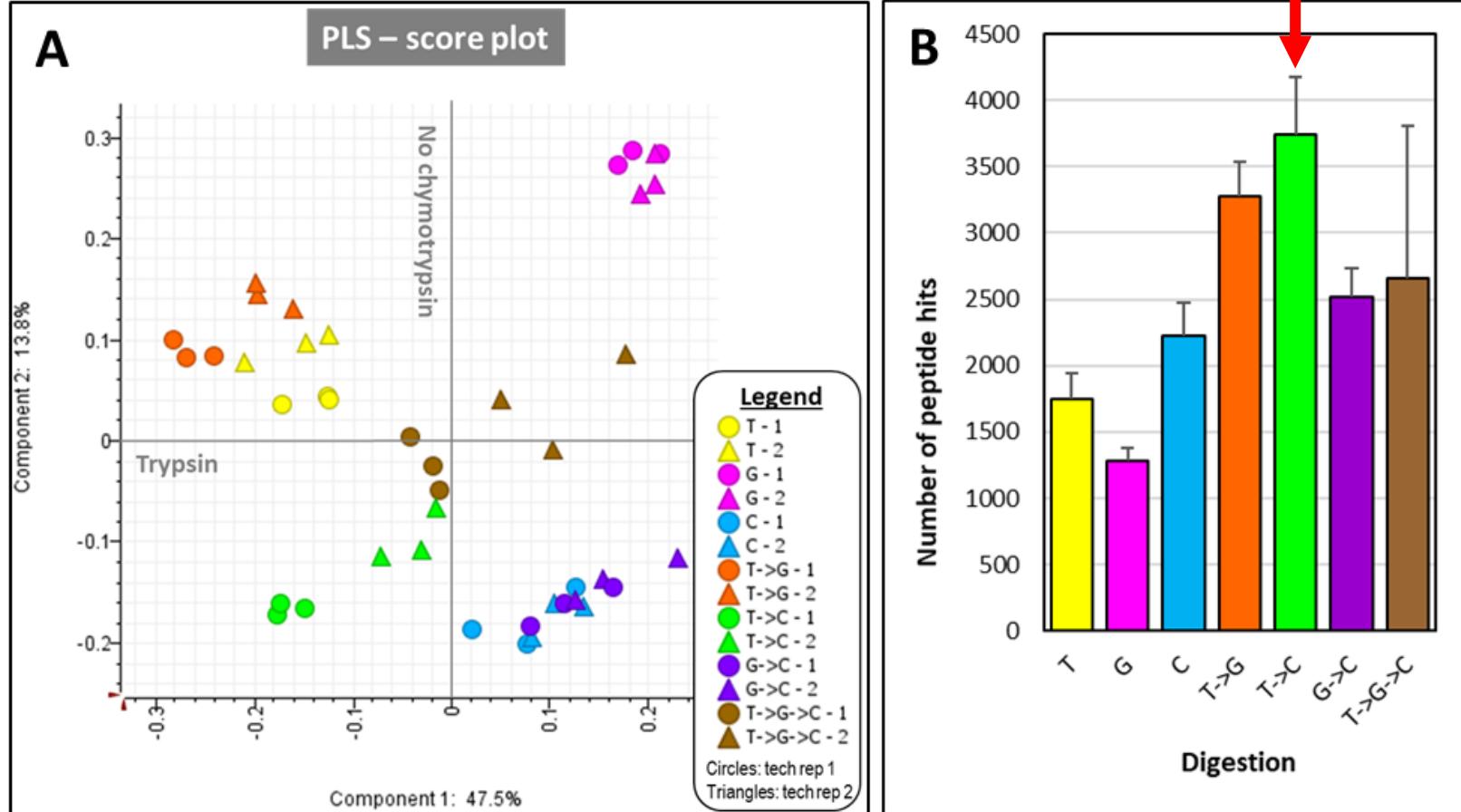
2. Cannabis results



- Reproducible analyses.

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

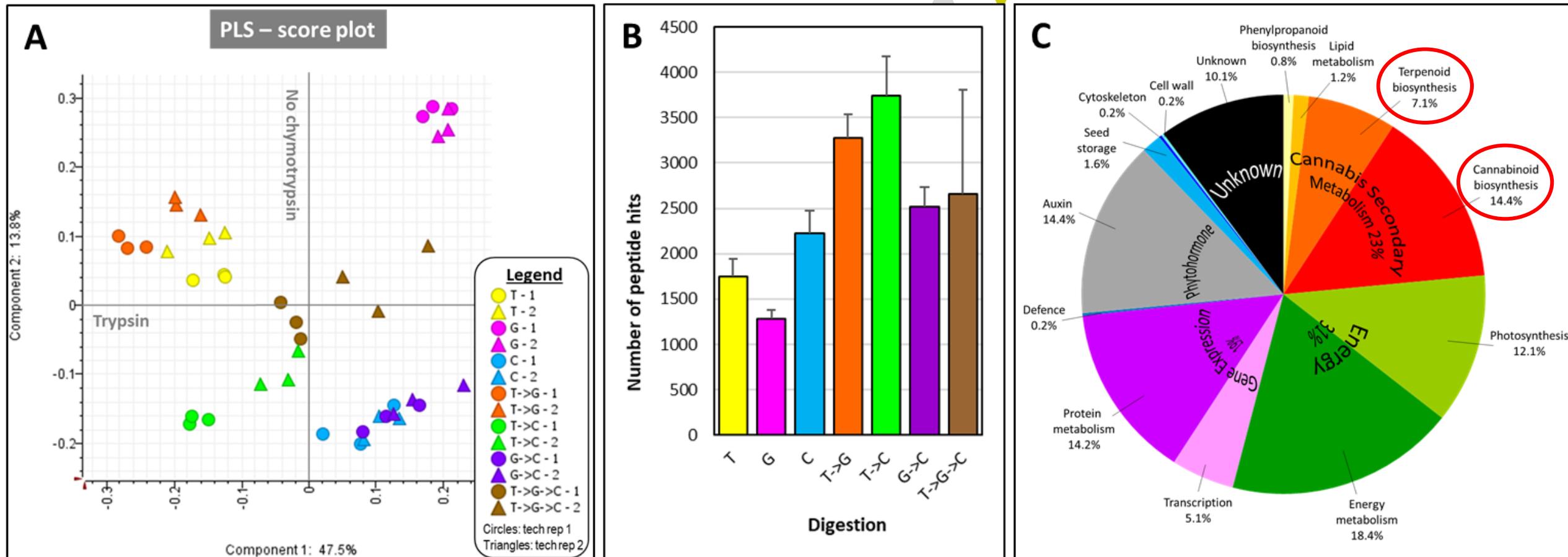
2. Cannabis results



- Reproducible analyses.
- Most peptides identified with TC.

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

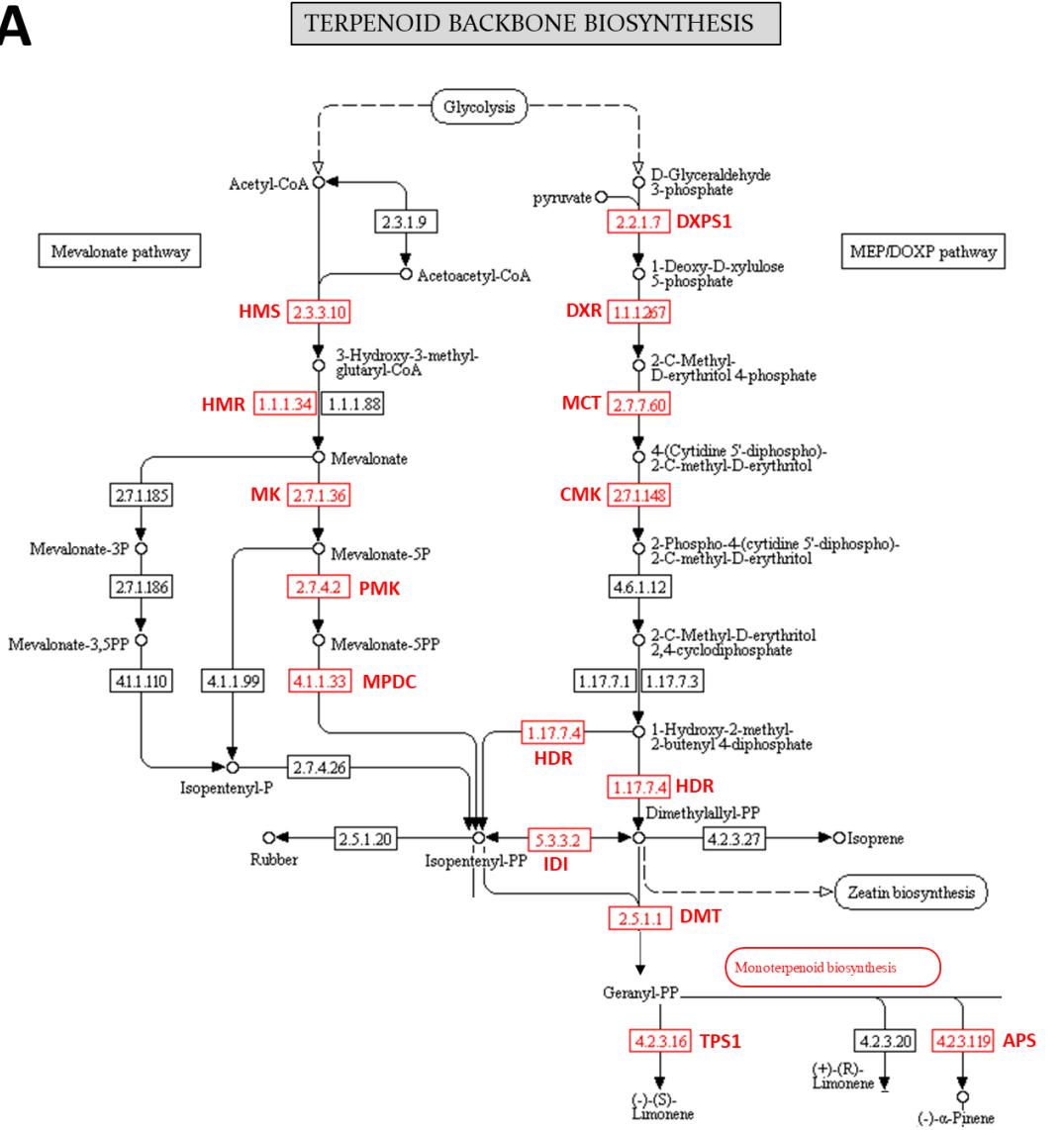
2. Cannabis results



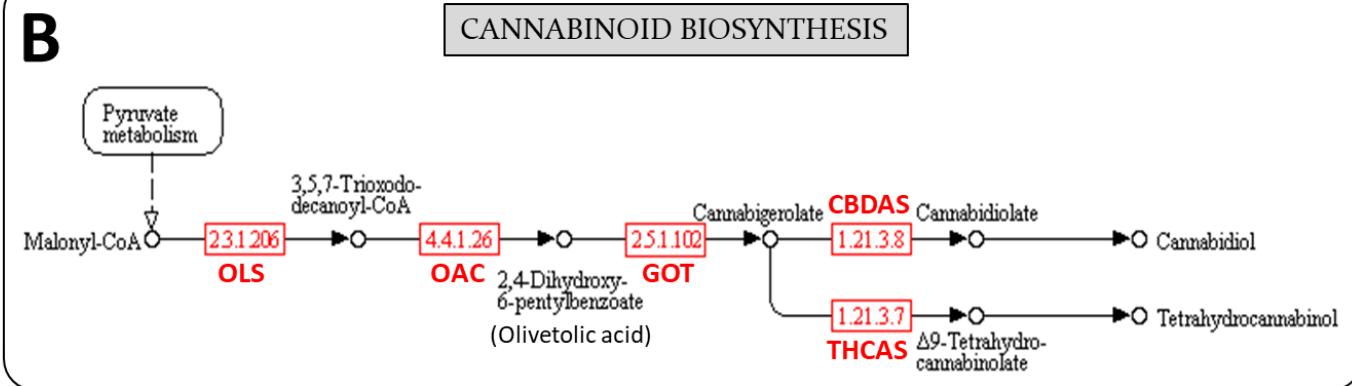
- Reproducible analyses.
- Most peptides identified with TC.
- 27,123 unique peptides identified, 494 accessions and 229 annotations (30% more than BUP).
- Secondary metabolism 23%, energy 31% (photosynthesis 12%), gene expression 19% (protein 14%).

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

2. Cannabis results

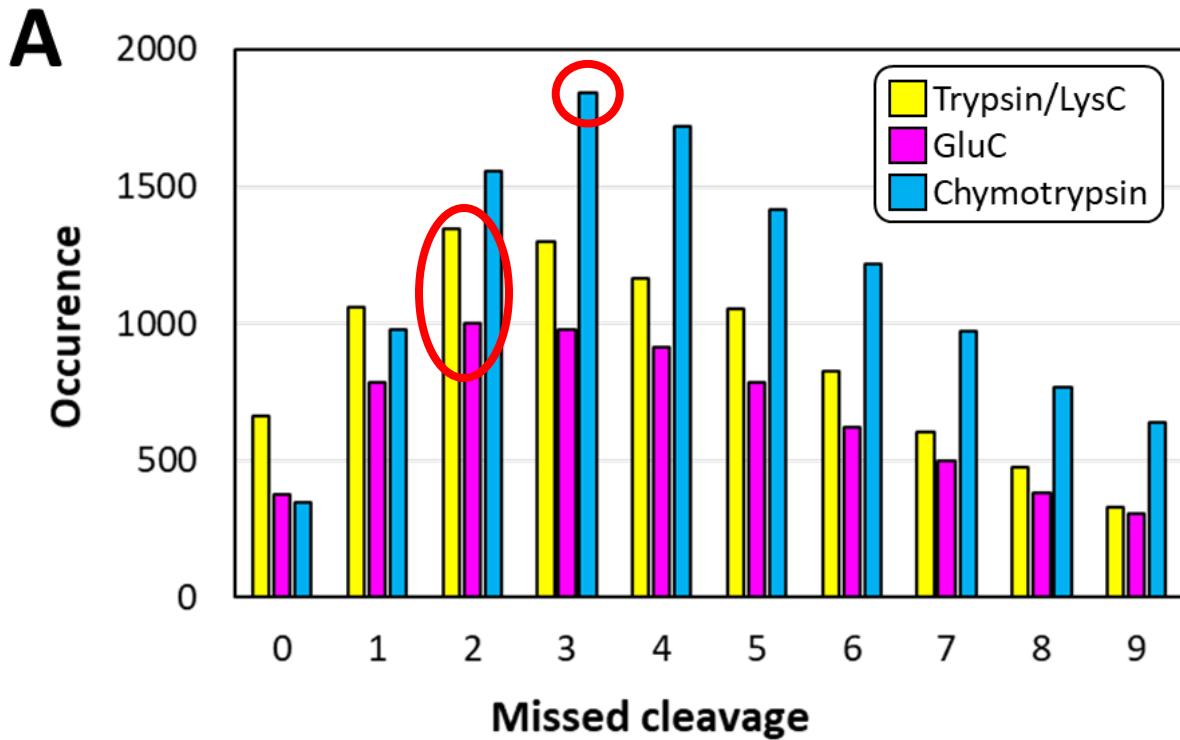
**A**

In red, cannabis enzymes identified in this study.

B

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

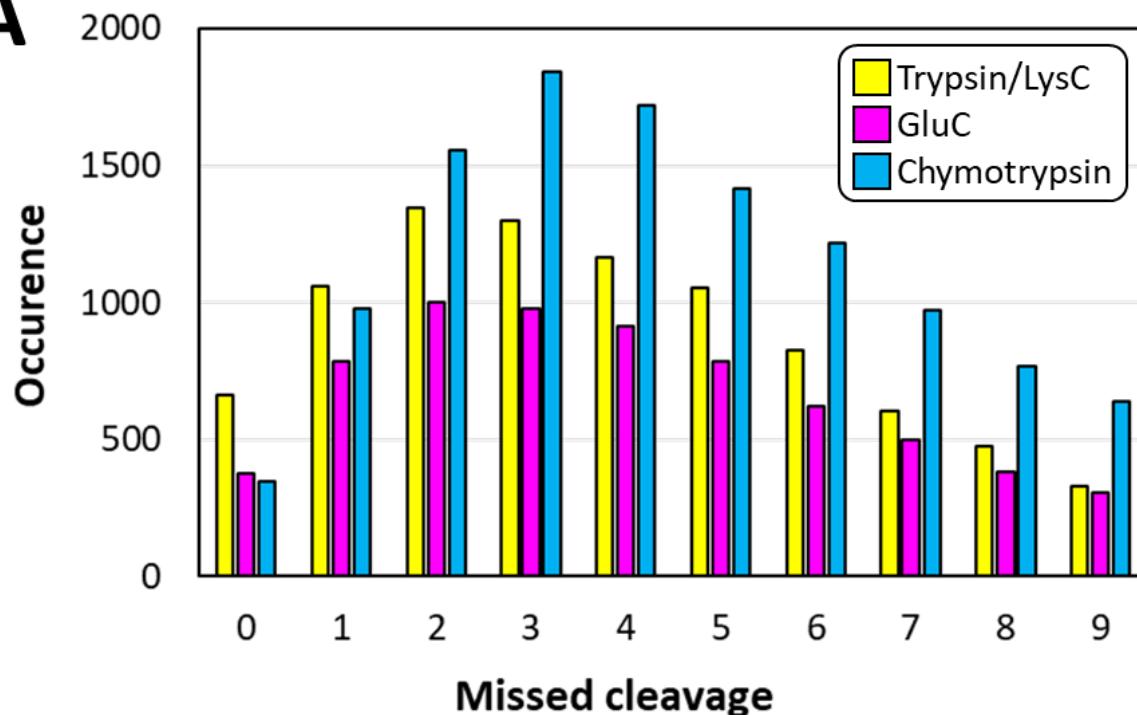
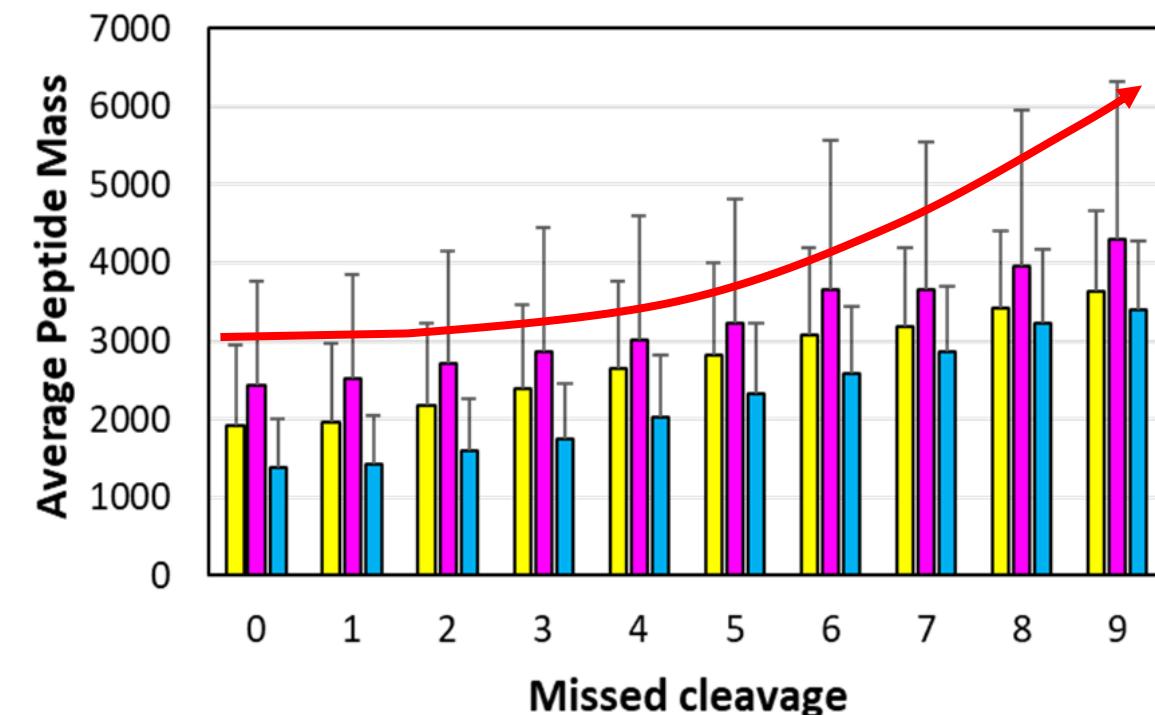
2. Cannabis results



- Up to 9 miscleavages.
- Miscleavage frequency is protease-dependent.

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

2. Cannabis results

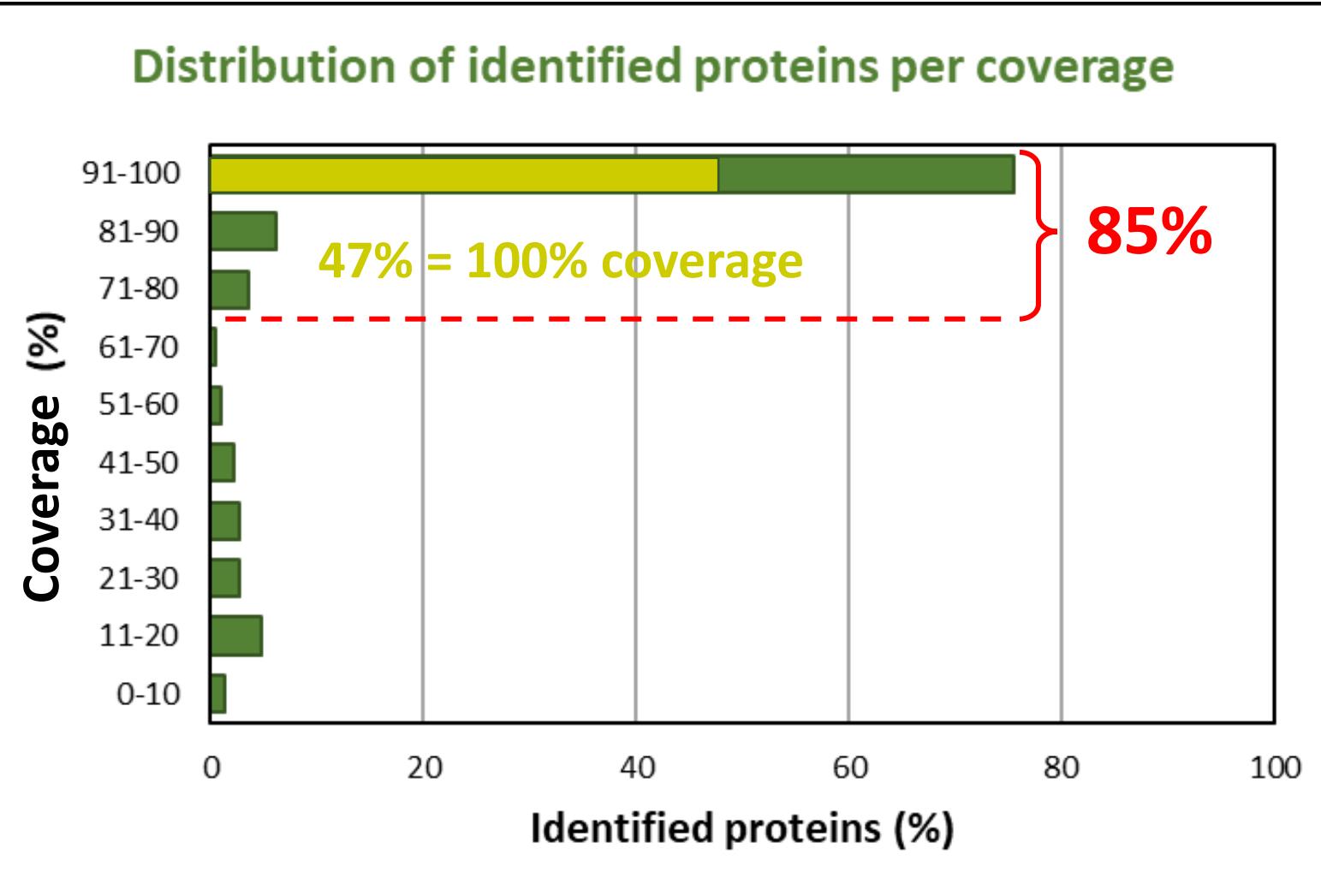
A**B**

- Up to 9 miscleavages.
- Miscleavage frequency is protease-dependent.
- Peptide size increase with number of miscleavages, irrespective of the protease used.

Shotgun proteomics study should apply more than 2 missed cleavages!

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

2. Cannabis results



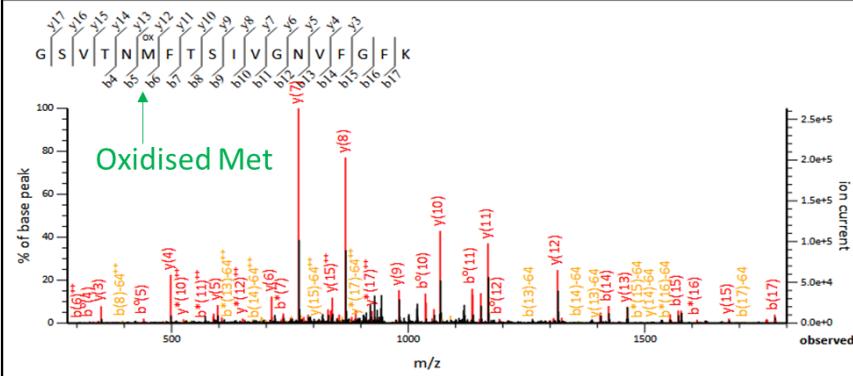
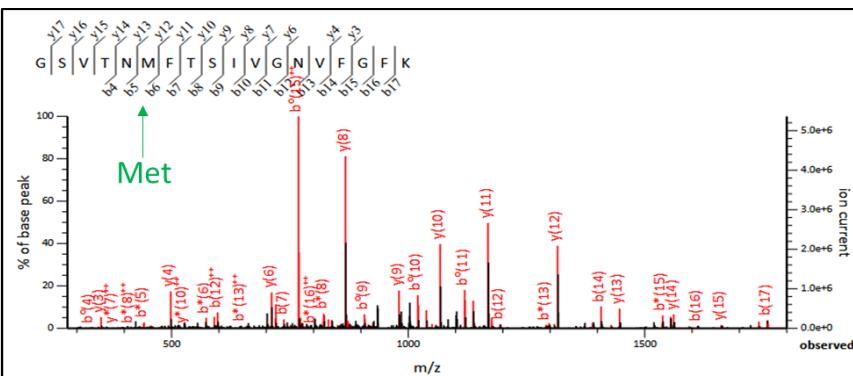
- Coverage rate spans 6-100% in a MW-dependent manner.
- Most proteins (85%) identified with coverage > 70%.
- Almost half (47%) fully covered (100% coverage).
- PTMs discovered

2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

2. Cannabis results

- PTMs discovered

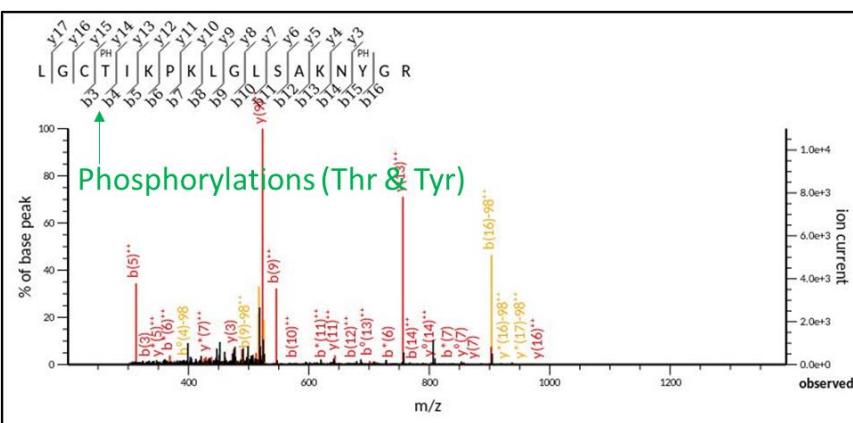
Proteases	Carbamidomethylation	Dynamic modifications			<i>Total</i>
		Acetylation	Phosphorylation	Oxidation	
Trypsin/LysC	1362	296	6213	2927	10798
Chymotrypsin	1483	238	7683	3520	12924
GluC	1396	149	4820	2789	9154
<i>Total</i>	4241	683	18716	9236	32876



Multiproteases needed to achieve 100% coverage and identify PTMs.

Focus on:

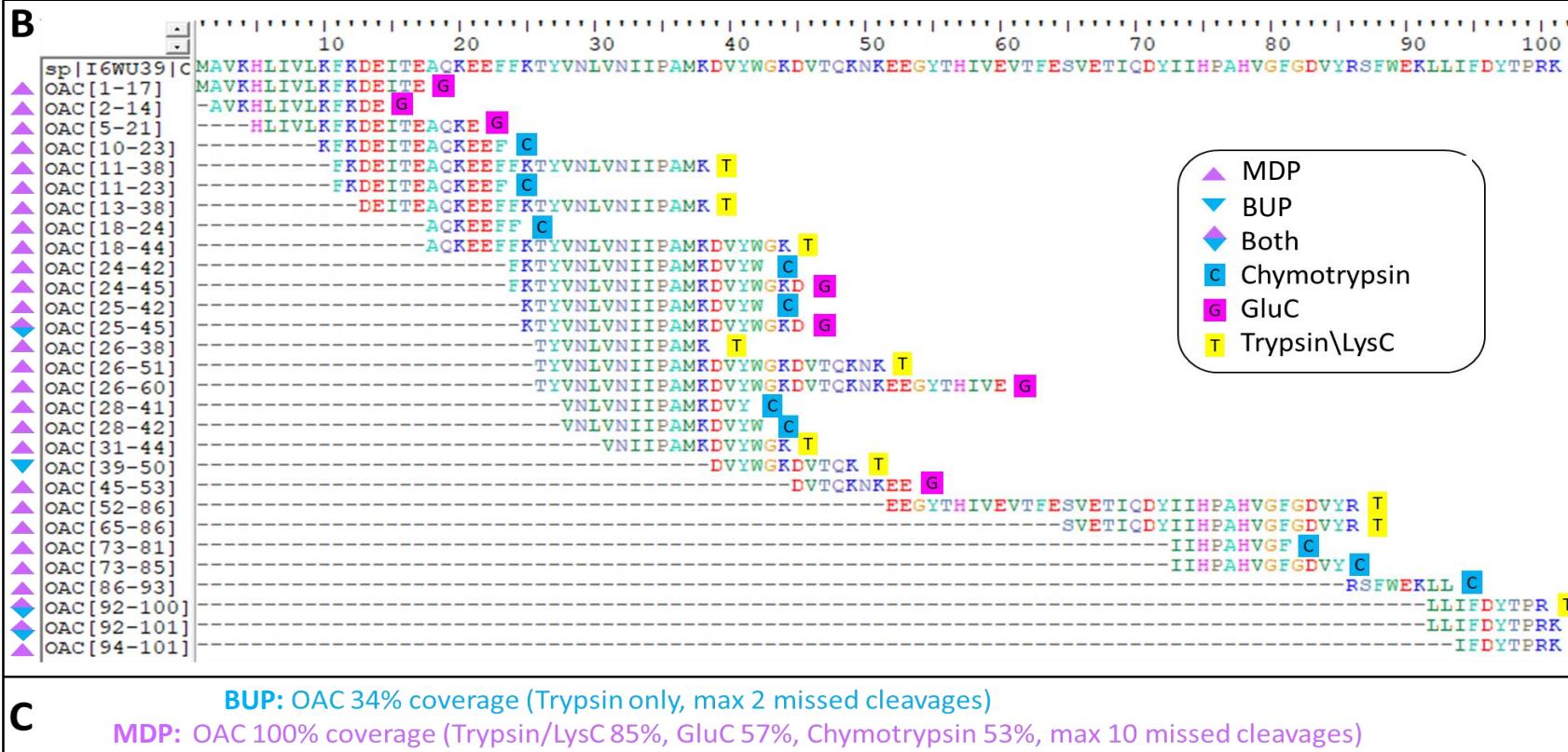
- OAC (olivetolic acid cyclase) (101 AAs, 12kDa)
- THCAS (tetrahydrocannabinolic acid synthase) (516 AAs, 59kDa)



2. Middle-down proteomics (MDP)

2. Cannabis results

Focus on: OAC (100% sequence coverage) (34% BUP)



OAC 100% coverage + PTMs (10 miscleavages)

>sp|I6WU39|OLIAC_CANSA Olivetolic acid cyclase OS=Cannabis sativa OX=3483 GN=OAC PE=1 SV=1
MAVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFESVETIQDYIIHPAHVGFGDVFYRSFWEKLIFDYTPRK

Miscleavage sites (red arrows):

- M1 (oxidised)
- T16, phosphorylated
- T26, Y27
- M37 (oxidised)
- Y41
- T56, T62, S65, T68, phosphorylated
- Y85
- T98

2. Middle-down proteomics

2. Cannabis results

Focus on: THCAS

Peptide Sequence	Modifications	MH+ [Da]	# Missed Cleavages
IDVHSQTAW		1056.52	1
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SMGEDLFWAIR		1324.64	4
ILKENPNLCAY	C9(Carbamidomethyl)	1334.68	2
SMGEDLFWAIR	M2(Oxidation)	1340.63	4
KLYEEDVGAGMY		1374.63	5
GGGGENFGIIAAWK		1376.70	3
WGVLFGFGPGLTVE		1478.77	3
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SKHIPNNVANPKLVY		1693.94	2
IIEKLYEEDVGAGMY		1729.84	6
GMSYISQVPFWVDLR		1809.96	3
ENPNLCAYEAPSLDAR	C6(Carbamidomethyl)	1819.83	4
GLAADNIIDAHLVNVDGK		1834.98	3
GGIMEEISEAIPFPHR		1869.93	3
IDVHSQTAWVEAGATLGE		1883.92	3
AGGTVLRLAKDLAENNKK	N-Term(Acetyl); T4(Phospho); K10(Methyl)	1906.00	4
NRLVKVTKVDPNNF	N-Term(Acetyl); K5(Acetyl); T8(Phospho)	1935.99	4
YFGKNFNRLVKVTK	N-Term(Acetyl); K4(Methyl); T14(Phospho)	1978.07	7
NYGLAADNIIDAHLVNVDGK		2112.08	4
LVSAAQTILPDSGDAIDGHLRE		2278.18	4
LGKEAATKAIKEWGQPKSK	T7(Phospho); K11(Methyl); S18(Phospho); K19(Acetyl)	2286.14	7
VKKPIPE TAMVKILEKLY	T8(Phospho); K12(Methyl); K16(Acetyl); Y18(Phospho)	2316.19	5
TTIFYSGVNFNTANFKKE	T1(Phospho); T13(Phospho); K18(Methyl)	2354.07	6
IKLVAVPSKSTIFSVKKNME	S14(Phospho); K16(Methyl); K17(Acetyl); M19(Oxidation)	2371.29	5
LNYRDLDLGKTNHASPNNY	K10(Methyl); N18(NAG)	2440.20	5
VLYPYGGIMEEISEAIPFPHR		2505.25	4
KIKLVAVPSKSTIFSVKKNME	S9(Phospho); S15(Phospho); K18(Methyl); M20(Oxidation)	2537.30	6
ITHLVFC TTSGVDM PGADYQLTK	C7(Carbamidomethyl)	2554.26	4
WIAHPGGPAILDQVESKLALKTE	K17(Methyl); K21(Acetyl); T22(Phospho)	2609.35	5
LDYVKKPIPE TAMVKILEKLY	Y3(Phospho); T11(Phospho); K19(Acetyl); Y21(Phospho)	2773.34	7
IDVHSQTAWVEAGATLGEVYYWINEK		2979.47	8
AEGPATIMAIGTATPANCVLQSEYPDYYFR	C18(Carbamidomethyl)	3306.57	6
AFKPLGTS DWNSLFWIAHPGGPAILDQVESK		3393.79	7
GGGGENFGIIAAWKIKLVAVPSKSTIFSVKK	K16(Methyl); T25(Phospho); S28(Phospho); K30(Acetyl)	3418.82	8
DKDLVLMTHFITKNITDNHGKNTTVHGY	K23(Acetyl); Y29(Phospho)	3462.71	8
CTTSGVDM PGADYQLTKLLGLRPSVKRLMMY	C1(Carbamidomethyl); Y13(Phospho); K17(Methyl); K26(Methyl); Y31(Phospho)	3689.74	6
YDKDLVLMTHFITKNITDNHGKNTTVHGY	Y1(Phospho); K3(Methyl); K22(Methyl); Y30(Phospho)	3691.71	9
LYEEDVGAGMYVLYPYGGIMEEISEAIPFPHR		3732.77	9
SLNEAFKPLGIS DWNSLFWIAHPGGPAILDQVESK		3836.95	8
KHNWVR SVYNFTTPYVSQNPRLAYLNRY	K1(Methyl); S8(Phospho); S18(Phospho); Y28(Phospho)	3853.81	9
QLTLLGLRPSVKRLMMYQQGC FAGGT VLRLAKD	T3(Phospho); C22(Carbamidomethyl)	3929.05	7
ITAVTFRGPN DTHLDLSVQ ALFGDGS AALIVGSD PIPE		3951.05	6
ISDTPPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTR	T5(Phospho); K7(Methyl); C26(Carbamidomethyl); T36(Phospho)	4260.25	4
GQPKSKITHVFC TTSGVDM PGADYQLTKLLGLRPSVK	T8(Phospho); C13(Carbamidomethyl); T28(Phospho); K38(Acetyl)	4345.18	7
ISDTPPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGGHHD	K7(Methyl); S15(Phospho); C26(Carbamidomethyl); S27(Phospho); K28(Acetyl)	4755.41	5
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SLNEAFKPLGISDWNSLFWIAHPGGPAILDQVESK		3836.95	8
KHNWVRSSVYNFTTPYVSQNPRLAYLNRY	K1(Methyl); S8(Phospho); S18(Phospho); Y28(Phospho)	3853.81	9
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GQPKSKITHVFC TTSGV DMPGADYQLTKLLGLRPSVK	T8(Phospho); C13(Carbamidomethyl); T28(Phospho); K38(Acetyl)	4345.18	7
ISDTPPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGGHHD	K7(Methyl); S15(Phospho); C26(Carbamidomethyl); S27(Phospho); K28(Acetyl)	4755.41	5
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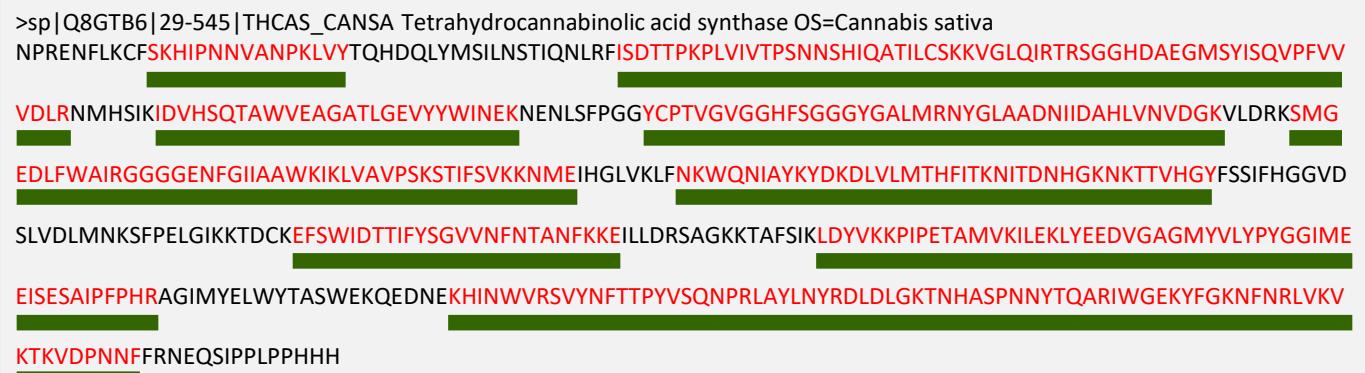
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THCAS 72% coverage, many PTMs (10 miscleavages)

>sp|Q8GTB6|29-545|THCAS_CANSA Tetrahydrocannabinolic acid synthase OS=Cannabis sativa
 NPRENFLKCF**SKHIPNNVANPKLVY**TQHDQLYMSILNSTIQLR**ISDTPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGGHDAEGMSYISQVPFVV**
VDLRNMHSIK**IDVHSQTAWVEAGATLGEVYYWINEK**NENLSFPGGYCPTVGVGGHFSGGGYGALMRNYGLAADNIIDAHVNVDGKVLDRK**SMG**
EDLFWAIRGGGENFGIIAAWKIKLVAVPSKSTIFSVKKNMEIHGLVKLF**NKWQNIAYKYDKDLVLMTHFITKNITDHGKNKTTVHGYFSSIFHGGVD**
 SLVDLMNKSFP~~ELGIKKTDCK~~**EFSWIDTTIFYSGVNFNTANFKKE**ILLDRSAGKKTAFSIK**LDYVKKPIPETAMV**KILEKLYEEDVGAGMYVLYPYGGIME
 EISESAIPFPHR**AGIMYELWYTASWEKQEDNE****KHINWRSVYNFTTPYVSQNPRLAYN**RDLGKTNHASPNNTQARIWGEKYFGKNFNRLVKV
 KTKVDPNNFFRNEQSIPPLP~~PHHH~~



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VKKPIPETAMV KILEKLY	T8(Phospho); K12(Methyl); K16(Acetyl); Y18(Phospho)	2316.19	5
TTIFYSGVNFNTANFKKE	T1(Phospho); T13(Phospho); K18(Methyl)	2354.07	6
IKLVAVPSKSTIFSVKKNME	S14(Phospho); K16(Methyl); K17(Acetyl); M19(Oxidation)	2371.29	5
	K10(Methyl); N18(NAG)	2440.20	5
		2505.25	4
	S9(Phospho); S15(Phospho); K18(Methyl); M20(Oxidation)	2537.30	6
	C7(Carbamidomethyl)	2554.26	4
	K17(Methyl); K21(Acetyl); T22(Phospho)	2609.35	5
	Y3(Phospho); T11(Phospho); K19(Acetyl); Y21(Phospho)	2773.34	7
		2979.47	8
FR	C18(Carbamidomethyl)	3306.57	6
ESK		3393.79	7
KK	K16(Methyl); T25(Phospho); S28(Phospho); K30(Acetyl)	3418.82	8
/	K23(Acetyl); Y29(Phospho)	3462.71	8
MMY	C1(Carbamidomethyl); Y13(Phospho); K17(Methyl); K26(Methyl); Y31(Phospho)	3689.74	6
GY	Y1(Phospho); K3(Methyl); K22(Methyl); Y30(Phospho)	3691.71	9
FPHR		3732.77	9
DQVESK		3836.95	8
R	K1(Methyl); S8(Phospho); S18(Phospho); Y28(Phospho)	3853.81	9
JLRLAKD	T3(Phospho); C22(Carbamidomethyl)	3929.05	7
ITAVTFRGPNNDTHLD SLV VGQALFGDGSAA LV IGSDPIPE		3951.05	6
ISDTPPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTR	T5(Phospho); K7(Methyl); C26(Carbamidomethyl); T36(Phospho)	4260.25	4
GQPKSKITHLVFC TTSG VDMPGADYQLTKLLGRPSVK	T8(Phospho); C13(Carbamidomethyl); T28(Phospho); K38(Acetyl)	4345.18	7
ISDTPPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGGH	K7(Methyl); S15(Phospho); C26(Carbamidomethyl); S27(Phospho); K28(Acetyl)	4755.41	5
ISDTPPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGGHDAE	S15(Phospho); C26(Carbamidomethyl); K28(Methyl); K29(Acetyl)	4875.54	6

2. Middle-down proteomics

2. Cannabis results

Focus on: THCAS

- peptide masses 1-5kDa
- most peptides contain > 2 miscleavages
- 72% sequence coverage (12% BUP)
- Most peptides are modified

THCAS 72% coverage, many PTMs (10 miscleavages)

```
>sp|Q8GTB6|29-545|THCAS_CANSA Tetrahydrocannabinolic acid synthase OS=Cannabis sativa
NPRENFLCFSKHIPNNVANPKLVYTQHDQLYMSILNSTIQNLRFISDTPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGGHDAEGMSYISQVPFVV
VDLRNMHSIKIDVHSQTAWVEAGATLGEVYYWINEKNEENLSFPGGYCPTVGVGGHFSGGGYGALMRNYGLAADNIIDAHLVNDGKVLDRKSMG
EDLFWAIRGGGENFGIIAAWKIKLVAVPSKSTIFSVKKNMEIHGLVKLFNKWQNIAYKYDKDLVLMTHFITKNITDHGKNKTTVHGYFSSIFHGGVD
SLVDLMNKSFPPELGKKTDCKEFSWIDTTIFYSGVVFNTANFKKEILLDRSAGKKTAFSIKLDYVKKPIPETAMVKILEKLYEEDVGAGMYVLYPYGGIME
EISESAIPFPHRAGIMYELWYTASWEKQEDNEKHINWRSVYNFTTPYVSQNPRLAYNRYDLDLGKTNHASPNNTQARIWGEKYFGKNFNRLVKV
KTKVDPNNFFRNEQSIPPLPPHHH
```

Peptide Sequence	Modifications	MH+ [Da]	# Missed Cleavages
IDVHSQTAW		1056.52	1
IDVHSQTAWVE		1284.63	2
SMGEDLFWAIR		1324.64	4
ILKENPNLCAY	C9(Carbamidomethyl)	1334.68	2
SMGEDLFWAIR	M2(Oxidation)	1340.63	4
KLYEEDVGAGMY		1374.63	5
GGGGENFGIIAAWK		1376.70	3
WGVLFGFPGPLTVE		1478.77	3
KPIPETAMVKILEK	K1(Methyl); M8(Oxidation)	1626.96	3
SKHIPNNVANPKLVY		1693.94	2
IIEKLYEEDVGAGMY		1729.84	6
GMSYISQVPFWVDLR		1809.96	3
ENPNLCAYEAPSLDAR	C6(Carbamidomethyl)	1819.83	4
GLAADNIIDAHLVNDGK		1834.98	3
GGIMEEISESAIPFPHR		1869.93	3
IDVHSQTAWVEAGATLGE		1883.92	3
AGGTVRLAKDLAENNKK	N-Term(Acetyl); T4(Phospho); K10(Methyl)	1906.00	4
NRLVKVTKVDPNNF	N-Term(Acetyl); K5(Acetyl); T8(Phospho)	1935.99	4
YFGKNFNRVLVKVTK	N-Term(Acetyl); K4(Methyl); T14(Phospho)	1978.07	7
NYGLAADNIIDAHLVNDGK		2112.08	4
LVSAAQTILPDSGDAIDGHLRE		2278.18	4
LGKEAATKAIKEWGQPKSK	T7(Phospho); K11(Methyl); S18(Phospho); K19(Acetyl)	2286.14	7
VKKPIPETAMVKILEKLY	T8(Phospho); K12(Methyl); K16(Acetyl); Y18(Phospho)	2316.19	5
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	ITAVTFRGPNNDHLDLSVQALFGDGSAAALIVGSDPIPE	4260.25	4
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	ISDTPPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGHDAE		

2. Middle-down proteomics

2. Cannabis results

Focus on: THCAS

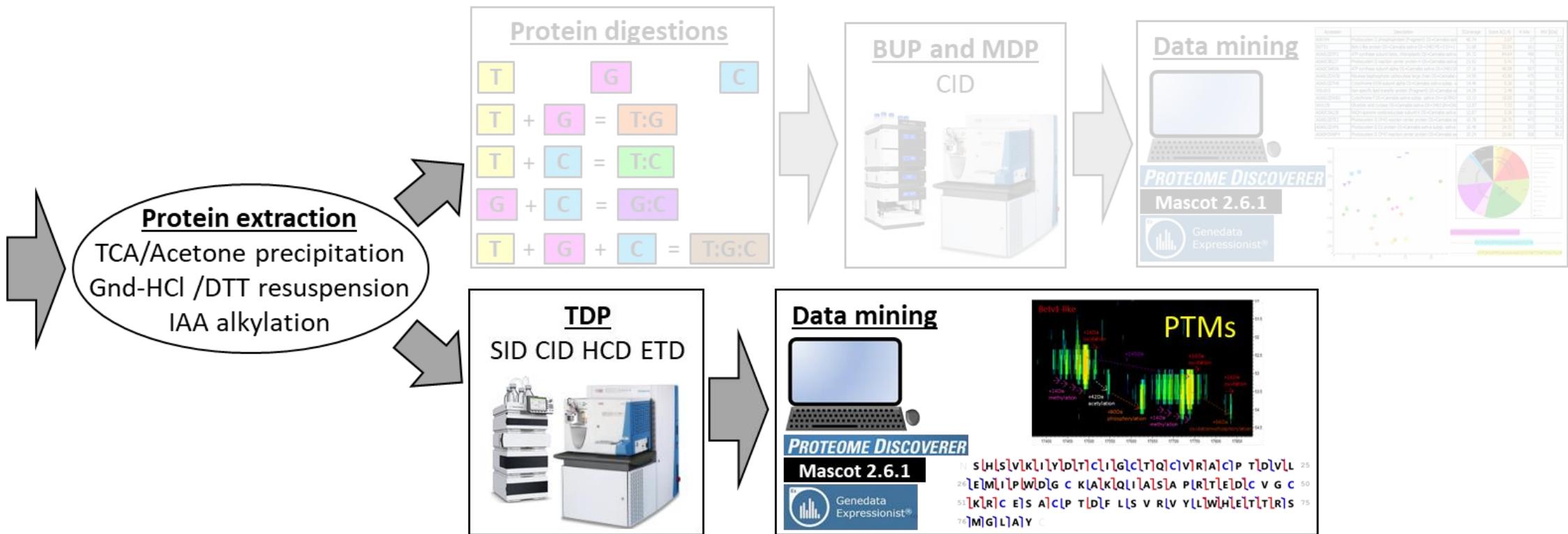
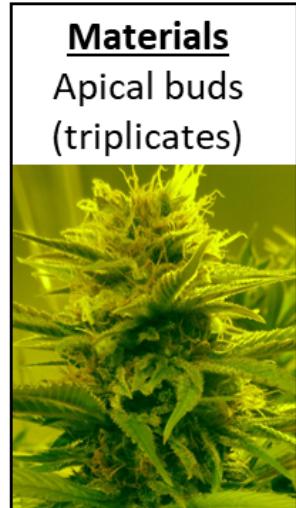
- peptide masses 1-5kDa
- most peptides contain > 2 miscleavages
- 72% sequence coverage (12% BUP)
- Most peptides are modified
- 2/7 NAG ligands found (N329 and N467)
- Other dynamic PTMs: methylations, phosphorylation, acetylation, oxidation

THCAS 72% coverage, many PTMs (10 miscleavages)

>sp|Q8GTB6|29-545|THCAS_CANSA Tetrahydrocannabinolic acid synthase OS=Cannabis sativa
NPRENFLKCF**SKHIPNNVANPKLVY**TQHDQLYMSILNSTIQNLRF**ISDTPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKVGLQIRTRSGGHDAEGMSYISQVPFVV**
VDLRNMHSIK**IDVHSQTAWVEAGATLGEVYYWINEK**NENLSFPGGYCPTVGVGGHFSGGGYGALMRNYGLAADNIIDAHVNVDGKVLDRK**SMG**
EDLFWAIRGGGENFGIIAAWKIKLVAVPSKSTIFSVKKNMEIHGLVKLF**NKWQNIAYKYDKDLVLMTFITKNITDHGKNKTTVHGYFSSIFHGGVD**
SLVDLMNKSFPELGKKTDC**EFSWIDTTIFYSGVVFNTANFKKE**ILDRSAGKKTAFSIK**LDYVKKPIPETAMV**KILEKLYEEDVGAGMYVLYPYGGIME
EISESAIPFPHR**AGIMYELWYTASWEKQEDNE**KHINWRSVYNFTTPYVSQNPRLAYLNRYDLDLGKTNHASPN^NYTQARIWGEKYFGKNFNRLV**KV**
KTKVDPNNFFRNEQSIPPLP^{PHHH}

Peptide Sequence	Modifications	MH+ [Da]	# Missed Cleavages
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	ISDTPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKV GLQIRTRSGGH D	4755.41	5
	ISDTPKPLVIVTPSNNSHIQATILCSKKV GLQIRTRSGGH DAE	4875.54	6

Optimisation of intact protein analysis



3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

Experimental design

1. Benchmarking MS/MS fragmentation using protein standards



 Protein Standards
Myoglobin (Myo, 17 kD)
Beta-lactoglobulin (β LG, 18 kD)
Alpha-S1-casein (α S1CN, 24 kD)
Bovine Serum Albumin (BSA, 66 kD)

3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

Experimental design

1. Benchmarking MS/MS fragmentation using protein standards

Protein Standards
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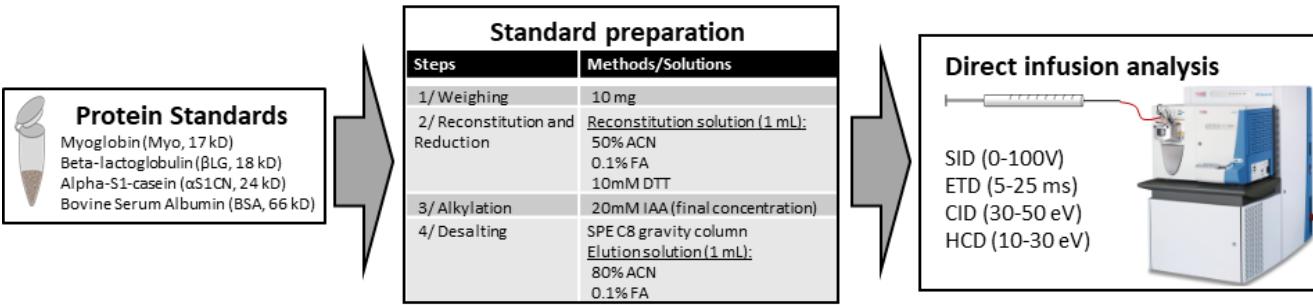
Standard preparation	
Steps	Methods/Solutions
1/ Weighing	10 mg
2/ Reconstitution and Reduction	<u>Reconstitution solution (1 mL):</u> 50% ACN 0.1% FA 10mM DTT
3/ Alkylation	20mM IAA (final concentration)
4/ Desalting	SPE C8 gravity column <u>Elution solution (1 mL):</u> 80% ACN 0.1% FA



3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

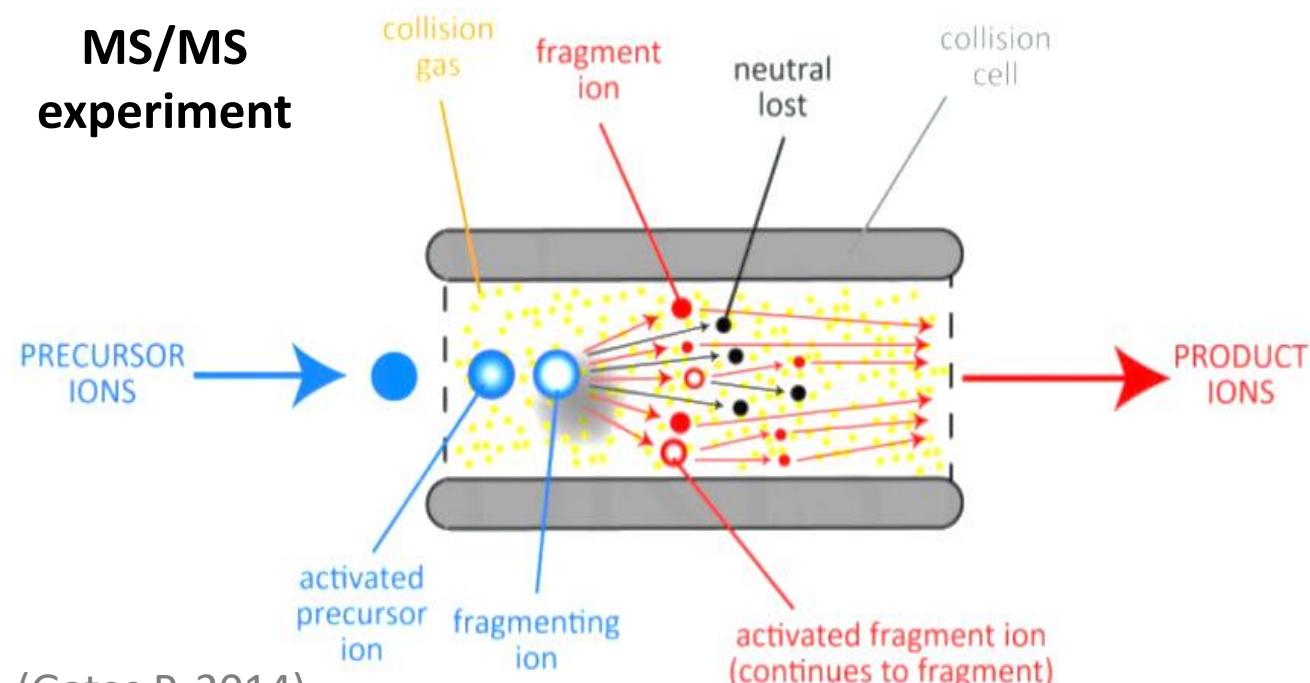
Experimental design

1. Benchmarking MS/MS fragmentation using protein standards



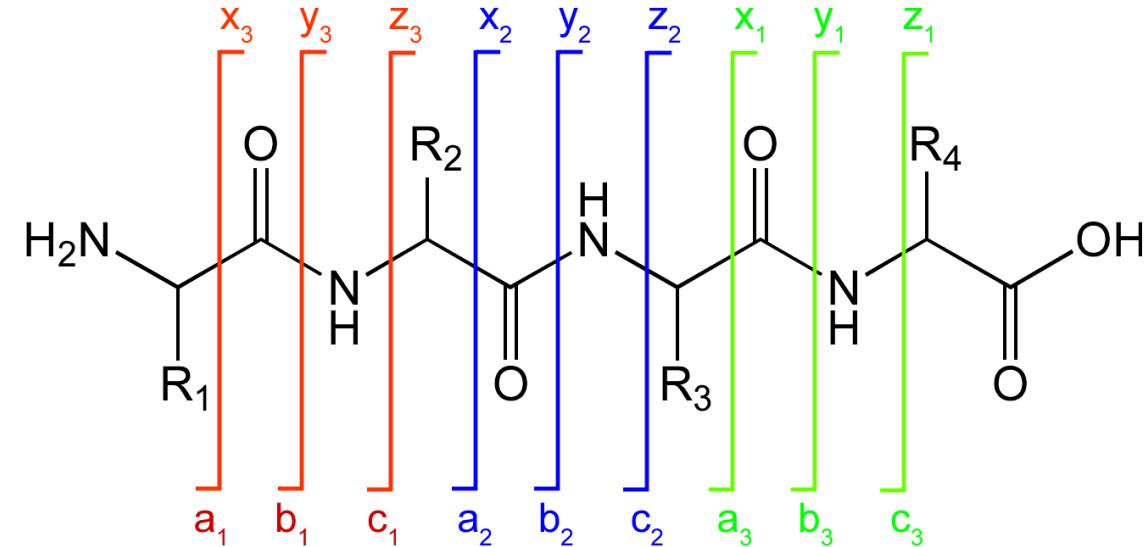
SID, CID, HCD → b-ions and y-ions
ETD → c-ions and z-ions

MS/MS experiment



(Gates P, 2014)

Fragmentation notation

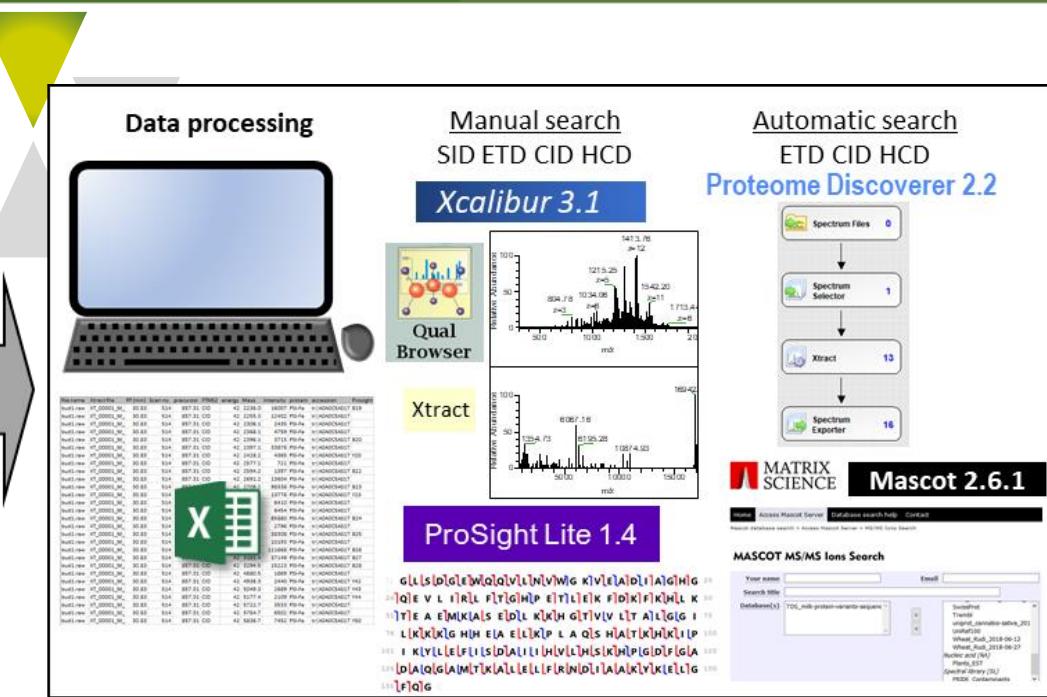
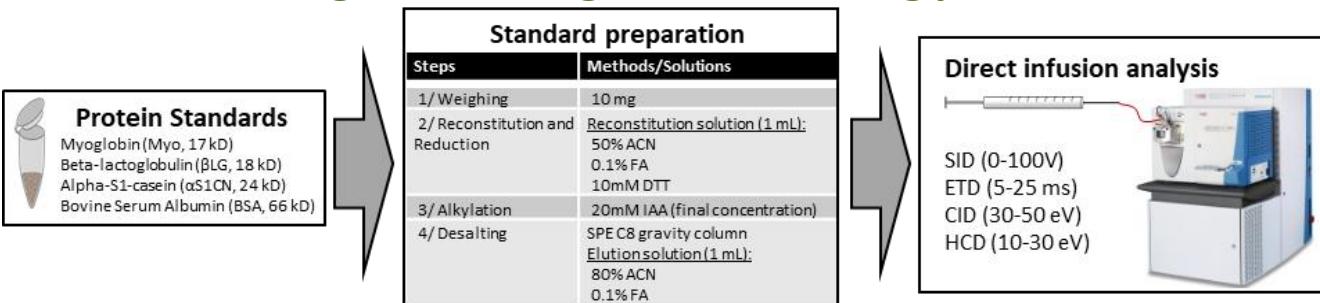


(SOURCE: wikipedia)

3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

Experimental design

1. Benchmarking MS/MS fragmentation using protein standards

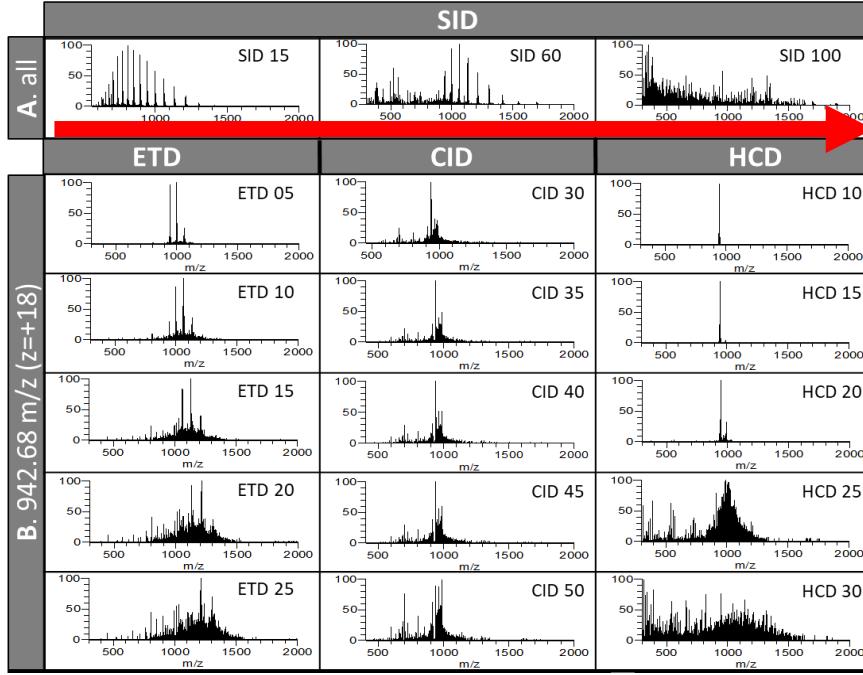


Example: Myoglobin (P68082 MYG_HORSE, 153 AAs, 17kD)



3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

MS/MS spectra of myoglobin



more
fragments as
SID energy
increases

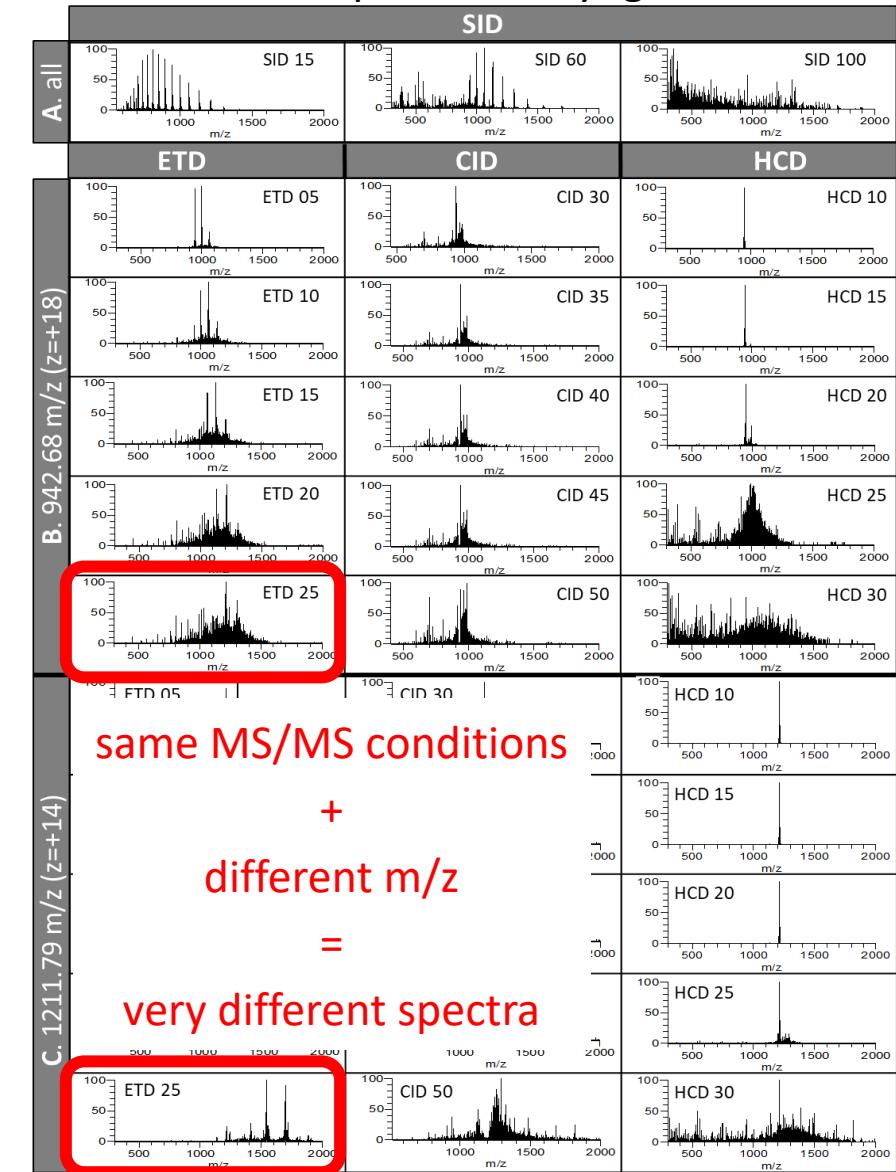
more
fragments
as ETD, CID,
HCD energy
increases



- Each MS/MS mode produces different fragmentation patterns in an energy-dependent way.

3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

MS/MS spectra of myoglobin



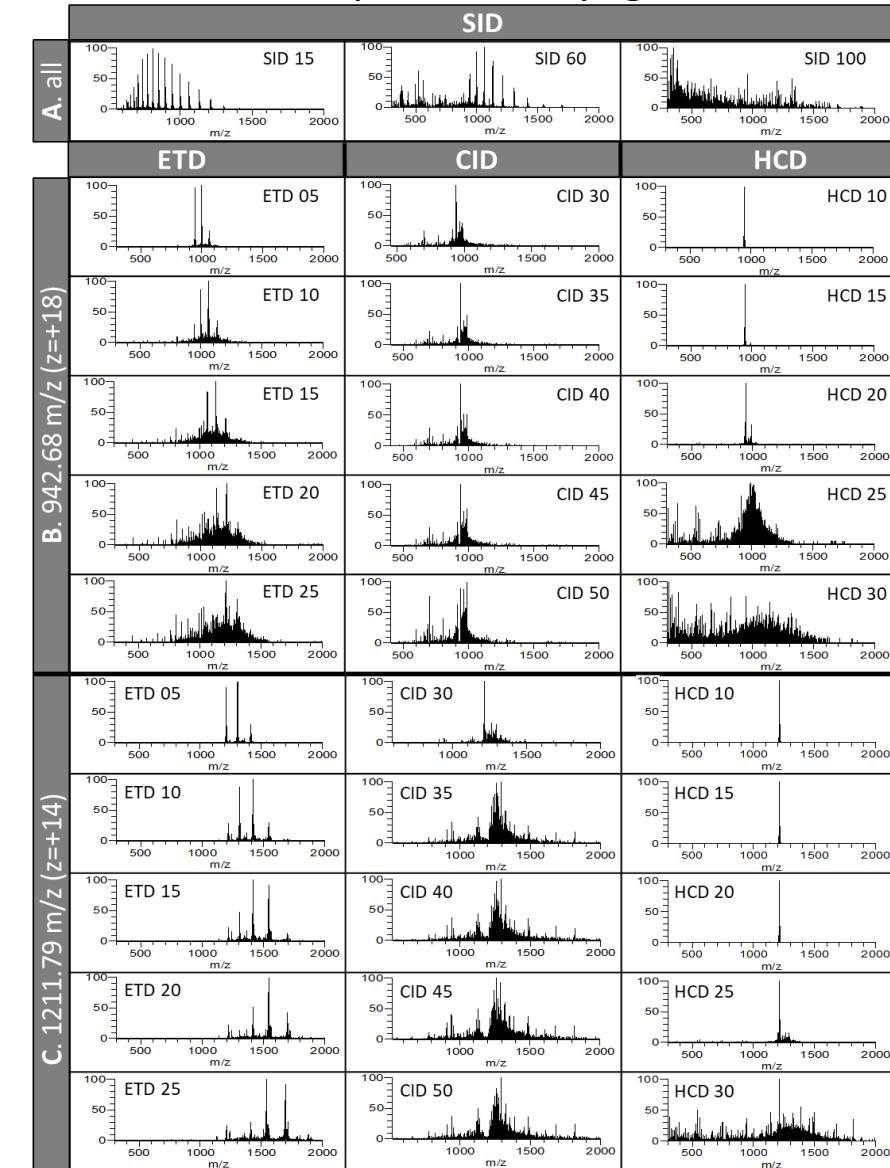
more
fragments
as energy
increases



- Each MS/MS mode produces different fragmentation patterns in an energy-dependent way.
- Fragmentation efficiency is precursor-dependent.

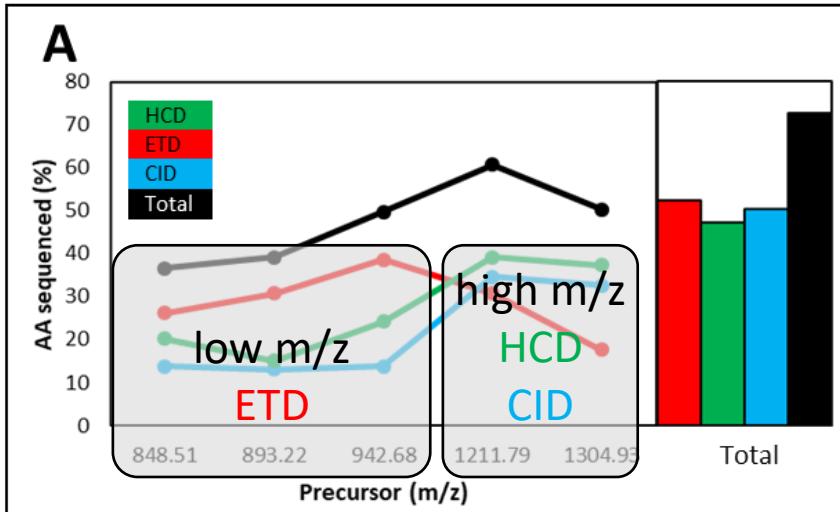
3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

MS/MS spectra of myoglobin



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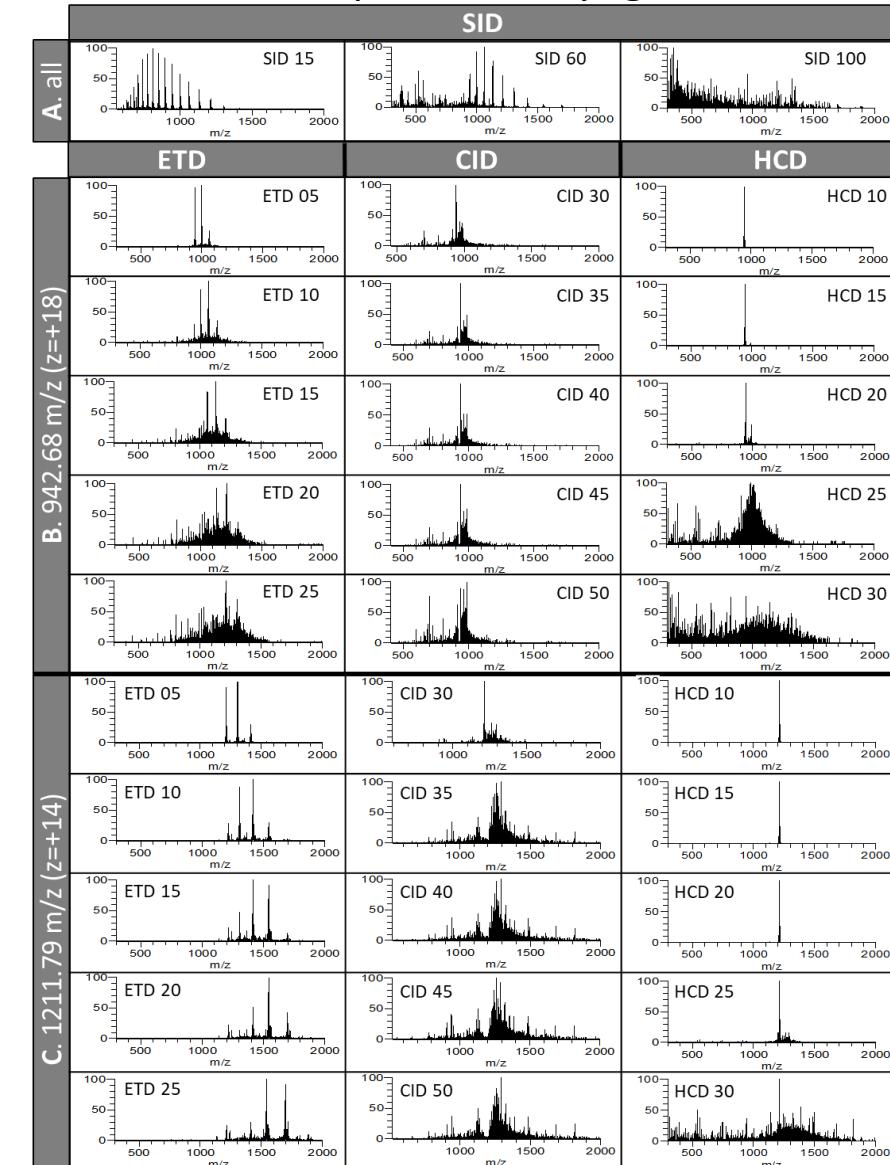
Top-down sequencing of myoglobin



- ETD is complementary to CID and HCD MS/MS modes.

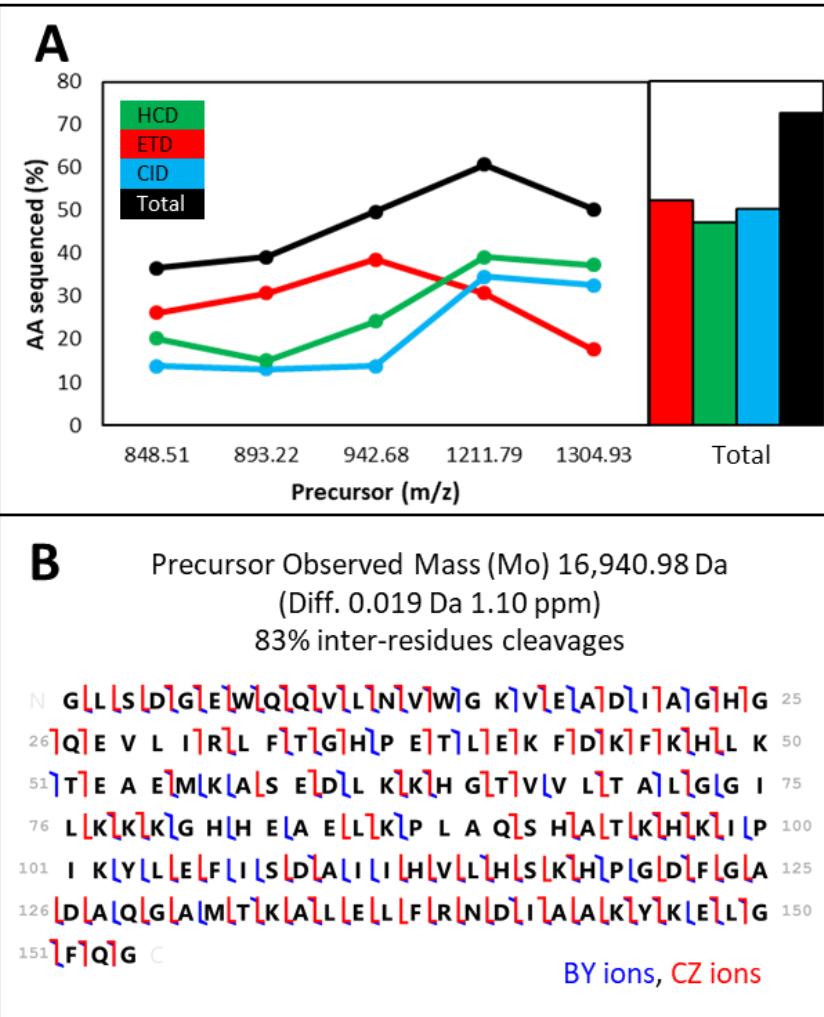
3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

MS/MS spectra of myoglobin



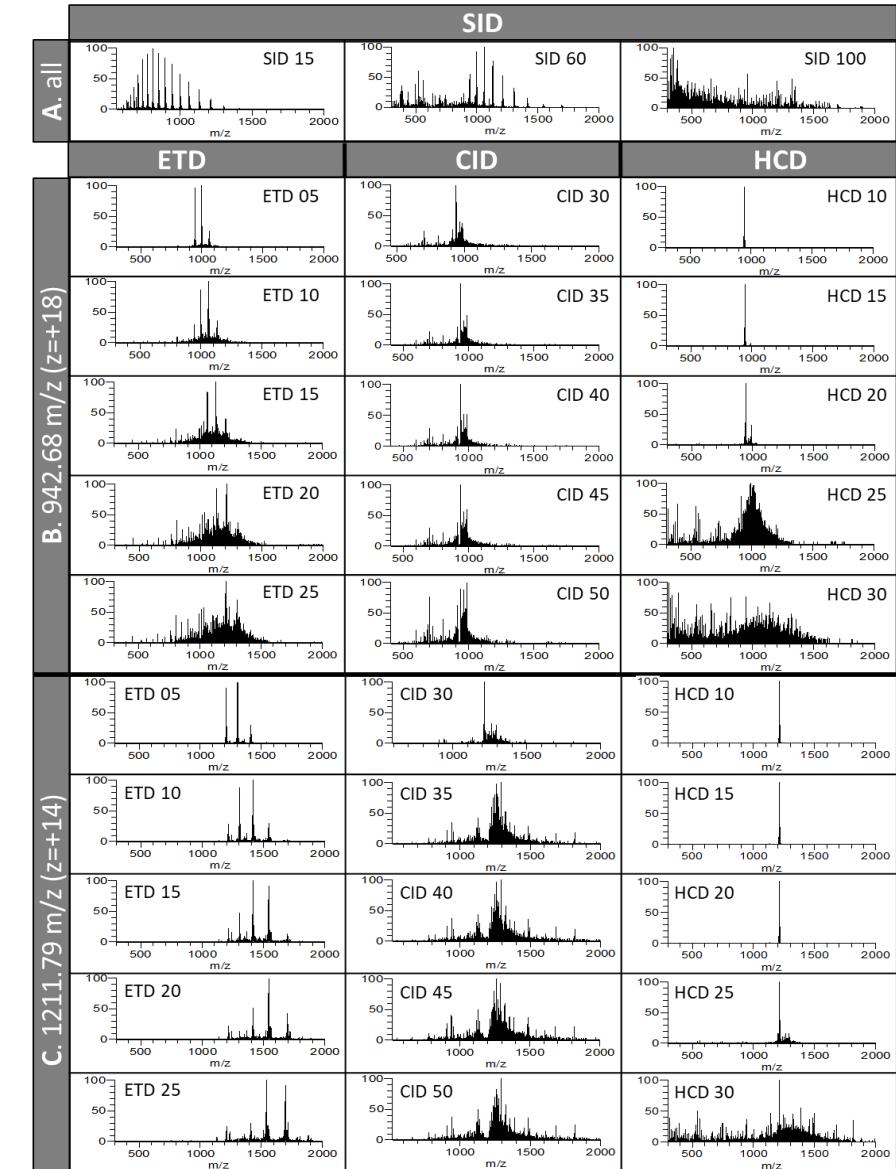
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Top-down sequencing of myoglobin



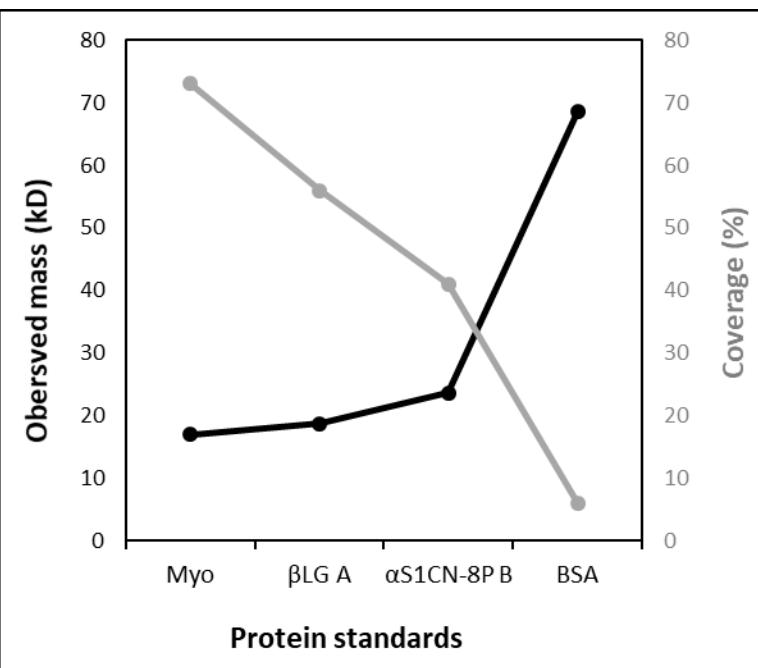
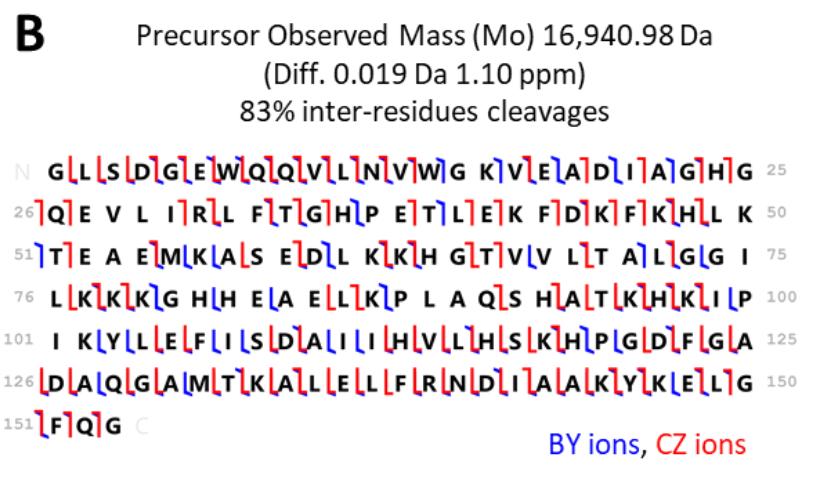
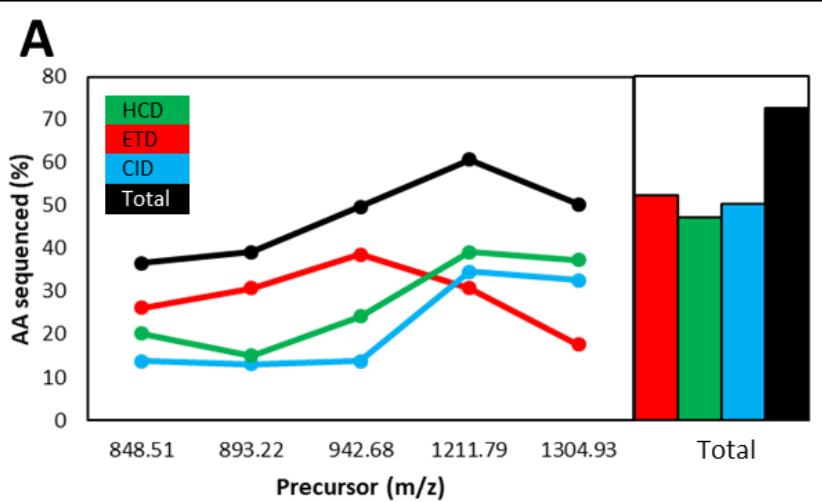
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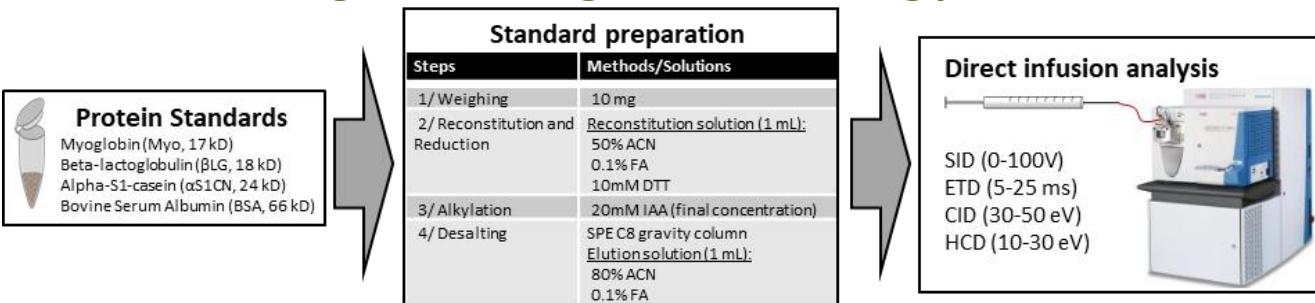
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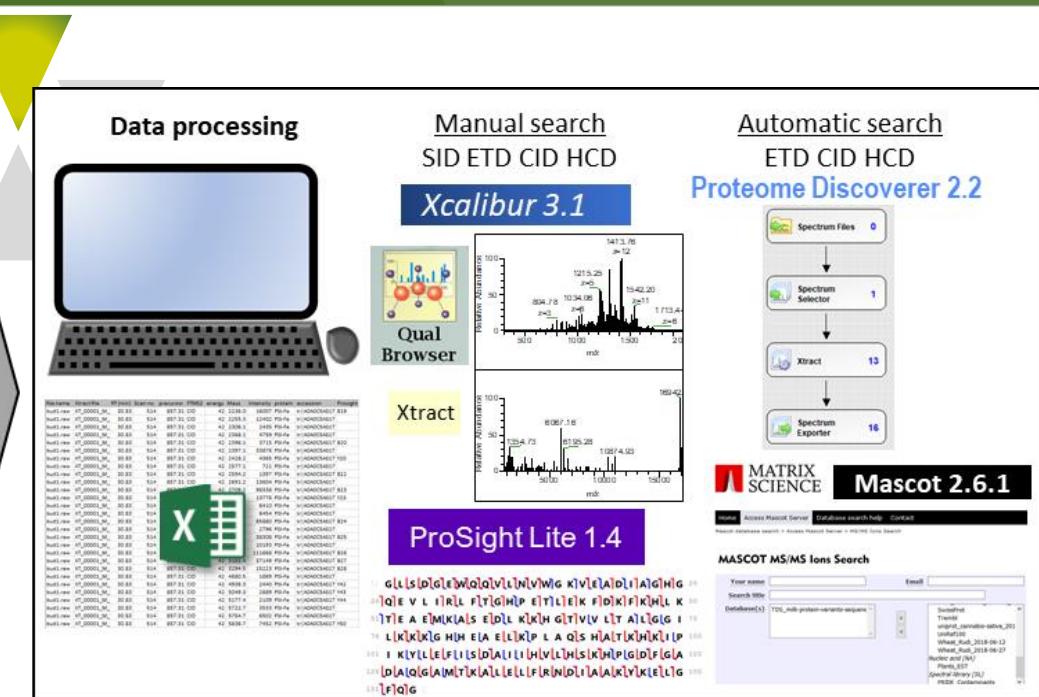
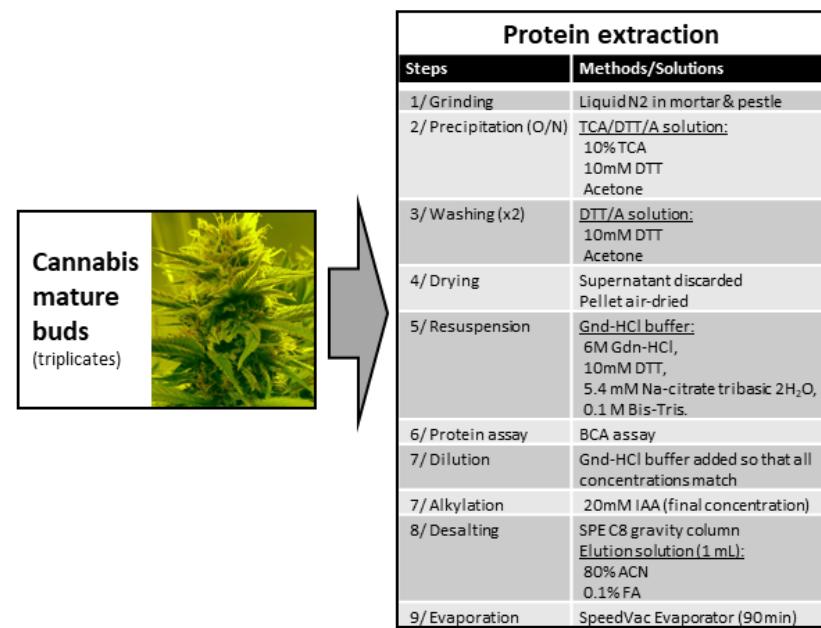
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Experimental design

1. Benchmarking MS/MS fragmentation using protein standards



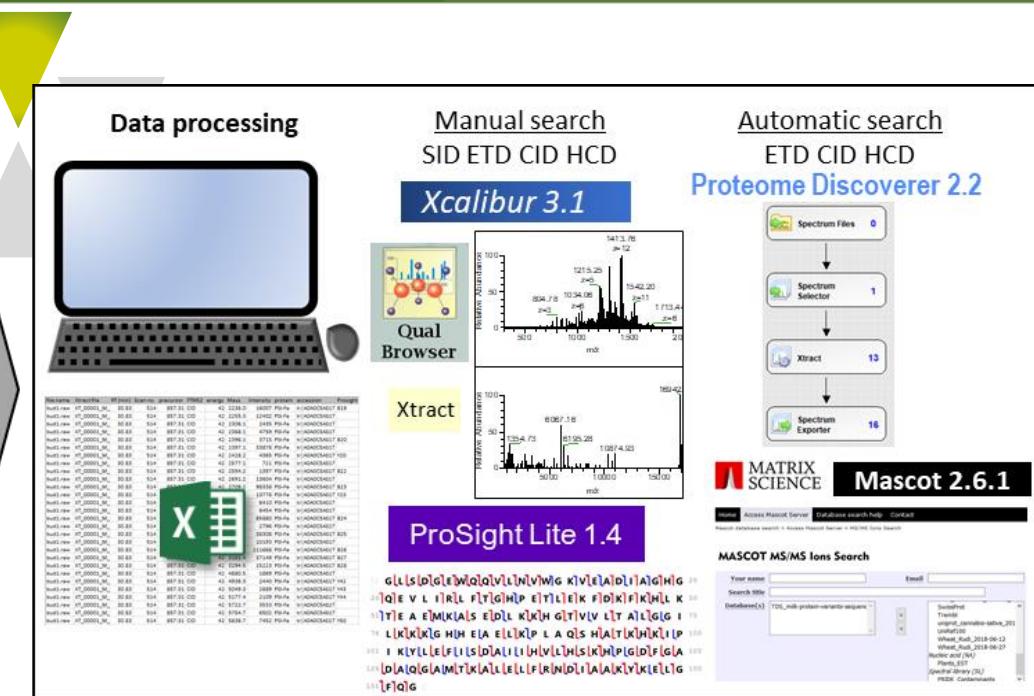
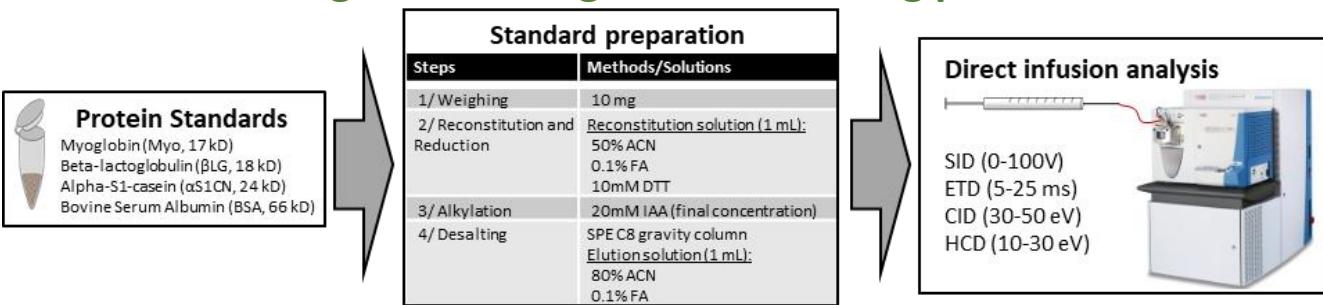
2. Apply best MS/MS methods to cannabis extracts



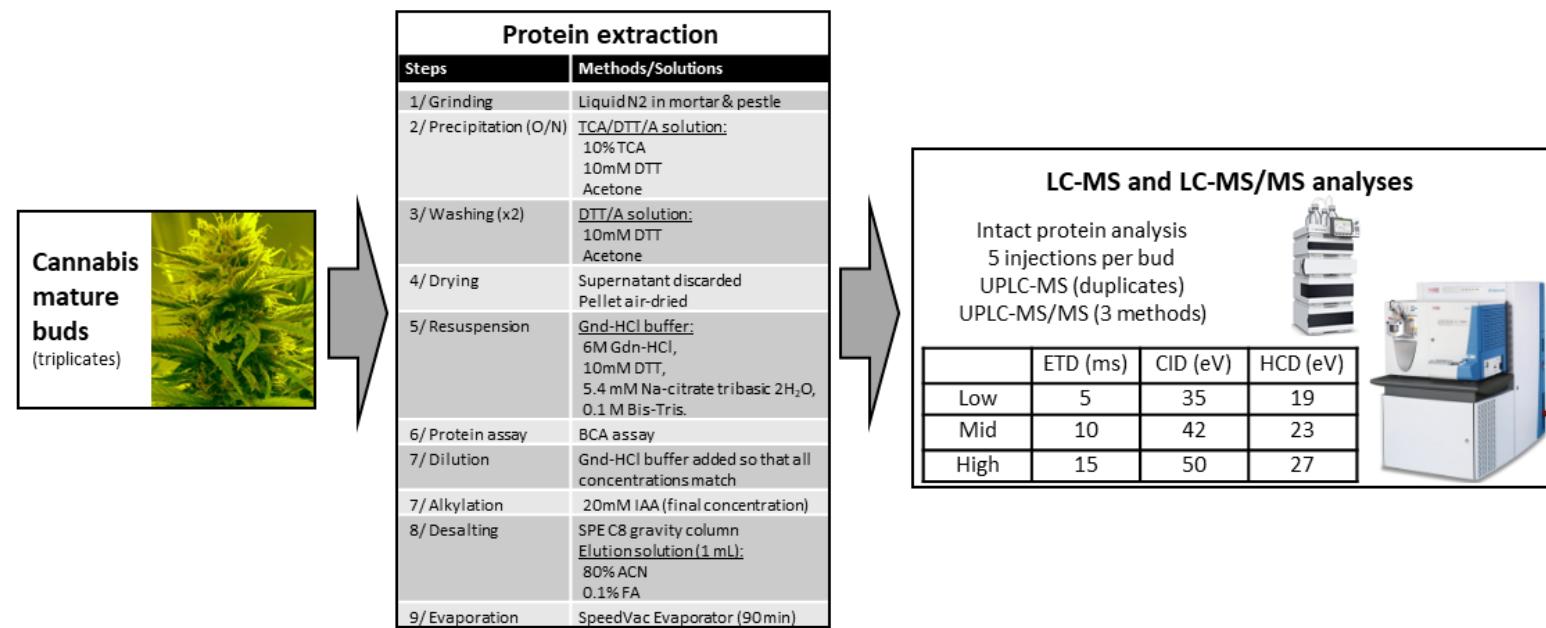
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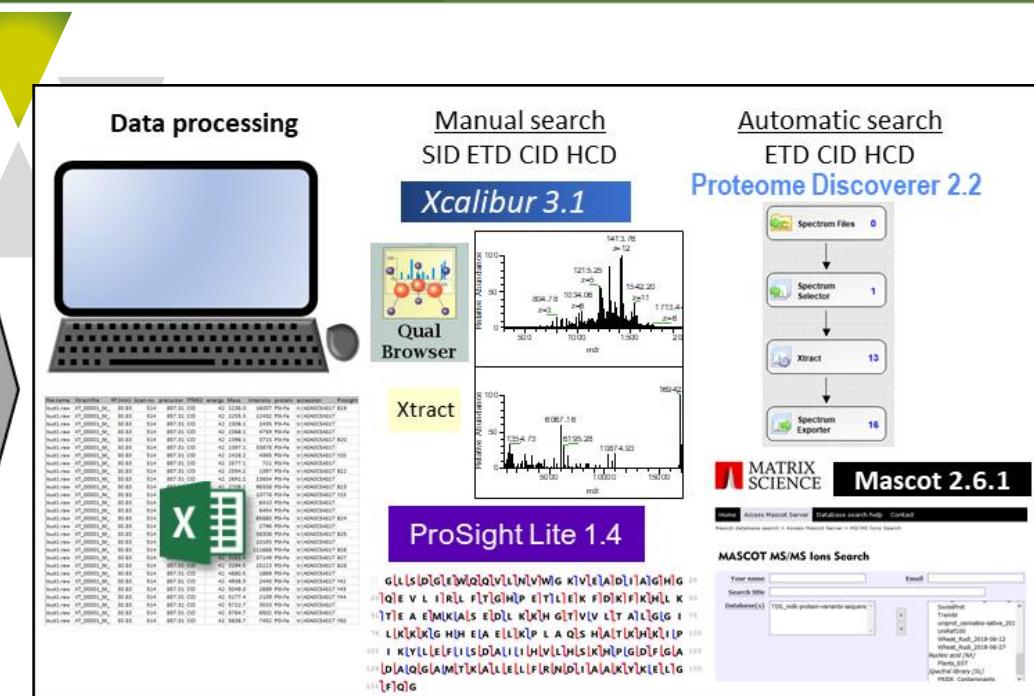
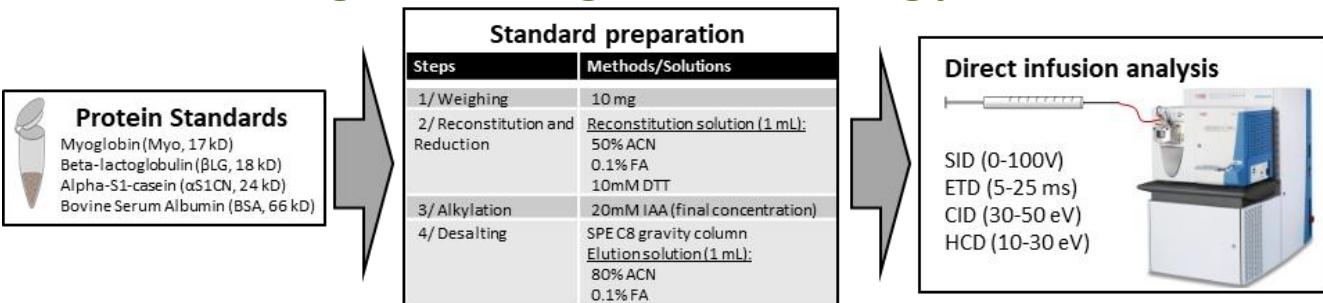
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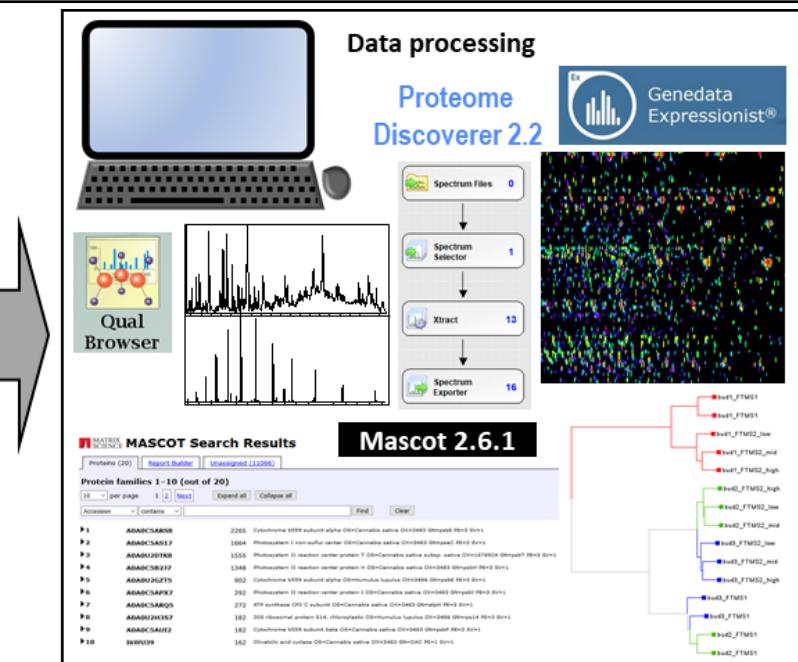
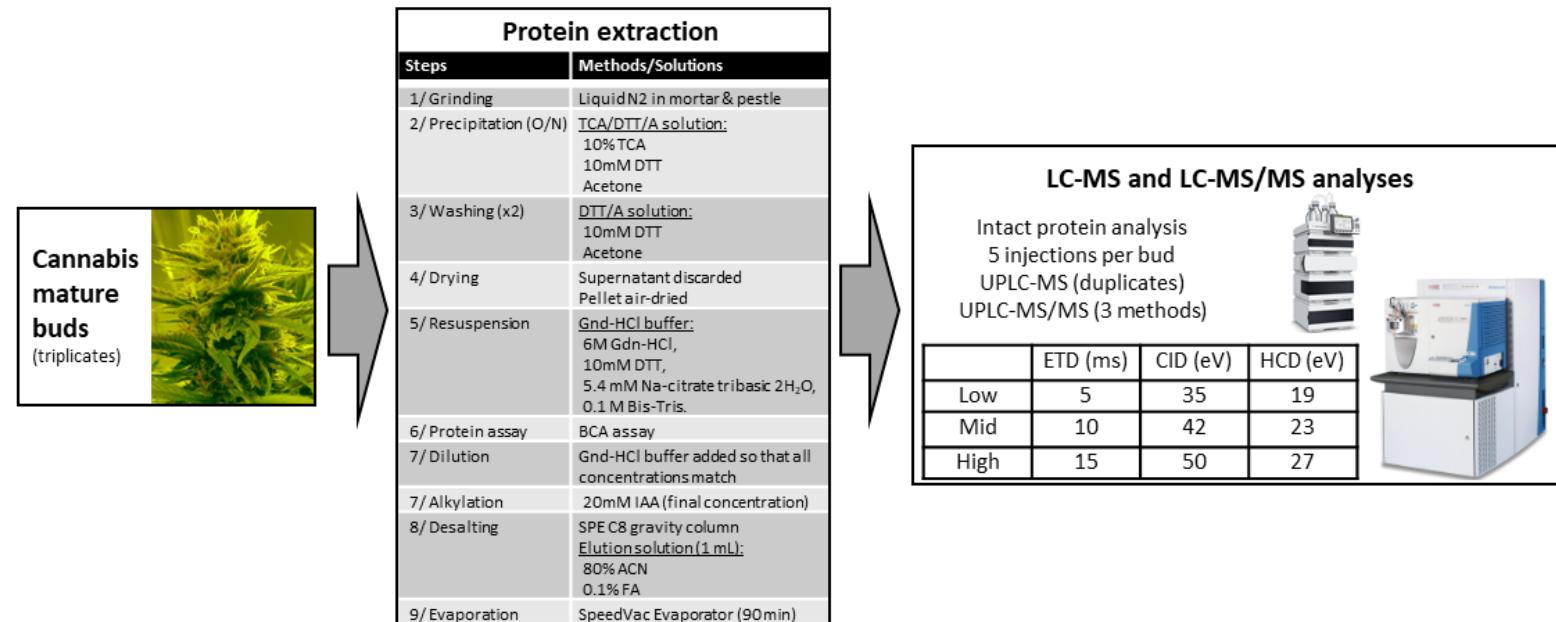
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Experimental design

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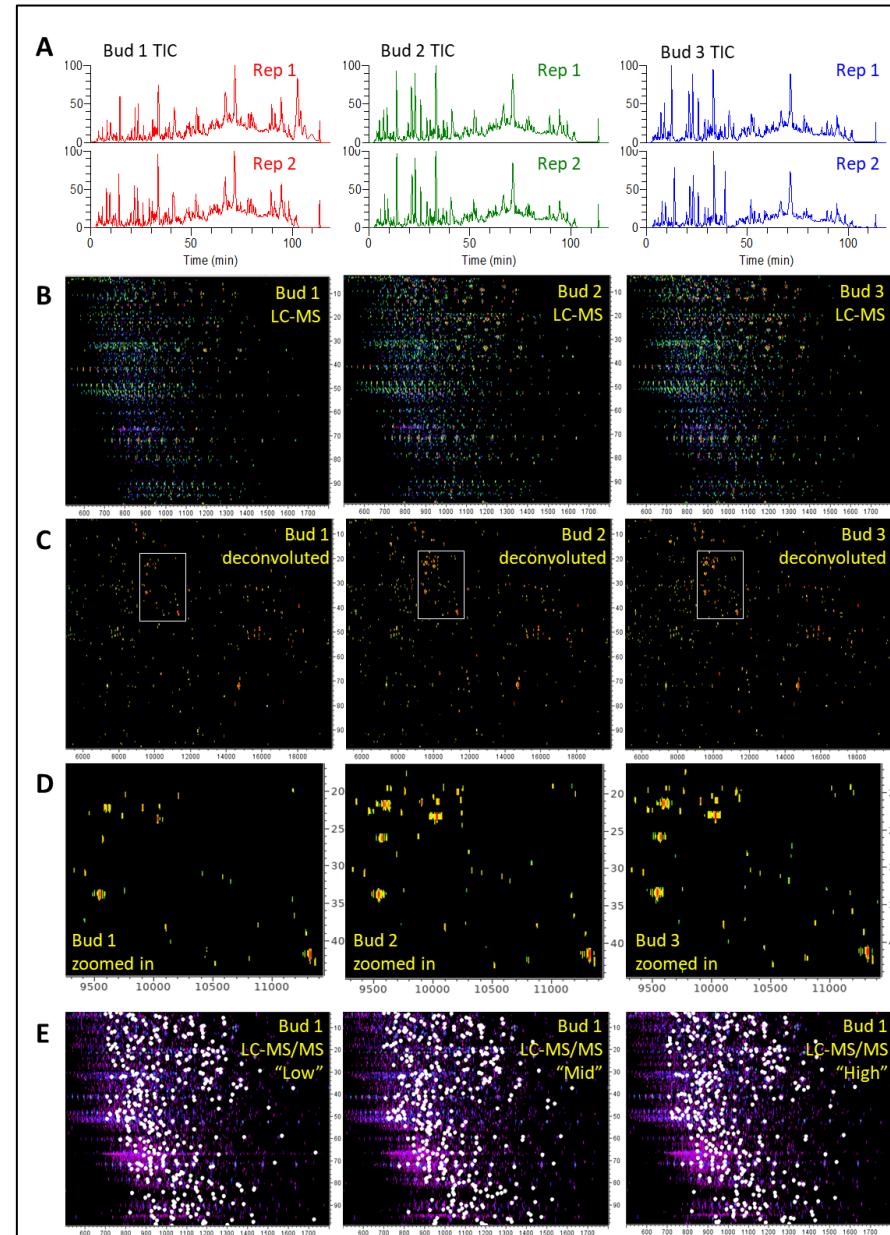
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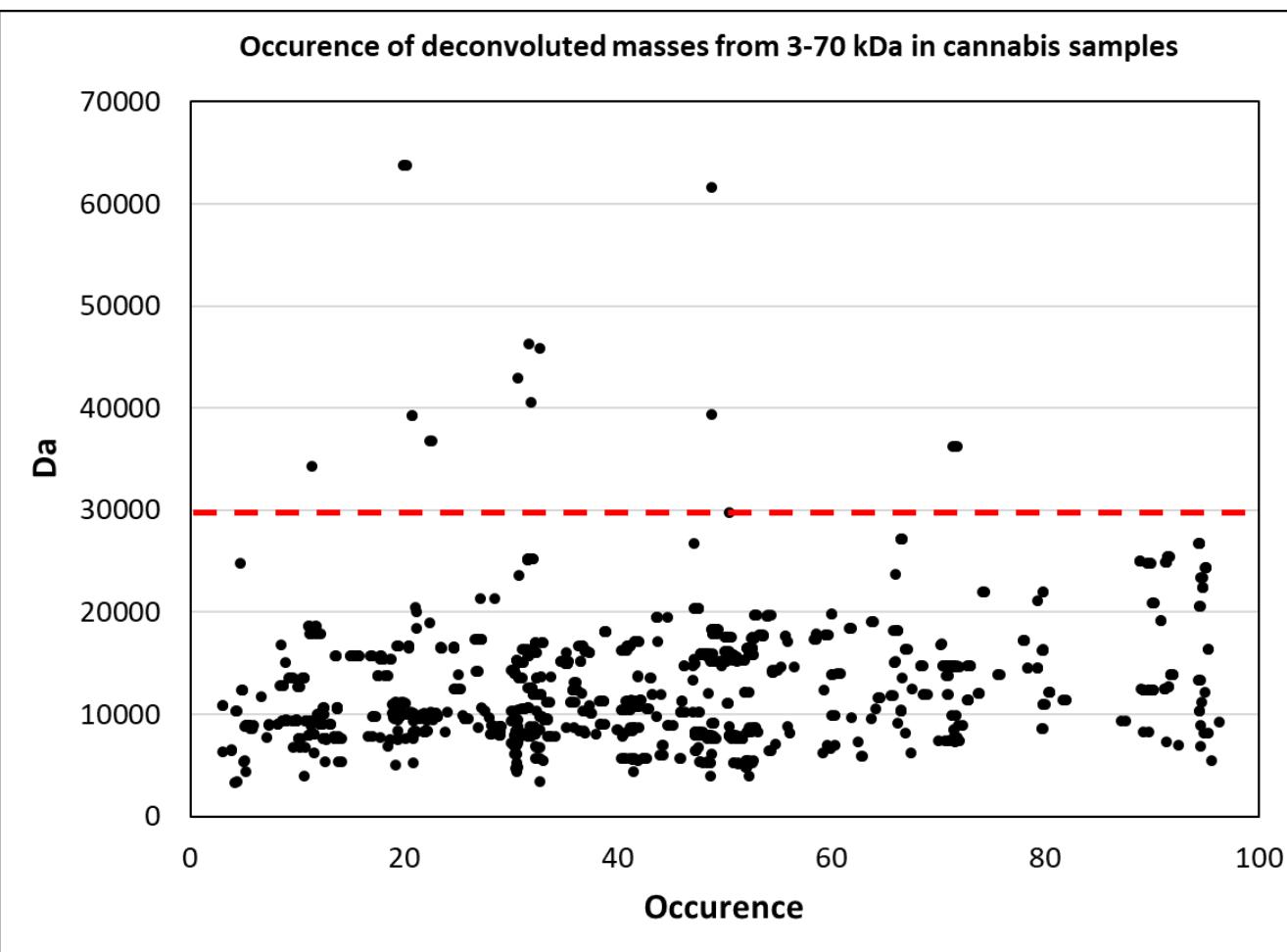
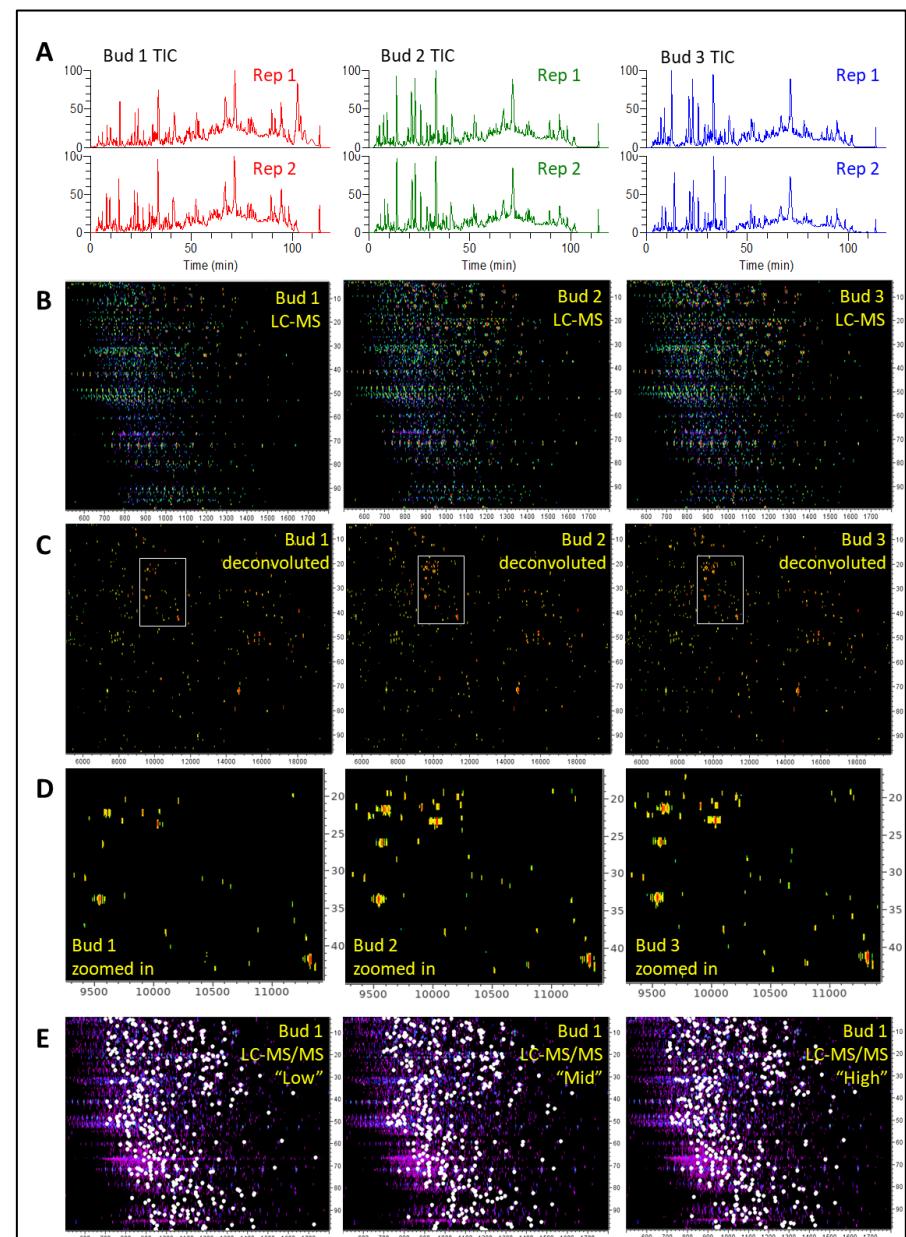
- Excellent reproducibility



3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)



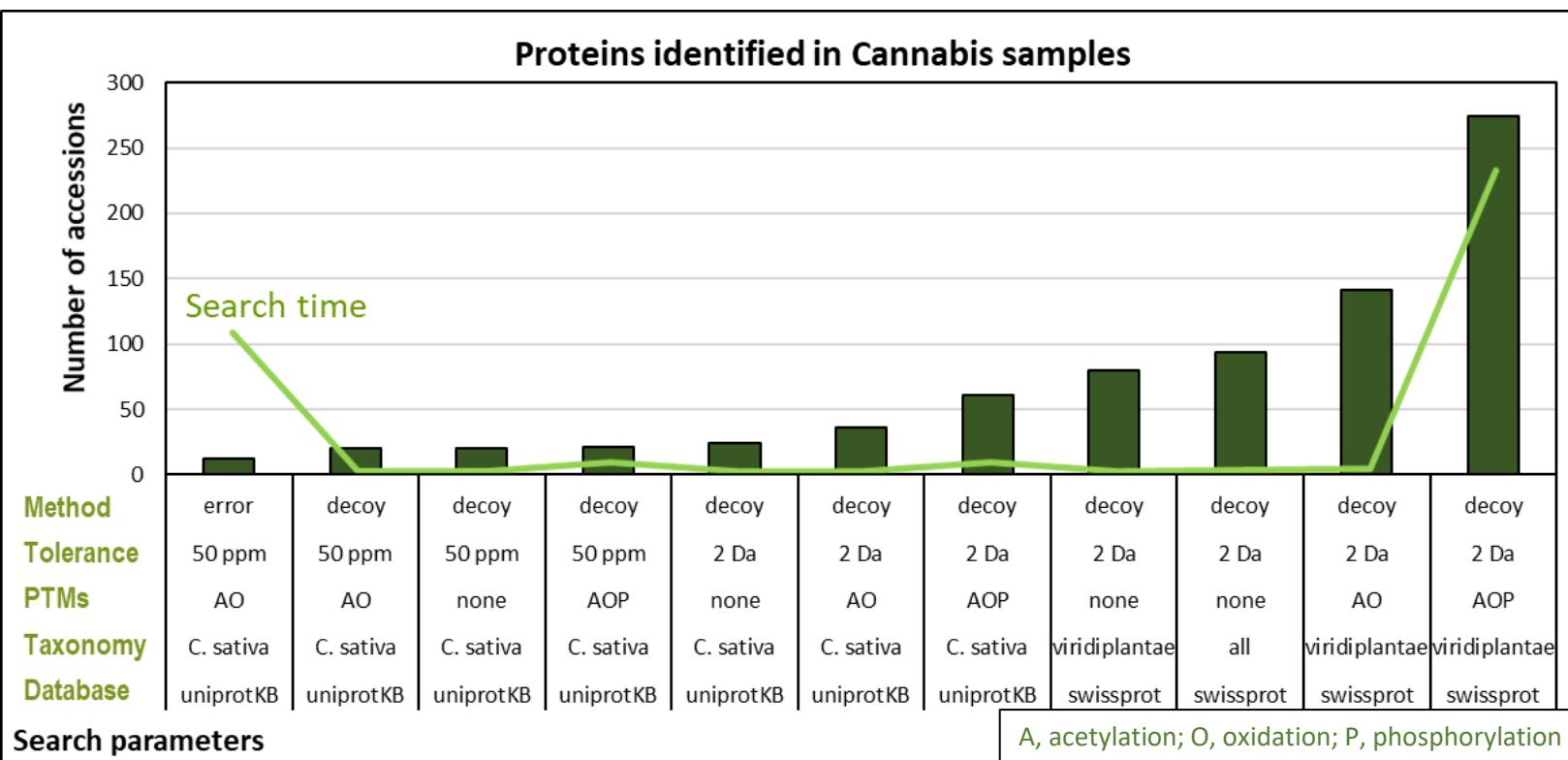
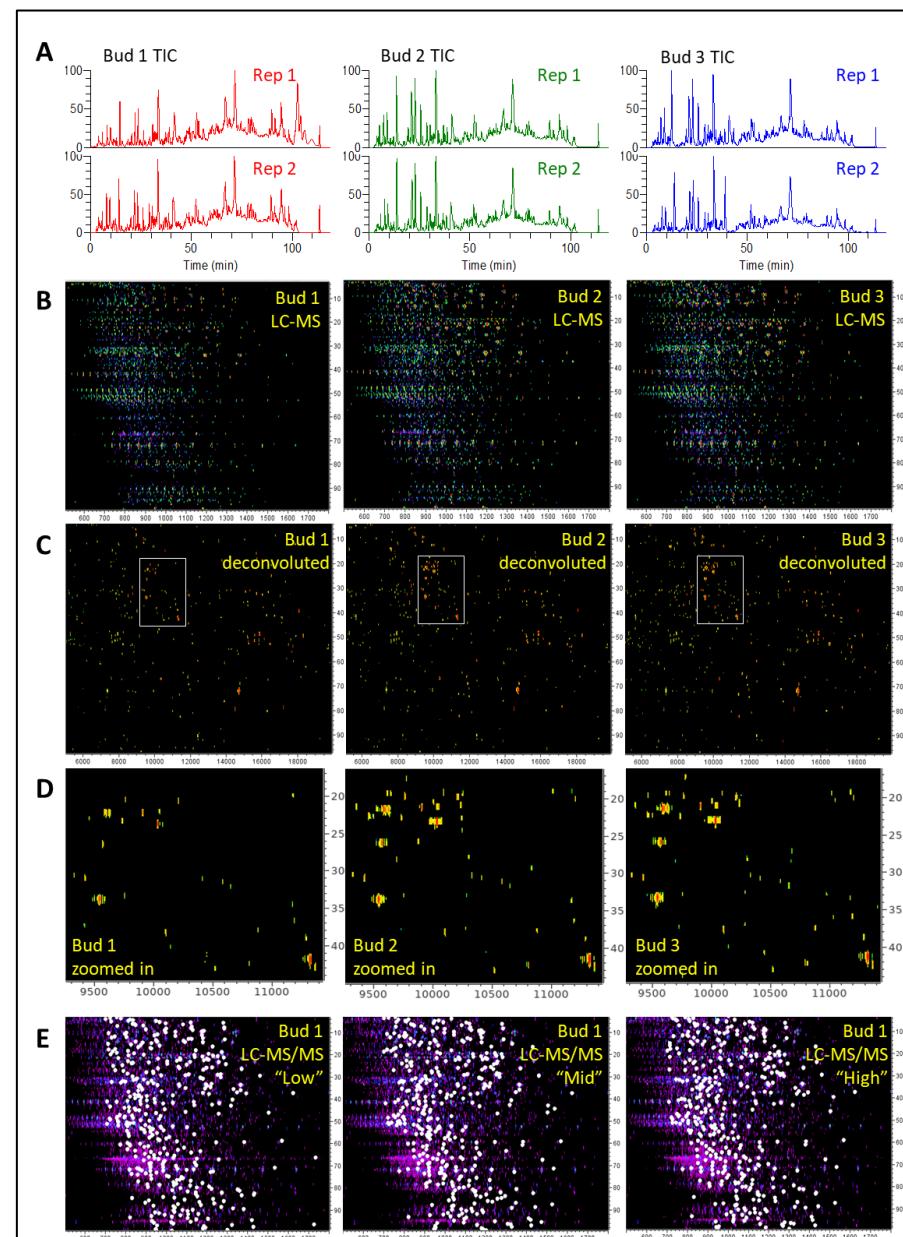
- Excellent reproducibility
- Most cannabis proteins <30kDa



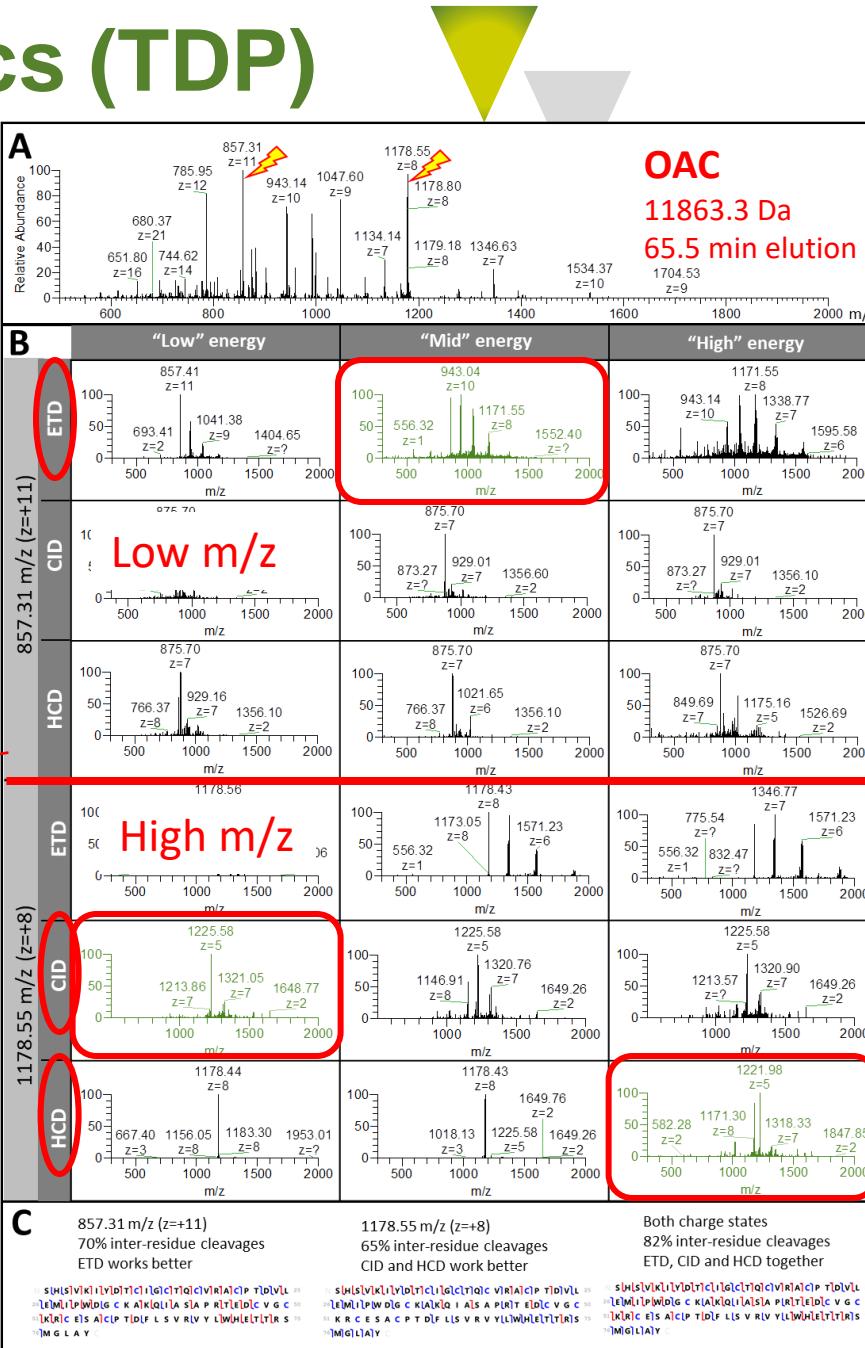
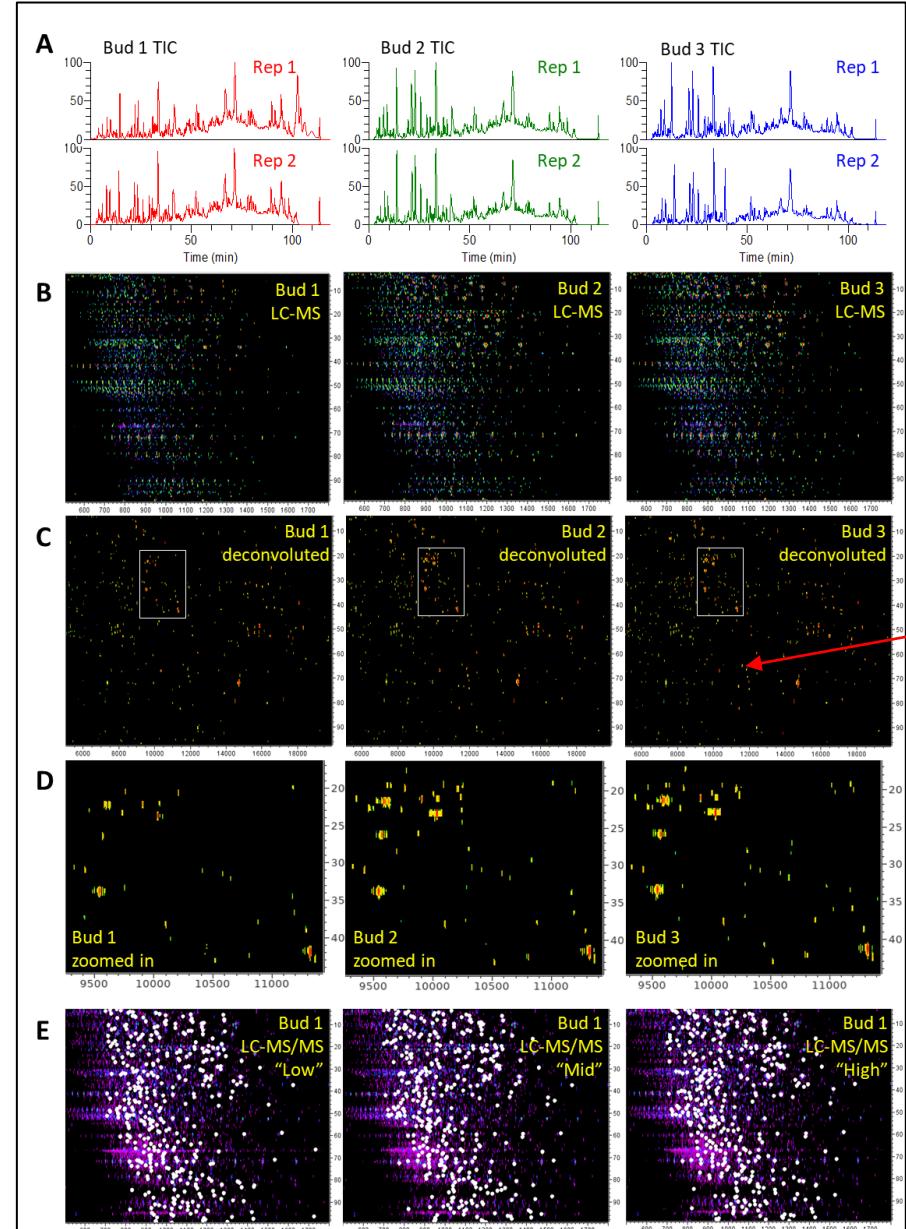
3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)



- Excellent reproducibility
- Most cannabis proteins <30kDa
- 11,250 MS/MS spectra
- 213-1863 (2-17%) matched in Mascot
- Search time spanned min to weeks depending on the DB and parameters (PTMs)!



3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)



Focus on OAC:
Elutes at 64-66 min (40%ACN)
Low m/z → ETD
High m/z → HCD, CID

3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

MASCOT Search Results

Protein View: I6WU39|OLIAC_CANSA

Olivetolic acid cyclase OS=Cannabis sativa OX=3483 GN=OAC PE=1 SV=1

Database: OAC_I6WU39
Score: 270
Monoisotopic mass (Mr): 11994
Calculated pI: 5.77

Sequence similarity is available as an NCBI BLAST search of I6WU39|OLIAC_CANSA against nr.

Search parameters

MS data file: 2019-05-04_MC_buds123_export-mgf_1z.mgf

Enzyme: NoCleave: cuts C-term side of J unless next residue is ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ.

Variable modifications: Methyl (K), Acetyl (K), Acetyl (Protein N-term), Acetyl (N-term), Oxidation (M), Phospho (ST), Phospho (Y)

Protein sequence coverage: 99%

Matched peptides shown in **bold red**.

1 MAVHLIVLK FKDEITEAQK EEEFFKTYVNL VNIIPAMKDV YWGKDVTQKN
51 KEEGYTHIVE VTFSVETIQ DYIIPAHVG FGDVYRSFWE KLLIFDYTPRK
101 K

Unformatted sequence string: [101 residues](#) (for pasting into other applications).

Sort by residue number increasing mass decreasing mass

Show matched peptides only predicted peptides also

Query	Start - End	Observed	Mr(expt)	Mr(calc)	#	M Score	Expect	Rank	U	Peptide
I6704	2 - 101	11866.3070	11865.2997	11863.1629	0.0180	0	20	0.04	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.-
I6795	2 - 101	11910.3060	11909.2987	11905.1735	0.0347	0	54	4.1e-05	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Acetyl (K)
I6702	2 - 101	11866.3070	11865.2997	11943.1292	-0.6517	0	48	5.4e-05	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Phospho (ST)
I6703	2 - 101	11866.3070	11865.2997	11943.1292	-0.6517	0	45	0.00013	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Phospho (ST)
I6725	2 - 101	11869.2875	11868.2802	11943.1292	-0.6267	0	60	4.1e-06	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Phospho (ST)
I6729	2 - 101	11869.2935	11868.2862	11943.1292	-0.6267	0	25	0.014	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Phospho (ST)
I6732	2 - 101	11869.3080	11868.3007	11943.1292	-0.6265	0	39	0.00055	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Phospho (ST)
I6733	2 - 101	11869.3080	11868.3007	11943.1292	-0.6265	0	31	0.0034	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Phospho (ST)
I6735	2 - 101	11870.2102	11869.2030	11943.1292	-0.6190	0	38	0.00069	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Phospho (ST)
I6723	2 - 101	11869.2875	11868.2802	11957.1449	-0.7432	0	21	0.035	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Methyl (K); Phospho (ST)
I6727	2 - 101	11869.2935	11868.2862	11957.1449	-0.7431	0	41	0.00033	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Methyl (K); Phospho (ST)
I6728	2 - 101	11869.2935	11868.2862	11957.1449	-0.7431	0	29	0.0058	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Methyl (K); Phospho (ST)
I6713	2 - 101	11868.1750	11867.1677	11961.1997	-0.7861	0	26	0.011	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Methyl (K); 2 Acetyl (K)
I6831	2 - 101	11995.3102	11994.3029	12001.1711	-0.0572	0	24	0.0061	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + 3 Methyl (K); Oxidation (M); Phospho (ST)
I6830	2 - 101	11983.3118	11982.3045	12079.1218	-0.8015	0	42	0.0022	1	U M.AVKHLIVLKFKEITEAQKEEFFKTYVNLVNIIPAMKDVYWGKDVTQKNKEEGYTHIVEVTFSVETIQDYIIPAHVGFGDVRYSFWEKLLIFDYTPRK.- + Methyl (K); Acetyl (K); Phospho (ST); Phospho (Y)

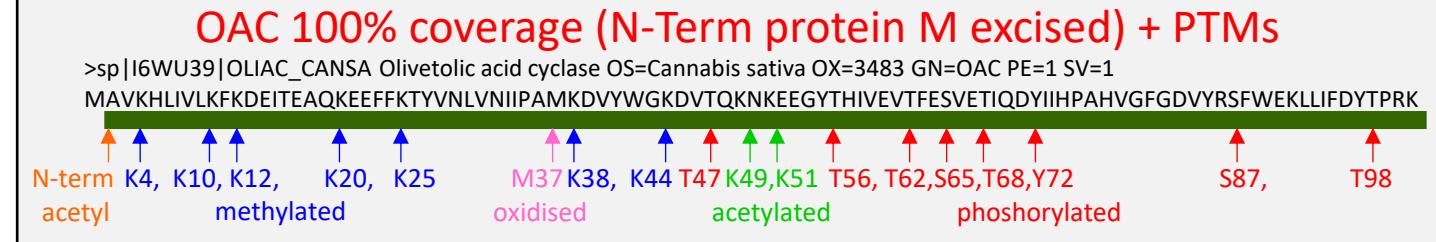


Focus on OAC:

Elutes at 64-66 min (40%ACN)

Low m/z → ETD

High m/z → HCD, CID

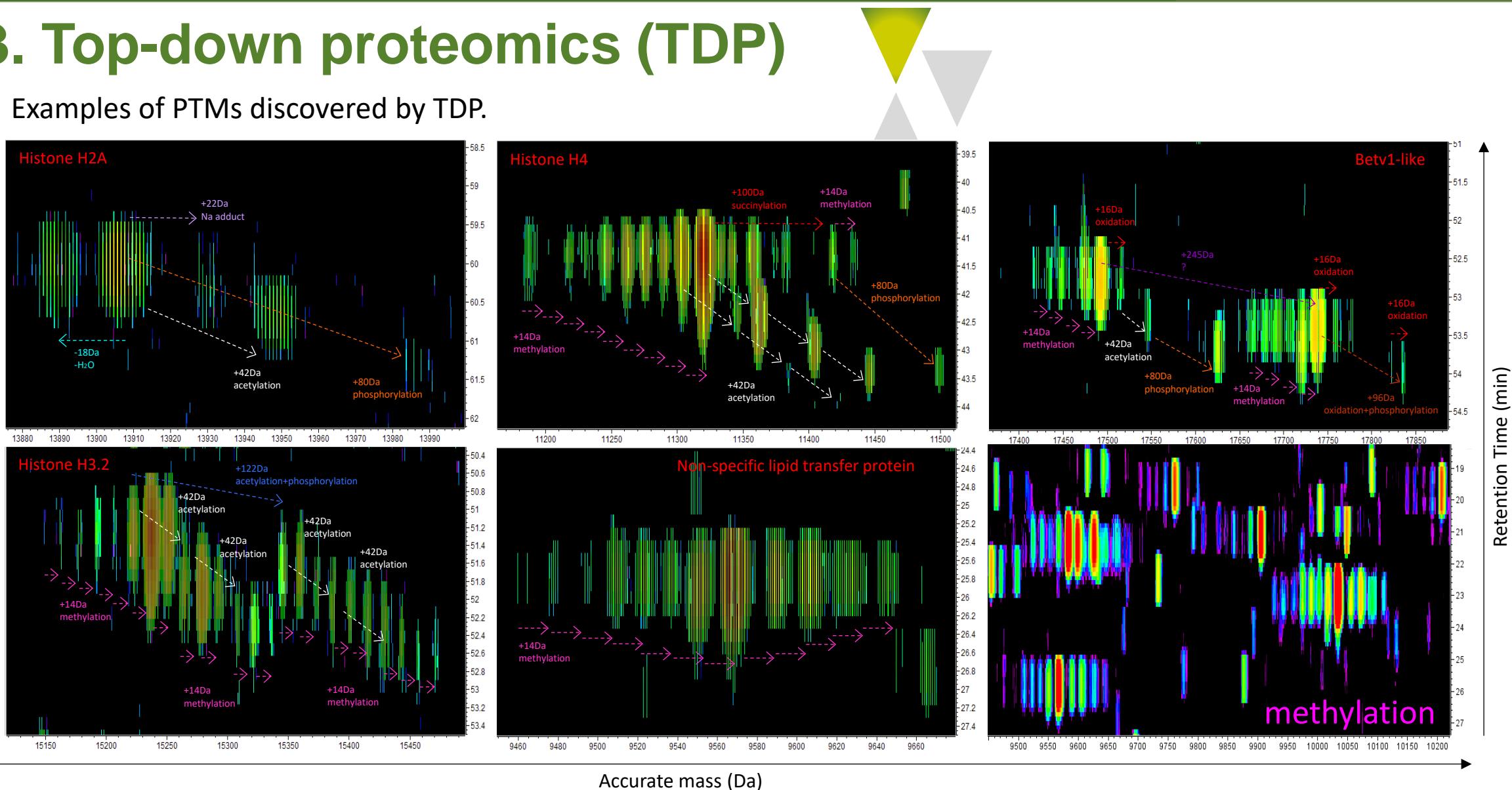


N-term M excision of OAC and PTMs not referenced in UniprotKB

OAC proteoforms

3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

Examples of PTMs discovered by TDP.



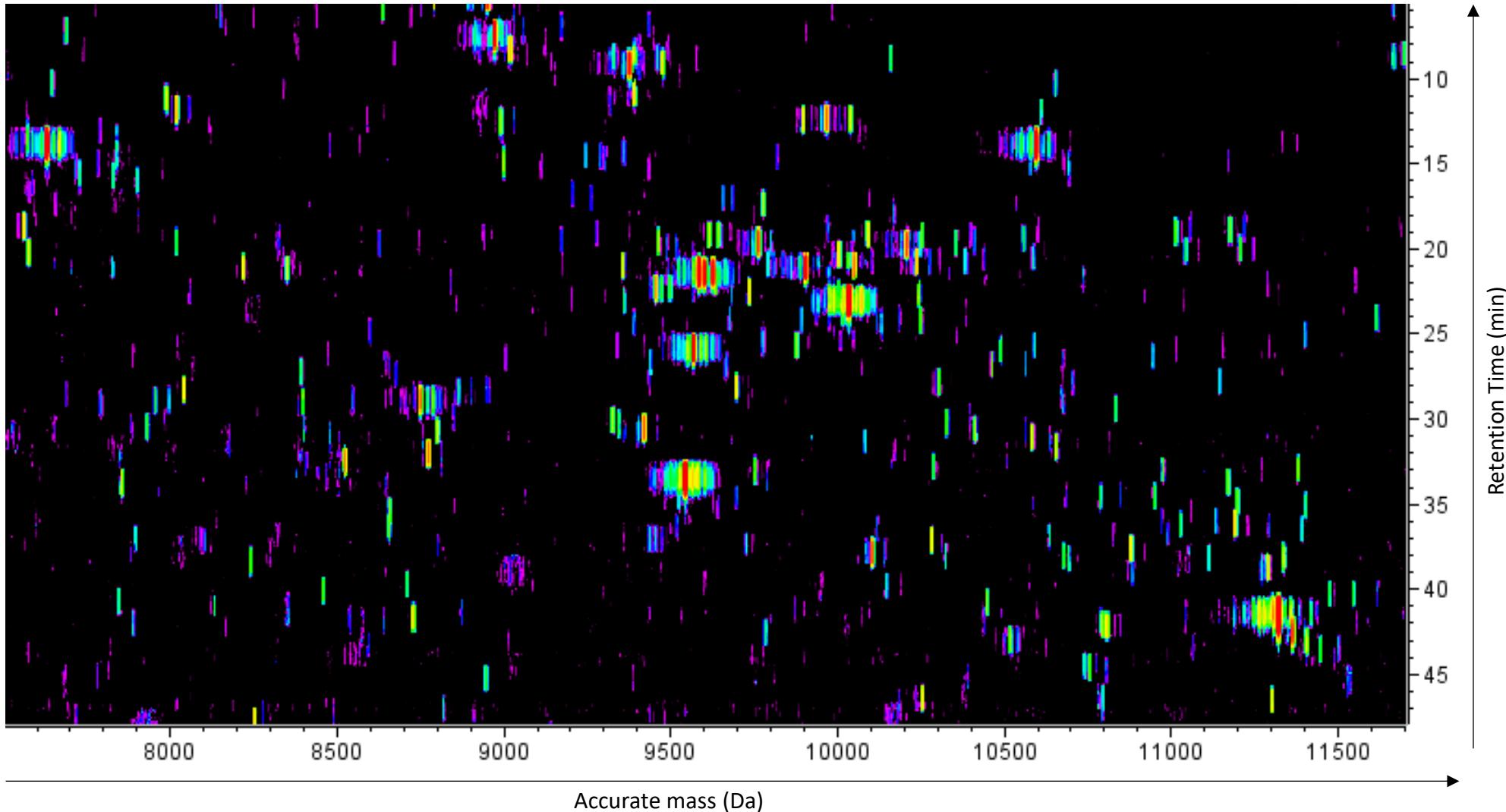
46 cannabis proteins identified, 136 proteoforms with different PTMs
(N-term M excision, N-term acetylation, methylation, acetylation, phosphorylation).

3. Top-down proteomics (TDP)

Protein methylation.



Cannabis proteins heavily methylated.



K methylation of histones determines chromatin structure and affect gene expression.

K methylation of non-histone proteins enables protein-protein interactions.

A black and white photograph showing a dense, sprawling cluster of cannabis plants. The plants are characterized by their large, deeply serrated leaves with prominent veins. The foliage is thick and overlapping, filling most of the frame. In the background, the structural elements of a grow room, such as pipes and a ceiling, are visible, though they are mostly obscured by the plants.

Conclusions



- **BUP:** Robust qualitative method that gives access to phytocannabinoid enzymes [1].
- **MDP:** Similar to BUP with greater sequence coverage and more proteins identified [2].
- **TDP:** Quantitative method but mostly unknown features. Proteoforms of identified proteins [3].

Highly complementary strategies.

Validates genome annotation (proteogenomics).

Future directions

Apply each of these methods to various cultivars of medicinal cannabis and hemp.

	BUP¹	MDP²	TDP³
speed	-	--	++
costs	+	++	--
tools	+	+	-
identities	+	++	--
quantitative	-	-	++
proteoforms	-	+	+++

PUBLICATIONS

1. Vincent, D.; Rochfort, S.; Spangenberg, G. Optimisation of protein extraction from medicinal cannabis mature buds for bottom-up proteomics. *Molecules* 2019, 24, 659. doi:10.3390/molecules24040659.
2. Vincent, D.; Ezernieks, V.; Rochfort, S.; Spangenberg, G. A multiple protease strategy to optimise shotgun proteomics of medicinal cannabis mature buds. *International Journal of Molecular Sciences* 2019, 20, 5630; doi:10.3390/ijms20225630.
3. Vincent, D.; Binos, S.; Rochfort, S.; Spangenberg, G. Top-down proteomics of medicinal cannabis. *Proteomes* 2019, 7, 33. doi:10.3390/proteomes7040033.

A close-up photograph of a cannabis plant, showing a dense cluster of buds. The buds are covered in a thick layer of white, crystalline trichomes. The surrounding leaves are large, serrated, and have prominent veins. The lighting highlights the texture of the leaves and the glistening trichomes.

Thank you!