A WIDE DISTRIBUTION OF A NEW VRN-B1c ALLELE OF WHEAT TRITICUM AESTIVUM L. IN RUSSIA, UKRAINE AND ADJACENT REGIONS: A LINK WITH THE HEADING TIME AND ADAPTIVE POTENTIAL

Shcherban A.*1, S. Chebotar2, G. Chebotar2, T. Efremova1, E. Salina1

1Institute of Cytology and Genetics SB RAS, Novosibirsk, Russia
2South Plant Biotechnology Center NAAS, Odessa, Ukraine

*e-mail: atos@bionet.nsc.ru

The adaptation of common wheat (T. aestivum L.) to diverse environmental conditions is greatly under the control of genes involved in determination of vernalization response (Vrn-1 genes). It was found that the variation in common wheat heading time is affected not only by combination of Vrn-1 homoeoalleles but also by multiple alleles at a separate Vrn-1 locus. Previously, we described the Vrn-B1c allele from T.aestivum cv. 'Saratovskaya 29' and found significant differences in the structure of the first (1st) intron of this allele when compared to another highly abundant Vrn-B1a allele, specifically, the deletion of 0.8 kb coupled with the duplication of 0.4 kb. We suggested that the changes in the intron 1 of Vrn-B1c allele caused earlier ear emergence in the near-isogenic line and cultivars, carrying this allele. In this study we investigate the distribution of the Vrn-B1c allele in a wide set of spring wheat cultivars from Russia, Ukraine and adjacent regions. The analysis revealed that 40% of Russian and 53% of Ukrainian spring wheat cultivars contain the Vrn-B1c allele. The high distribution of the Vrn-B1c allele can be explained by a frequent using of 'Saratovskaya 29' in the breeding process inside the studied area. From the other hand, the predominance of the Vrn-B1c allele among cultivars cultivated in West Siberia and Kazakhstan may be due to the selective advantage of this allele for the region where there is a high risk of early fall frosts.