

Transcriptome Variation in *Arabidopsis* Under Dynamic Growth Conditions

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Project Background

- ▶ Plants experience abiotic stress in nature
- ▶ Plants exhibit natural variation in stress tolerance
- ▶ Studying natural variation can give clues to mechanism
- ▶ Matching natural variation to dynamic conditions may uncover cryptic phenotypes



Terminology

- ▶ **Transcriptomics:** study of global gene expression
- ▶ **RNAseq:** transcriptome quantification by sequencing
- ▶ **Pipeline:** series of software which turns data into results
- ▶ **QTL Mapping:** technique to associate variation in genotype to phenotype variation

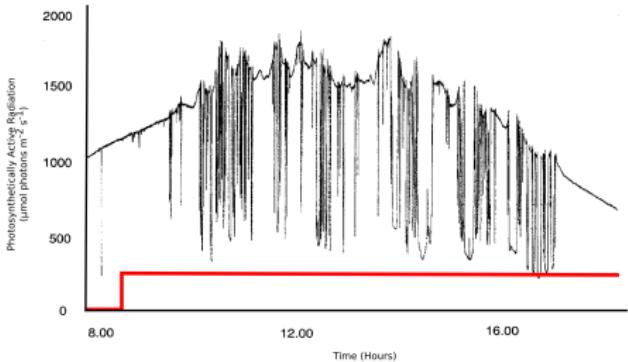
Aims

1. Design & implement dynamic growth conditions
2. Develop improved bioinformatic and molecular protocols for High-throughput RNAseq experiments
3. Determine effect of light intensity on transcriptome under dynamic light conditions

Aim 1: The growth condition dilemma



- ▶ Plants grow in nature
- ▶ A lot of science done in labs



(Külheim, Ågren, and Jansson 2002)

- ▶ Aim to merge elements of these two scenarios

Aim 1: Introducing the SpectralPhenoClimatron

- ▶ Several new technologies
 - ▶ Growth Cabinets
 - ▶ LED Arrays
 - ▶ Imaging hardware
- ▶ Simulate regional climates
- ▶ Model diurnal and circannual trends of climate
- ▶ Use model simulation to drive actual growth cabinet conditions



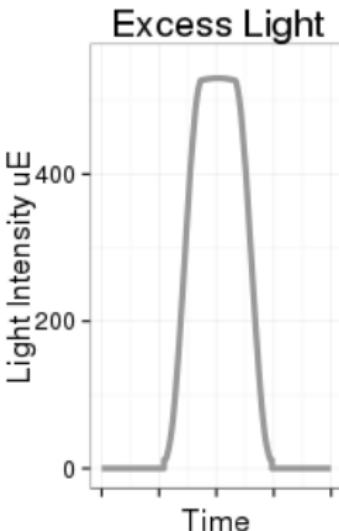
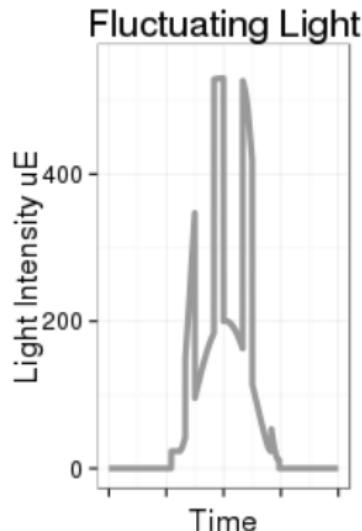
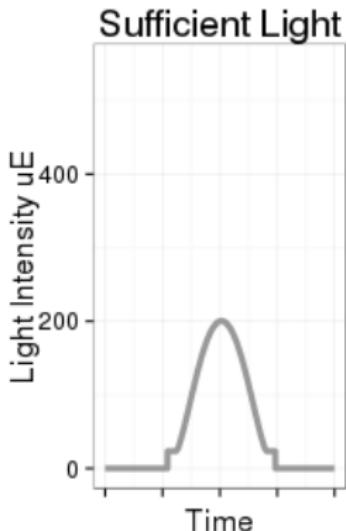
Aim 1: Result: Controlling the SpectralPhenoClimatron

- ▶ Disparate pieces of technology
- ▶ Need software “glue” to stick bits together
- ▶ Wrote `spcControl` Python module
 - ▶ 750 lines
 - ▶ 134 minor, 16 major versions
 - ▶ Open source, on github.com
- ▶ Allow minute-wise control of all components



Aim 1: Result: Novel Growth Conditions

- ▶ Investigating altered light intensity
- ▶ Within a simulated climate, modify light intensity
- ▶ Create 3 new conditions:
 - ▶ Sufficient light
 - ▶ Fluctuating light
 - ▶ Excess light



Aim 1: Hypothesis: Plants Become Hardened

- ▶ Hypothesised “hardening” of plants to harsher conditions
 - ▶ Increased steady state expression of stress genes
 - ▶ Decreased induction of stress genes after stress
- ▶ Hypothesised a relative order of “hardening”
 1. Fluctuating light
 2. Excess light
 3. Sufficient light
 4. Standard growth conditions

Aim 1: Plant Growth Under Dynamic Growth Conditions

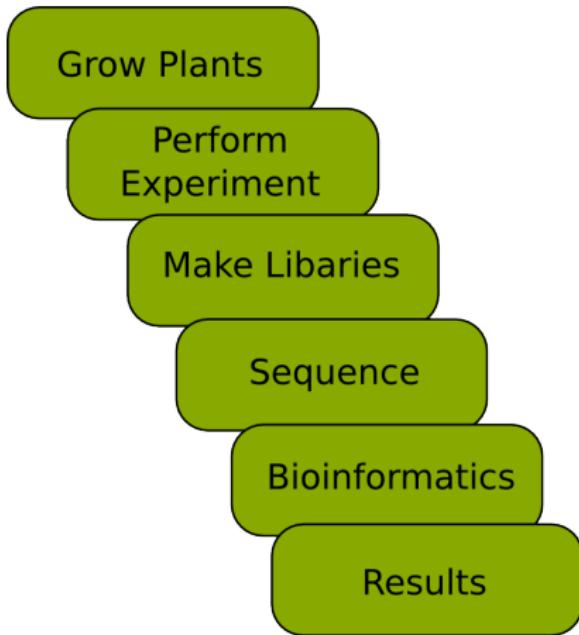
- ▶ A QTL mapping set; Col, Cvi, Ler Ecotypes
- ▶ Over 1200 plants planted
- ▶ Grown for 3 weeks dynamic growth conditions
- ▶ Assay expression before and after high light pulse treatment



Aims

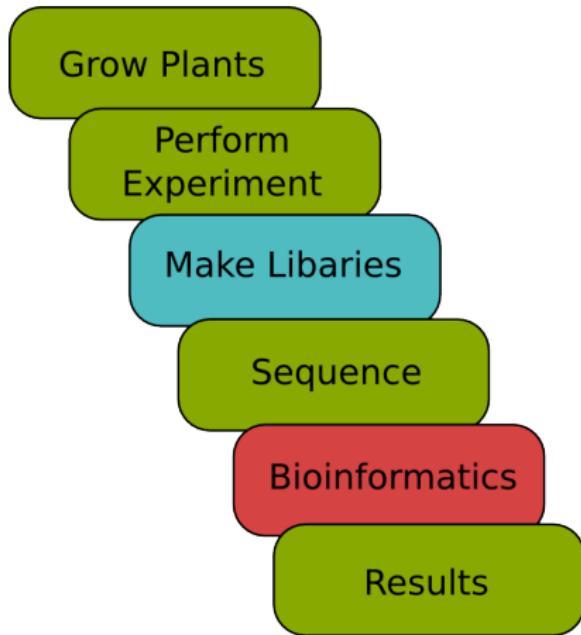
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Aim 2: How does RNAseq work?



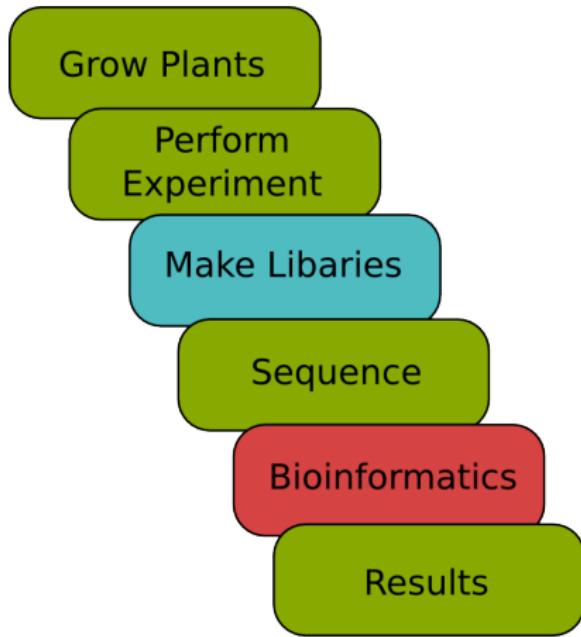
- ▶ Assay **ALL** expression in your tissue
- ▶ Unbiased, as quantitative as qPCR
- ▶ Becoming cheaper and easier

Aim 2: How does RNAseq work?

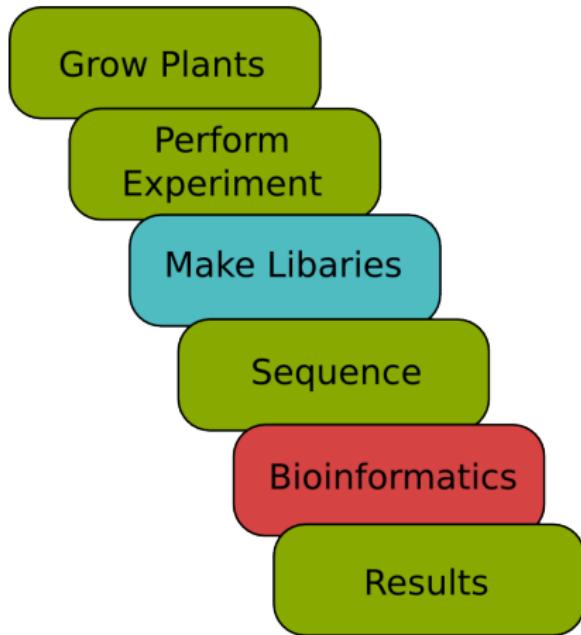


- ▶ Will focus on two areas of improvement
 - ▶ Making RNAseq library prep. cheaper & higher throughput
 - ▶ Making RNAseq data analysis easier & faster

Aim 2: RNAseq Analysis Made Easy!

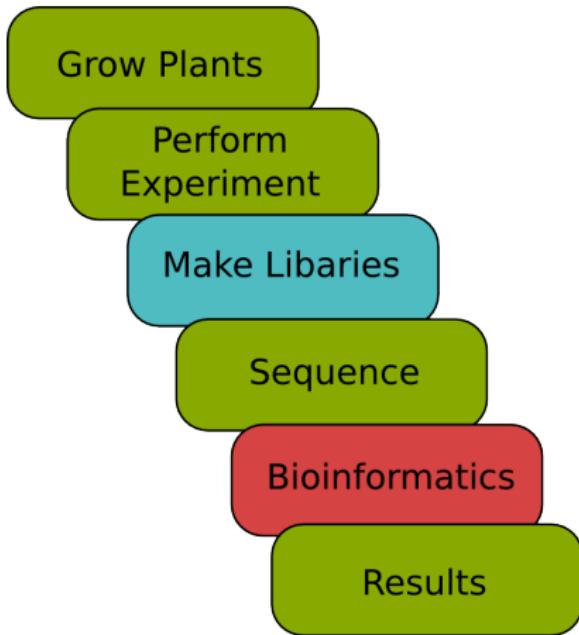


Aim 2: RNAseq Analysis Made Easy!



*"Can't there just be a
'do my bioinformatics'
button?"*

Aim 2: RNAseq Analysis Made Easy!



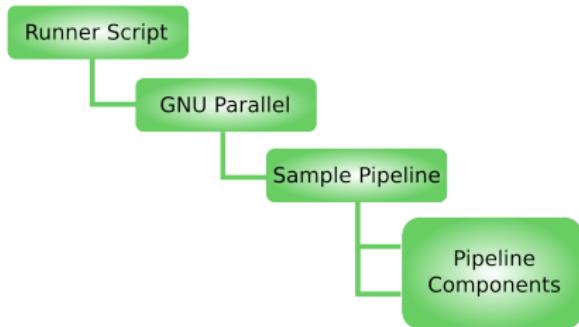
*"Can't there just be a
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Aim 2: How To Run a Pipeline

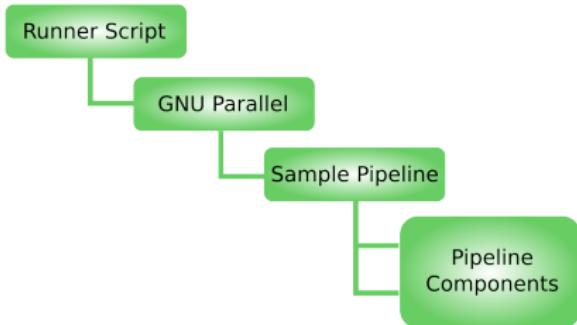
Command:

```
bash runner.sh keyfile.key
```



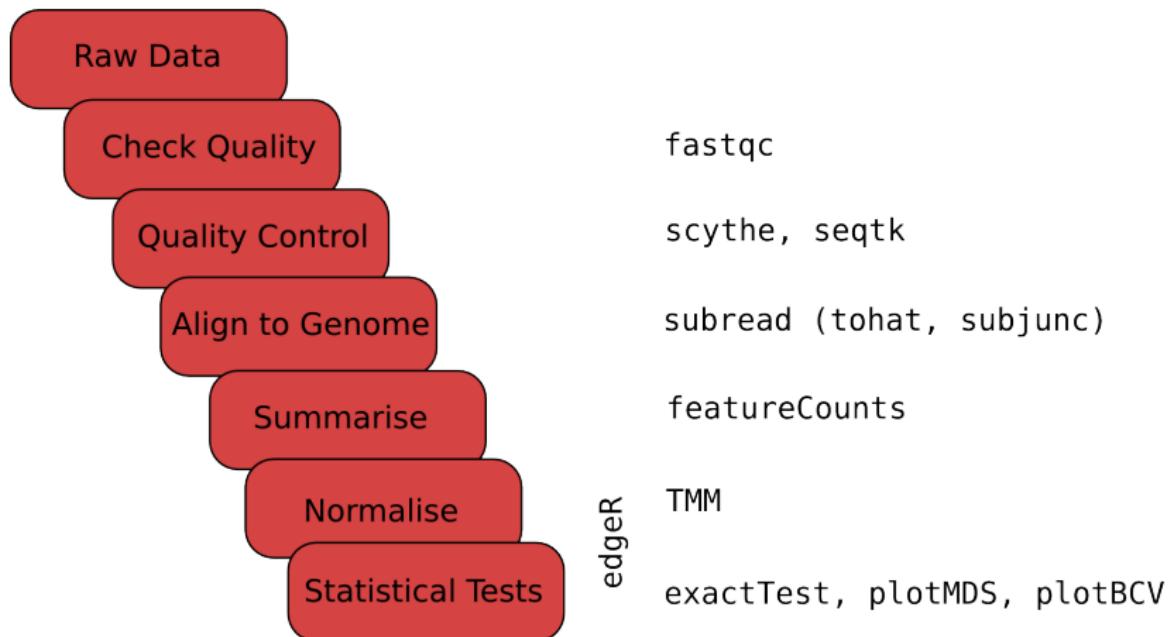
- ▶ Let's dissect that:
 - ▶ bash runner.sh
 - Call the runner script
 - ▶ keyfile.key
 - Give it the “keyfile”
- ▶ No need to run each component separately
- ▶ Automagically logs exact commands

Aim 2: How does that work?

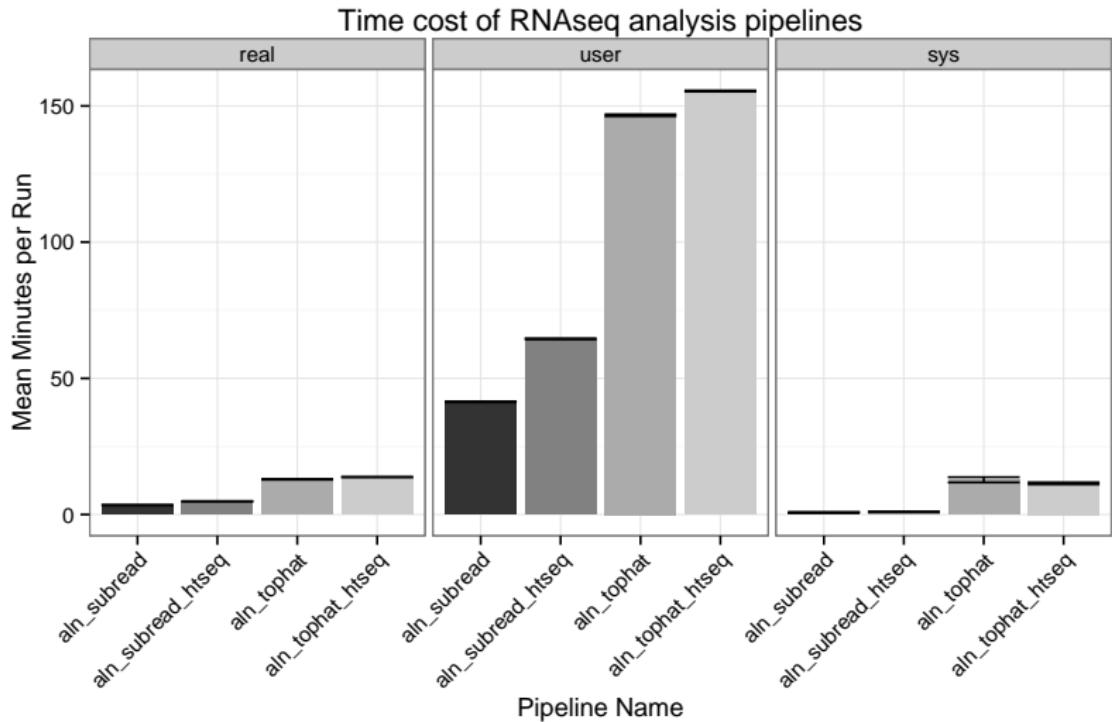


- ▶ Written in bash, python and R
- ▶ > 2500 lines of code, > 200 commits
- ▶ Code is on github.com
- ▶ Open source (GPL v3)
- ▶ Pilfer at will!

Aim 2: RNAseq Pipeline Components

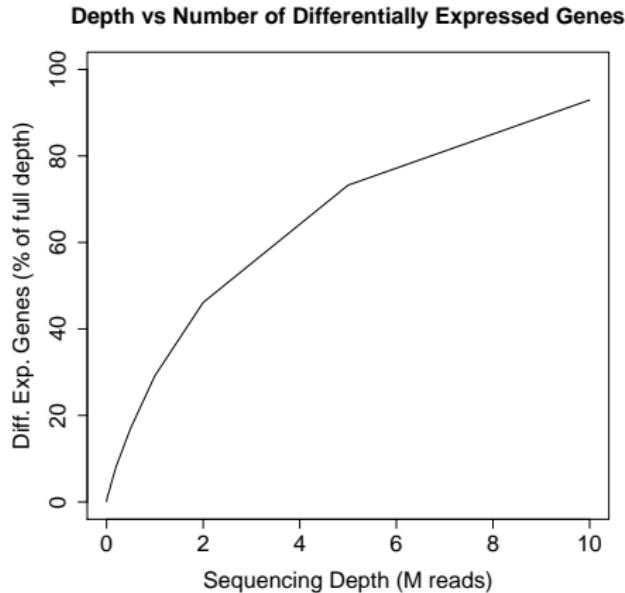


Aim 2: Pipeline Performance



Aim 2: Effect of Sequencing Depth

- ▶ Trade off between multiplexing and statistical power
- ▶ Conclusion: Recommend 48x multiplexing (5M reads)

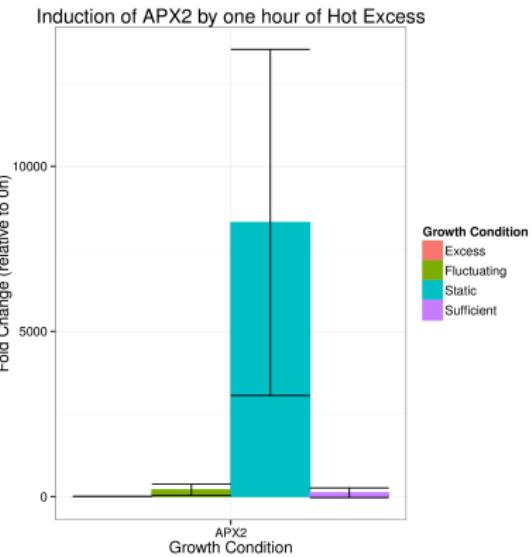


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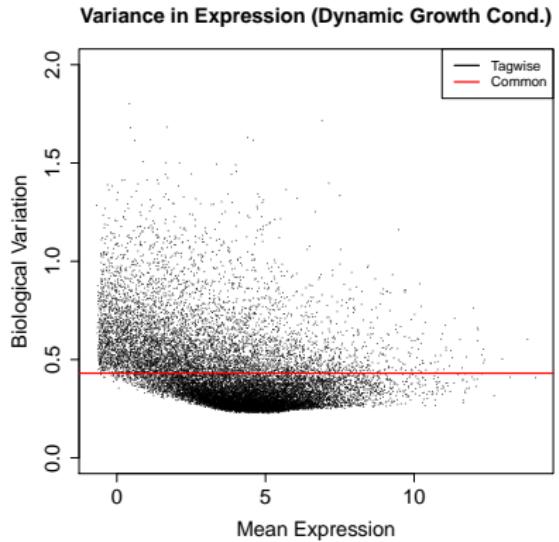
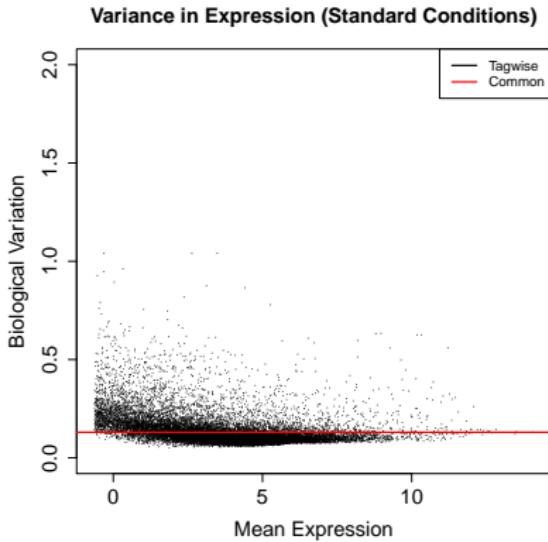
Aim 3: qPCR analysis tells a small story

- ▶ Examine expression of known excess light responsive genes (APX2, ELIP1, ELIP2, LHCBI.4)
- ▶ Dynamic growth conditions show reduced induction and increased steady state expression
- ▶ Hypotheses appear mostly correct



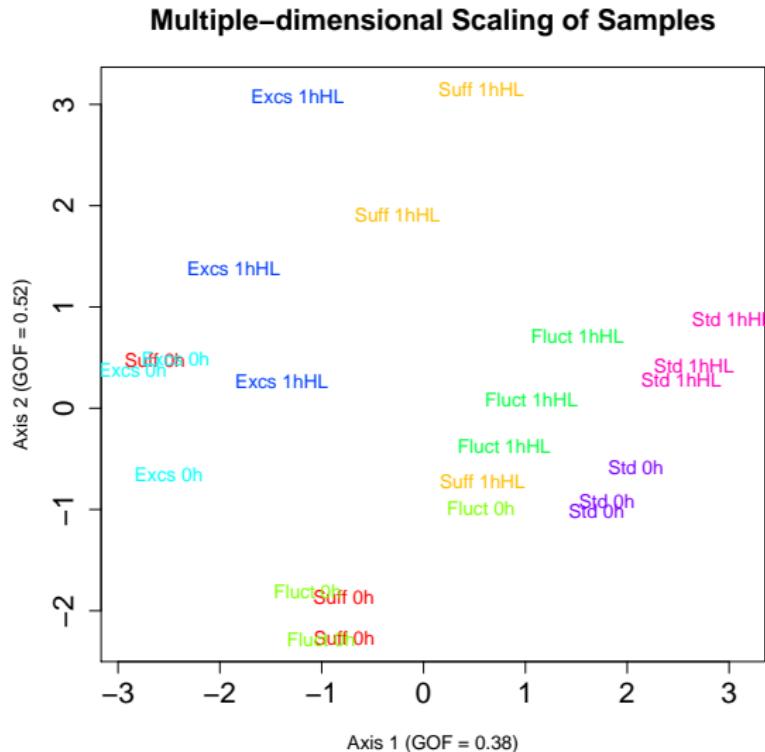
RNAseq shows the whole picture

- ▶ Overall, high variation amongst samples



RNAseq shows the whole picture

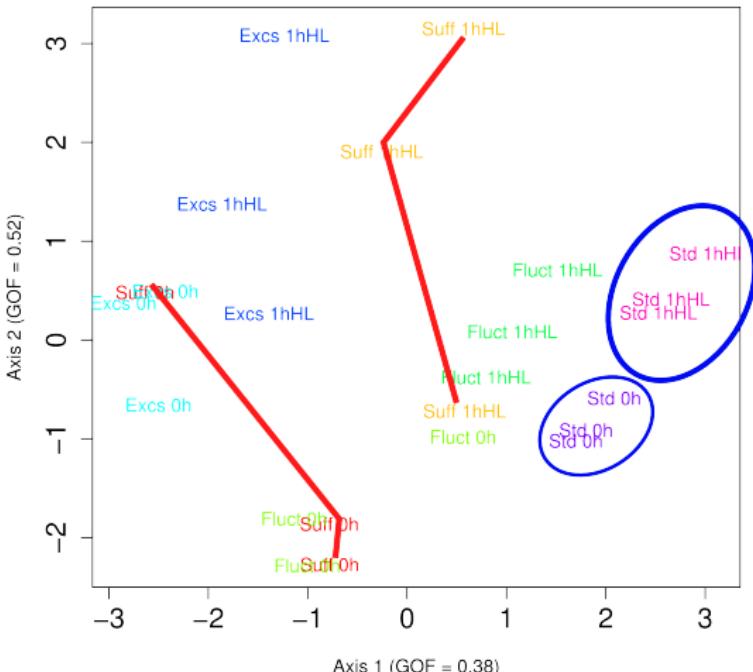
- Amongst a noisy response, a pattern emerges



RNAseq shows the whole picture

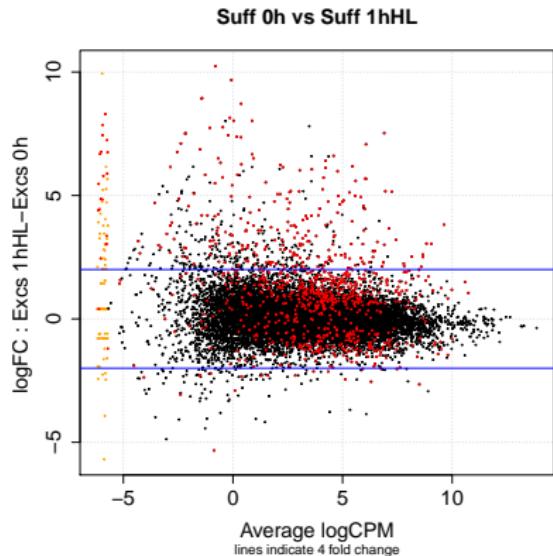
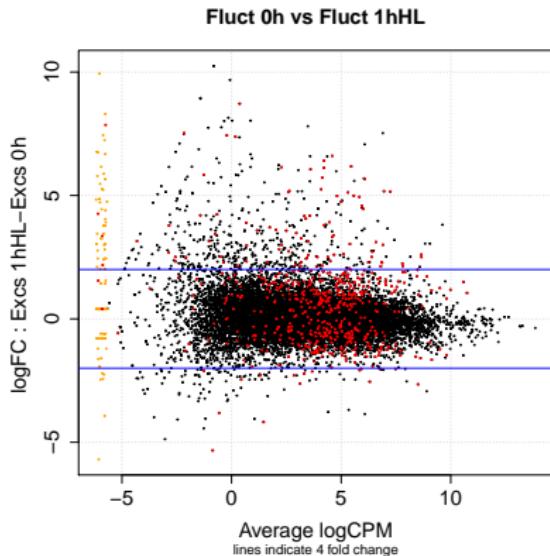
- ▶ Amongst a noisy response, a pattern emerges
- ▶ Plants grown in dynamic condition still exhibit stress response

Multiple-dimensional Scaling of Samples



RNAseq shows the whole picture

- Less differential expression in more “hardened” conditions



- 343 up, 229 down

- 666 up, 227 down

Conclusions

1. Design & implement dynamic growth conditions
 - ▶ *Dynamic growth conditions may allow stress hardening*
2. Develop improved bioinformatic and molecular protocols for High-throughput RNAseq experiments
 - ▶ *RNAseq is here, and easier than you might think*
3. Determine effect of light intensity on transcriptome under dynamic light conditions
 - ▶ *Patterns of differential expression seen, more replicates needed, analysis ongoing*

Future Work

- ▶ Optimise 96-well RNAseq protocol - required for expression QTL mapping
- ▶ Analyse QTL mapping set:
 - ▶ RNAseq to map expression QTLs of stress responsive genes
 - ▶ Map QTLs for phenomic traits e.g. anthocyanin accumulation
 - preliminary data looks interesting
- ▶ Repeat entire experiment with improved sampling techniques - increase statistical power

Acknowledgements

- ▶ Pogson and Borevitz labs
- ▶ Pete Crisp and Norman Warthmann
- ▶ The GDU and associates