Seasonal Variations in the Deoxypodophyllotoxin Content and Yield of *Anthriscus sylvestris* L. (Hoffm.) Grown in the Field and under Controlled Conditions

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**ABSTRACT:** Deoxypodophyllotoxin (DPT) is the main lignan in *Anthriscus sylvestris*. For this study two sets of experiments with 16 plants and seeds, collected from a wide geographical range, were carried out. The DPT content in roots was significantly lower (*p* < 0.05) when the plants were cultivated in a non-native environment. For field-grown plants the highest DPT content was found in March (second year): 0.15% w/w (dry weight) in roots; 0.03% w/w in aerial parts. For plants grown in the climate room, the highest concentration (0.14% w/w) was observed in April (second year) in the roots and in July (first year) in the aerial parts (0.05% w/w). For the isolation of DPT, roots are the most suitable part. The best harvest times are March (second year) for outdoor plants and April (second year) for indoor plants when height content and adequate biomass give the optimal DPT yield.

**KEYWORDS:** lignan, deoxypodophyllotoxin, podophyllotoxin, *Anthriscus sylvestris*, environmental factors, plant cultivation, biosynthesis, etoposide, teniposide

**INTRODUCTION**

*Anthriscus sylvestris* (L.) Hoffm. (Apiaceae) is a common wild plant in northwest Europe, in parts of North America, Africa, Asia, and New Zealand.1–3 The dried roots are used in Korean and Chinese traditional medicine for the treatment of various diseases, including bronchitis, and as an antipyretic, cough remedy, and analgesic herbal drug.4–6 The plant accumulates considerable amounts of lignans, which are held responsible for the biological activity.7

Deoxypodophyllotoxin (DPT) (Figure 1) is considered to be the plant’s main lignan constituent.8 It has pharmacological properties such as antiproliferative, antitumor, antiviral, anti-inflammatory, antiplatelet aggregation, and anti-allergic related activities in disorders including asthma.8–16 The number of studies of DPT mechanism of action against cancer cells17 and other pharmacological properties is growing.8,18–21 It also has insecticidal properties.22,23 The closely related podophyllotoxin (Figure 1) is used for the semisynthesis of the cytotoxic agents etoposide and teniposide. These drugs are used for the treatment of lung and testicular cancers, Ewing’s sarcoma, lymphoma, glioblastoma, and nonlymphomatous leukemia.24

In several plant species, DPT serves as a biosynthetic precursor for podophyllotoxin.25,26 Feeding experiments with cultures of undifferentiated plant cells (*Linum album*) or fungi (*Penicillium* F-0543 and *Aspergillus niger*) have shown that DPT can be converted into podophyllotoxin.25,27

To date, podophyllotoxin is obtained by extraction of the rhizome of *Podophyllum* species. The availability of *Podophyllum* species is limited,28 and the increasing demands of podophyllotoxin jeopardize the natural sources. *Podophyllum* species are listed on the endangered species list in India.29,30 Soon, the availability of podophyllotoxin will be a major bottleneck in supplying pharmaceutical needs.

Preliminary studies focusing on the question of which factors may influence the production of DPT in *A. sylvestris* suggested that environmental factors highly determine the lignan profile and content.31,32 It has also been reported that DPT content differs at least 2-fold between low and high altitudes both in aerial (0.13% dw at 900 m, 0.33% dw at 1200 m) and in root parts (0.38% dw at 900 m and 0.78% dw at 1200 m) of *A. sylvestris*.21 Different populations of *A. sylvestris* yielded different lignan patterns, and there was no clear genetic factor determining the lignan profiles when seeds from different locations were grown under identical conditions.31,32 A major drawback of that study was the limited number of plants. Here we conducted a biannual experiment with a higher number of collected plants and seeds from a wider geographical range. The plants from the previous studies were included as well (Table 1). All plants were grown under identical field conditions and in a climate room. DPT was the main important compound and was therefore used as the biosynthetic marker. The field resembles natural weather conditions, whereas the climate room resembles controlled cultivation.

The first objective of this study is to determine the DPT content of native and non-native *A. sylvestris* grown in the field and in a climate room to get insight into the production rate of DPT in *A. sylvestris*. Second, we aimed to study the influence of growing conditions, both outdoor and indoor, on the DPT production. Furthermore, it is important to identify rate-limiting ecological factors for optimal growing conditions of *A. sylvestris* for DPT production.
MATERIALS AND METHODS

Chemicals. DPT was a gift from Dr. M. Angeles Castro (Salamanca University, Spain) and was synthesized chemically. The identity and purity of DPT were checked by using HPLC (100%). Acetonitrile and methanol were of HPLC grade from Biosolve ( Valkenswaard, The Netherlands). Dichloromethane was from Fisher Scientific ( Landsmeer, The Netherlands).

Plant Material. The fruits (ripe mericarps, hereafter called seeds) and plants of A. sylvestris L. were obtained from different sources (Table 1). Voucher specimens are deposited in our department coded Asylv2007-1—16. The identity of the seeds was verified, and samples were stored in the reference collection of the Groningen Institute of Archaeology. A. sylvestris plants were collected at the flowering stage between May and June 2007, from locations in The Netherlands and other European countries (Table 1), and used for analysis. From the same plants and origin, seeds were collected. Plants were grown from these seeds (identical conditions) in the Botanical Garden de Kruidhof (Buitenpost, The Netherlands, 53° 15' 52'' N, 06° 10' 41'' E) and sampled in 2009. The roots were separated immediately from the aerial parts. The plant material was dried at room temperature prior to grinding and extraction.

Plant Cultivation in the Field (Outdoor). The seeds were sown in December 2007 on soil in trays for cold stratification at the Botanical Garden de Kruidhof and germinated in February 2008. These seedlings were planted into individual pots and placed under a day—night regimen (16 h light and 8 h dark) at 20—22 °C in May 2008. In the first year (2008), samples were collected in June, July, and August. During the subsequent winter period (September 2008—February 2009), the plants were placed in an open greenhouse to induce a cold dormancy period. In March of the second year (2009), they were placed back into the climate room, and samplings were continued every month, from March until August.

Sample Preparation and Extraction Method. All samplings were from three individual plants (triplicate) and randomly selected. The samples were divided into aerial part and root part. Subsequently, the biomass (fresh weight) of the aerial and root parts was weighed for every plant. The biomass data were an average of three individual plants. Samples from the field and the climate room experiments were freeze-dried and pulverized for analysis. The fresh weight/dry weight ratio was calculated on the basis of an average of six plants. The ratio for the aerial part was 0.1891 and for the root part, 0.2840. The yield was calculated based on DPT concentration and total dry weight of the biomass per plant. The extraction method was as described by Kouman et al.33 Briefly, 100 mg of dried plant material was weighed in a sovirel tube. A 2.0 mL portion of 80% methanol was added, and the mixture was sonicated during 1 h. Subsequently, 4.0 mL of dichloromethane and 4.0 mL of H2O were added. The mixture was vortexed and centrifuged at 1000g for 5 min. The aqueous layer was discarded, and 2.0 mL of organic layer was transferred into a 2 mL Eppendorf tube. The organic layer was left in the fume hood until dried. The residue was redissolved in 2.0 mL of methanol and filtered over a 0.45 μm HPLC syringe filter (nylon). The samples were submitted to HPLC analysis.

HPLC Analysis. The HPLC analysis was as described by Vasilev et al.33 with some modifications. We used a Shimadzu-VP system consisting of a LC-10AT pump, a Kontron 360 autosampler, a SPD M10A DAD detector, a FCV-10AL low-pressure gradient mixer, a SCL-10A system controller, and a FLAtron system CH-30 column heater, operated with LC Solution software, version 1.2. The column used was a Zorbax Eclipse C18 (150 × 4.6 mm, 5 μm), together with a Phenomenex guard cartridge C18 (4 × 3 mm; Phenomenex, Bester, The Netherlands). The detection

![Figure 1. Chemical structures of deoxypodophyllotoxin and podophyllotoxin.](image)

Table 1. Origins of the Collected Anthriscus Plants and Seeds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>no.</th>
<th>origin</th>
<th>country</th>
<th>location</th>
<th>amsl*</th>
<th>collector</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nieuwegeinb</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>52° 00' 50'' N</td>
<td>05° 06' 06'' E</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Oostb</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>52° 32' 97'' N</td>
<td>06° 10' 21'' E</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dieerb</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>52° 85' 95'' N</td>
<td>06° 32' 91'' E</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Groningenb</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>53° 11' 34'' N</td>
<td>06° 37' 04'' E</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Buitenpostb</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>53° 15' 32'' N</td>
<td>06° 07' 41'' E</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oudeschansb</td>
<td>The Netherlands</td>
<td>53° 08' 19'' N</td>
<td>07° 08' 34'' E</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Bonn</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>50° 45' 04'' N</td>
<td>07° 06' 39'' E</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tartu</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>58° 36' 00'' N</td>
<td>26° 69' 25'' E</td>
<td>79</td>
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<td>Coventry</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>52° 24' 03'' N</td>
<td>01° 30' 40'' W</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>na</td>
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<td>Suffolk</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Enebyberg</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>59° 26' 06'' N</td>
<td>18° 01' 48'' E</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Reykjavik</td>
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<td>66° 21' 25'' N</td>
<td>21° 71' 29'' W</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Egilstafram</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>64° 59' 57'' N</td>
<td>14° 17' 22'' W</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Hrisey</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>66° 01' 03'' N</td>
<td>18° 23' 69'' W</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mogilsa</td>
<td>Iceland</td>
<td>66° 21' 25'' N</td>
<td>21° 71' 29'' W</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Above mean sea level (m). * Same locations as in the preliminary studies.31,32
The DPT content of all field plants cultivated in The Netherlands in 2009 was used for the correlation analysis. There was a significant negative correlation between the DPT content in the aerial part of the field plants with the rainfall ($r = -0.624, p < 0.01$), with the duration of sun ($r = -0.402, p < 0.01$), and with the temperature ($r = -0.643, p < 0.01$). There was also a significant negative correlation between the DPT content in the root part of the field plants with the duration of sun ($r = -0.611, p < 0.01$) and with the temperature ($r = -0.599, p < 0.01$). In the climate room plants, there was a significant negative correlation between the DPT content in aerial part with the rainfall ($r = -0.430, p < 0.01$) and with the temperature ($r = -0.190, p < 0.01$). There was also a significant negative correlation between the DPT content in the root part with the duration of the sun ($r = -0.326, p < 0.01$), and with the rainfall ($r = -0.646, p < 0.01$). There was a positive correlation between the DPT contents in the aerial and in the root of the field plants ($r = 0.315, p < 0.01$) and the climate room plants ($r = 0.374, p < 0.01$). There was a significant positive correlation between the total yield of DPT in the aerial part of the field plants with the duration of sun ($r = 0.221, p < 0.01$). There was a significant negative correlation between the total yield of the DPT in the root part of the field plants with the duration of sun ($r = -0.573, p < 0.01$) and temperature ($r = -0.507, p < 0.01$). Thus, a lower temperature and less sun result in a higher DPT production in *A. sylvestris*.

### DPT Content of the Field Plants (Outdoor Plants)

The experiments in the field with *A. sylvestris* plants grown from seeds of the various origins (uncontrolled condition—outdoor plants) and in the climate room (controlled condition—indoor plants) were carried out in parallel. The DPT content variation over the developmental stages was measured and compared both for the aerial (Figure 3A) and the root parts (Figure 3B). *A. sylvestris* is a biannual plant; therefore, we started sampling in the second year when the plants develop biomass and flower. The DPT content in the roots of the field plants was up to 0.15% and in the aerial parts, up to 0.03%. The highest DPT content in aerial part was found in March for all plants and in the root part in April, except *A. sylvestris* from Enebyberg and Eglstafler, which were in March. The lowest was between July and September 2009. The highest yields of DPT per plant in the field plants were 22.23 mg in the aerial part in June 2009 and 68.87 mg in the root part in March 2009 (Figure 3C,D). Data are summarized in Table 3.
DPT Content of the Climate Room Plants (Indoor Plants).

Samples were taken during two years following the developmental stages of the life cycle of *A. sylvestris*. The DPT content and yield were measured and compared with outdoor-grown plants of the same seed origin (Figure 4). The DPT content of the climate room plants was up to 0.144% in the roots and up to 0.051% in the aerial part. The highest yield of DPT per plant in the field plants was 2.81 mg in the aerial part and 12.60 mg in the root part in April 2009 (Table 3).

In the first year, the highest DPT content in the roots was found in *A. sylvestris* from Bonn (0.053%) in July 2008. In the aerial parts the highest content of DPT was found in *A. sylvestris* from Tartu (0.051%) also in July 2008. In the second year, in general the highest DPT contents in both aerial and root parts were found in April 2009 for all plants except *A. sylvestris* from Bonn and Oudechans for aerial parts and *A. sylvestris* from Reykjavik and Oudeschans (Figure 4A,B). At this time the plants started to grow after the cold dormancy period.

Indoor *A. sylvestris* did not flower at the same time as the outdoor plants. All *A. sylvestris* plants from Bonn and Nieuwegein had already started to flower by mid-April 2009, whereas only about 50% of

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**Figure 3.** (A) Deoxypodohyllotoxin content in the aerial part of *A. sylvestris* grown in the field; (B) deoxypodohyllotoxin content in the root part of *A. sylvestris* grown in the field; (C) aerial mass of *A. sylvestris* grown in the field; (D) root mass of *A. sylvestris* grown in the field. All DPT contents and yields significantly differ (p < 0.01) when indoor and outdoor plants are compared.
plants from the other origins had started to flower at this time point. The A. sylvestris plants from Estonia did not flower at all by mid-April 2009. By end of May 2009, all plants had flowered. In The Netherlands, A. sylvestris flowered between April and May.

In the first year, the highest DPT yield in the root part was in August and September 2008 for all plants, but in the aerial parts the highest yield was in July 2008 for all plants. In the second year, the highest DPT yield in the aerial as well as root parts was in July 2009, all plants had started to flower at all by mid-April 2009, except the root part of A. sylvestris from Groningen (Figure 4C,D).

There is a significant difference when the DPT contents of the field and climate room plants are compared (p < 0.01). There is also a significant difference when the total yields of the field and climate room plants are compared (p < 0.01).

## DISCUSSION

A. sylvestris is a biennial plant, meaning that a life cycle takes 2 years. In the first year, the rosettes remain in the vegetative phase and form a basal rosette with a taproot. Vernalization will lead to flowering during the next growing season. After flowering, the seeds are produced and then the life cycle is completed. The biomass of the aerial and root of the field plants reached the maximum in May in the second year for all plants, but the highest DPT content was in March for field plants, in both aerial and root parts. However, only the aerial part of the field plants has the highest yield following the highest biomass in May for all plants except A. sylvestris from Oudeschans. The highest yield of the root part for all field plants was in March when the highest DPT content was reached (Table 3).

DPT as the main lignan in A. sylvestris was used as a marker to study its metabolic variation over the developmental stages. This is the first study reporting results of climate room experiments covering the entire life cycle of 2 years. In general, the DPT content in the roots was higher than in the aerial parts.

**Native versus Cultivated.** The first experiment was dedicated to comparison of the DPT content of plants of the native location with that of the same plants grown on the non-native location (Buitenpost). There were significant differences (p < 0.05) when the DPT contents in the root parts of all plants except A. sylvestris from Enebyberg and Coventry were compared (Figure 2). The DPT content in the aerial part differed moderately over time. Meanwhile, the DPT content in the roots decreased except in A. sylvestris from Coventry, U.K. It seems that the A. sylvestris from Coventry adapted easily to the Dutch soil. This is reflected in a more or less equal DPT content (0.007% in aerial native compared to 0.005% in aerial cultivation; 0.064% in root native compared to 0.062% in root cultivation). The DPT content of the A. sylvestris from Bonn, Germany, was moderately higher (significantly different from the DPT concentration in the root part, p < 0.05) compared to others (0.025% in aerial native compared to 0.017% in aerial cultivation; 0.146% in root native compared to 0.081% in root cultivation). On the basis of these results, A. sylvestris from Coventry and Bonn were chosen as candidates for further cultivation. The DPT content in roots from the cultivated plants from Groningen was 7.5-fold decreased (0.087% in roots native compared to 0.012% in roots cultivation). This high-producing plant at its native location became a low-producing one when cultivated in a foreign environment.

### Table 3. Summary of the Highest and Lowest DPT Content, Biomass, and DPT Yield of *Anthriscus sylvestris* (Figures 3 and 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>field aerial</th>
<th>field root</th>
<th>climate room aerial</th>
<th>climate room root</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>highest DPT content (% w/w, dry wt)</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enebyberg</td>
<td>March 2009</td>
<td>Nieuwegein</td>
<td>Tartu</td>
<td>Bonn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lowest DPT content (% w/w, dry wt)</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nieuwegein</td>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td>Reykjavik</td>
<td>Esse</td>
<td>Reykjavik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest mass (dry wt in g)</td>
<td>173.4</td>
<td>108.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nieuwegein</td>
<td>May 2009</td>
<td>Oudeschans</td>
<td>Buitenpost</td>
<td>Olst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lowest mass (dry wt in g)</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>Aug 2009</td>
<td>Egilsstaftr</td>
<td>Bonn</td>
<td>Tartu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest yield (dry wt in mg) per plant</td>
<td>22.23</td>
<td>65.87</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>12.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oudeschans</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
<td>Bonn</td>
<td>Buitenpost</td>
<td>Bonn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lowest yield (dry wt in mg) per plant</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coventry</td>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td>Reykjavik</td>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>Coventry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>
Interestingly, the DPT content in the root parts of *Anthriscus* from the local area of the botanical garden (Buitenpost) also decreased 5-fold (0.119% in root native compared to 0.024% in root cultivation). In general, the decrease of DPT content in the cultivated root parts varied with a factor between 7.5 and 1 compared to the native plants (0.087% in roots native compared to 0.012% in root cultivation in Groningen *Anthriscus*, 0.064% in roots native compared to 0.062% in root cultivation in Coventry plants). These results clearly show that environmental factors play an important role in the DPT content in *Anthriscus*.

Statistical analysis showed that there is a significant negative correlation among the DPT content, rainfall, temperature, and duration of sun. In both the aerial and root parts, the DPT content is expected to increase with decreasing temperature and duration of sun. The DPT in the aerial part is also influenced by rainfall. The DPT in the aerial part is also expected to increase with decreasing rainfall. There is also a positive significant correlation between the DPT content in the root and aerial parts, which means that the DPT in the aerial part increases with increasing DPT in the root.35

This correlation could explain the significant differences (p < 0.05) found in DPT content of the root part of all plants.
(except *A. sylvestris* from Enebyberg and Coventry) from The Netherlands in 2007 and the Dutch cultivated plants in 2009. These plants originated from Buitenpost, Olst, Groningen, Diever, and Nieuwegein. The DPT content of the cultivated plants became reduced up to 7.5 times in the root parts and up to 3 times in the aerial parts. The DPT content in the root would decrease when the duration of sun and the temperature were increased. In May 2007 the temperature was 1.7 °C higher and there was 38 h less sun as compared to May 2009. This may have caused the DPT content in the root to decrease as shown in Figure 2, whereas in the aerial part, the DPT content would decrease when there were less sun, rainfall, and temperature. In 2007, the weather in The Netherlands was unusual as there was no rain in March 2007, but there was 73 mm more rain in May 2007 compared to May 2009. The more abundant rainfall and higher temperature contributed to the decrease of the DPT in the aerial part; however, the less duration of sun contributed to the increase of the DPT in the aerial part. This might explain why the DPT content was reduced only up to 3 times in the aerial compared to up to 7.5 times in the root part.

**Outdoor versus Indoor.** The second experiment was to grow all plants in the same field, under the same environmental conditions. In parallel, we also grew the plants under controlled conditions in the climate room. The *A. sylvestris* grown in the field (outdoor) received influences from abiotic and biotic stress, such as temperature, light, drought, wind, and insects, and had more space to grow compared to the plants in the climate room. For experiments of controlled cultivation in a climate room we expect that differences found are mainly to be ascribed to genetic factors, as growing conditions are standardized. Furthermore, it is important to identify rate-limiting ecological factors for improved cultivation either outdoors or indoors.

In the climate room experiment, there was a decrease of DPT production during the vegetative period in the first year (August—February) and also after the plants had flowered (second year). This biosynthetic profile was also observed in *Podophyllum hexandrum*. When the plant gets older, the podophyllotoxin content in the rhizome also decreases. The DPT content in *A. sylvestris* increased again in the spring (March—April, second year). Interestingly, the DPT patterns over the entire period in the climate room were in general similar for all plants (Figure 4).

The DPT profiles of both the indoor and outdoor plants were comparable; however, there were differences in the mass of the aerial and root parts, which influenced the yield, and also in the flowering time of the indoor plants. There is a significant difference (*p* < 0.01) either of the DPT contents or the DPT yields between indoor and outdoor plants. The differences found in DPT production between indoor and outdoor plants were comparable to those from a previous study by our group and others. The interindividual variability of the DPT content in the root parts of the outdoor plants was higher than that of the indoor plants (e.g., 0.151—0.007% versus 0.144—0.012%; see Table 3). In contrast, the interindividual variability of the DPT content in the aerial part of the indoor plants was higher than that of the outdoor plants (e.g., 0.051—0.008% versus 0.033—0.001%; see Table 3). Previous research showed that the indoor plants contained higher DPT contents in aerial parts than in the roots. We now confirm these results as several indoor plants from Estonia (0.051% in aerial, 0.045% in root), Buitenpost (0.031% in aerial, 0.024% in root), and Olst (0.028% in aerial, 0.023% in root), all sampled in July 2008, had higher DPT contents in the aerial part compared to the roots.

The differences found in the flowering time of the indoor plants point toward variations even though the plants were grown under identical conditions. These variations might point to differences in genotype at different geographical locations. The similarity in DPT contents observed under controlled conditions suggested that these genetic differences, if any, do not influence the DPT production. However, the significant differences in DPT content and yield between outdoor and indoor plants suggest that there might be environmental factors that play a role in DPT production and yield.

The root mass of the outdoor plants was up to 8 times higher than that of the indoor plants, and the aerial mass was up to 30 times higher than that of the indoor plants. This influenced the DPT yield. The DPT yield of the outdoor plants was up to 8 times higher in the aerial part and up to 5 times higher in the root part compared with the indoor plants. This variation in the root and aerial mass of the indoor plants was also observed in the previous study.

In summary, these results show the DPT content over time for both indoor and outdoor plants. The best time to harvest plants for DPT isolation is when the plants reach the optimal DPT production together with an adequate biomass. For indoor plants this was in April (second year) in both aerial and root parts. For outdoor plants this was in March (second year) for the root part and in June (second year) for the aerial part. *A. sylvestris* from Bonn showed constant production of DPT in the field over the season and may be a suitable candidate for ongoing cultivation and breeding for production purposes and commercial isolation of DPT (Figure 3). Another candidate is *A. sylvestris* from Coventry, which showed a similar DPT content when cultivated elsewhere (Figure 2), but further work to optimize growing conditions must be carried out.

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