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红火蚁病原真菌 AUGM47 早期发育超微结构研究

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摘要: 在前期筛选已获得对红火蚁 *Solenopsis invicta* Buren 高效致病真菌罗伯茨绿僵菌 *Metarhizium robertsii* AUGM47 的基础上, 为进一步明确病原真菌对寄主昆虫的侵染机制。本试验在室内条件下, 以红火蚁工蚁为侵染对象, 利用荧光显微镜和透射电镜观察了罗伯茨绿僵菌 AUGM47 侵染单元分生孢子在体表附着萌发、穿透和体内增殖的早期发育过程。结果表明, 菌株 AUGM47 分生孢子在红火蚁体表可萌发并形成附着胞侵入, 接种后 12 h 观察到萌发, 在 36 h 内普遍出现穿透结构穿透体壁。接种后 48 h 为菌体在血腔内的增殖阶段。菌丝体在穿透表皮和体腔内增殖过程中伴随着机械压力和酶的活动。接种后 96 h, 观察到自噬现象, 菌体通过自噬降解并回收细胞器, 为从体内穿出的晚期发育过程提供物质基础。本研究对罗伯茨绿僵菌 AUGM47 分生孢子在红火蚁体外至体内的发育进程研究证实了菌株的高致病性, 为红火蚁生防真菌菌种改良和后续开发利用奠定理论基础。

关键词: 红火蚁; 病原真菌; 罗伯茨绿僵菌; 早期发育; 分生孢子

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Ultrastructural study of early infection of entomopathogenic fungi *Metarhizium robertsii* against *Solenopsis invicta*

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Abstract: In this study, based on the previous screening of the high pathogenic *Metarhizium robertsii* strain AUGM47 of *Solenopsis invicta*, to better understand the infection mechanism of this entomopathogenic fungi against pest host, the development at an early-stage associate with germination, attachment, penetration and conidial reproduction of *M. robertsii* strain AUGM47 in worker ant of *S. invicta* were observed using fluorescent microscopy and transmission electron microscope methods. Comparative observation with light microscopy and electron microscopy showed: Appressoria formation was the terminal act of germination. Strains AUGM47 began to germinate within 12 h, and penetrations were commonly observed within 36 h. Within 48 h post-inoculation, the hyphal bodies colonized the body cavity. The penetration and propagation of the hyphal bodies was accompanied by a combination of mechanical pressure and enzymatic action during the infection process. After 96 h post-inoculation, autophagy occurs, organelles were degraded and recycled through an autophagic process, to provide

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energy needs of late stage of infection *in vitro*. The structural characteristics of conidial development were explored while the highly pathogenic of *M. robertsii* strain AUGM47 was confirmed, this study will further provide the theoretical basis and reference for strain improvement and field application.

Key words: *Solenopsis invicta*; pathogenic fungi; *Metarhizium robertsii*; early-stage of infection; conidia

红火蚁 *Solenopsis invicta* Buren 是一种来自南美洲的入侵性蚂蚁，极具破坏力，在中国已传播至 12 个省份 448 个县市区（农业农村部办公厅, 2021），根除已经不可能，对红火蚁的生物控制，特别是病原微生物控制，被视为可持续的抑制策略。在昆虫病原微生物种类中（细菌、真菌和病毒），真菌通过主动侵染控制虫体而不依赖寄主的生活习性，其侵染是一个连续性的过程，可划分为接触期、侵入期、潜育期和水平传播期。首先是真菌侵染单元分生孢子与侵染部位接触（Rangel et al., 2008; Chouvenc et al., 2009），当外界条件适宜时孢子萌发形成芽管和菌丝，芽管或菌丝末端膨大形成侵染结构附着胞（Amóra et al., 2010），在机械压力和酶类物质降解作用下侵入寄主昆虫，在寄主体内生长增殖，使寄主发病显示致病症状，菌体穿出表皮并产生新的分生孢子水平扩散（Stone and Bidochka, 2020）。真菌侵染害虫的过程是与寄主相互抗衡的过程，除了主动侵染，还需要克服寄主行为和生理上的防御反应（Ortiz-Urquiza and Keyhani, 2013），只有当菌体成功侵入并在寄主体内大量增殖致其发病，两者才算真正建立寄生关系，因而分生孢子从接触至潜育的早期发育时期，对侵染成败具有决定性作用。

红火蚁的土栖和群居习性有利于病原微生物控制策略，然而作为一种社会性昆虫，它们已经高度进化，具有许多独特的社会行为帮助其生存，包括一系列使种群免受真菌或其他微生物侵害的防御机制，如分泌抗生素、清理巢穴、梳理行为和逃避行为等，虽然这些行为未必针对微生物而进化，但对病原真菌的侵染和传播效率有消极影响。尽管在微生物防治上人们做了不少努力，但目前实际应用微生物成功防治红火蚁还鲜有报道。另一方面，由于自然界中确实存在且常有真菌寄生蚂蚁的现象，一些真菌已被证明可以在蚁巢内自然传播和削弱红火蚁巢，因而寻找有效微生物对红火蚁进行生物控制仍具有研究价值。国内外有关红火蚁病原真菌的工作主要集中在菌株分离鉴定和防效评价（杨佳后等, 2009; 吕利华等, 2011; Kafle et al., 2012; 刘晓燕等, 2014; 王磊等,

2014, 2018; Li et al., 2016; Rojas et al., 2018; 吴志鹏和童应华, 2020; 樊春丽等, 2022）、菌剂研制（王磊等, 2016; Qiu et al., 2019）以及基因工程改造等方面（Fan et al., 2012）。而关于病原真菌对红火蚁识别、附着、穿透以及血腔定殖等侵染过程的机制研究尚无报道。

本课题组通过前期对红火蚁昆虫病原真菌种类及防治潜能的评估，已鉴定出一株对红火蚁具有高致病性的病原真菌罗伯茨绿僵菌菌株 AUGM47，其接种红火蚁工蚁后第 7 天的致死中浓度（LC₅₀）为 4.52×10^6 孢子/mL，表现出极大的生防潜力。最新研究显示，罗伯茨绿僵菌既是植物根际有益真菌，又是昆虫病原真菌，可开发成兼具生物农药和生物肥料的菌剂（Meng et al., 2021）。罗伯茨绿僵菌具有典型的真菌侵染阶段，关于这种病原真菌对红火蚁的侵染模式尚未开展相关研究，其侵染结构形成和侵入方式仍不得而知。鉴于红火蚁具有社会性昆虫复杂的防御系统，对该菌早期发育的研究，有助于深入了解其侵染机制，并以此制定相应防治策略。本文以该菌株为材料，利用荧光和电子显微镜观察其分生孢子侵染红火蚁过程中的微观结构特征，以明确互作体系中菌体侵染与寄主致病性的相关性，为进一步评估其宿主特异性和释放潜力提供理论依据。

1 材料与方法

1.1 供试虫源和菌株培养

红火蚁蚁巢采自广州市白云区钟落潭镇广东省农业科学院白云基地，参照吕利华等（2006）方法开展田间采集、室内蚁群分离及饲养。供试蚂蚁分别置于内壁涂了滑石粉的保鲜盒（长 380 mm、宽 300 mm、高 200 mm）中，盒内放置人工蚁巢，保持在 25℃、相对湿度 70% 条件下，以 25% 蜂蜜水和黄粉虫饲养。

供试罗伯茨绿僵菌 AUGM47 保存于广东省农业科学院植物保护研究所，经致病力测定证实对红火蚁具有较强致病力。将菌株接种于马铃薯葡萄糖琼脂（PDA）培养基（马铃薯 200 g/L、葡萄

糖 20 g/L、琼脂 20 g/L、蒸馏水 1 000 mL)，于温度 $27 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ ，相对湿度 70% ± 5%，光周期 L:D = 14 h:10 h 的恒温培养箱中培养 20 d 后供试。

1.2 接种及取样方法

用灭菌软毛笔将 PDA 平板上的分生孢子粉刷入装有灭菌 0.05% 吐温-80 溶液的烧杯 (50 mL) 中，经涡流振荡，点样血球计数板，配制浓度为 1×10^8 孢子/mL 的孢子悬浮液，作为接种的菌液，以灭菌 0.05% 吐温-80 溶液处理为对照。采用浸虫法处理红火蚁，将工蚁放入孢子悬浮液浸渍 10 s 后挑出，置于滤纸上吸去多余水分，移至含无菌水棉花球和皿底垫有湿润滤纸片的培养皿 (d = 9 cm) 中饲养，皿内放入新鲜黄粉虫供其取食。每个处理 20 头幼虫，重复 3 次，处理后的幼虫置于人工气候箱中饲养 (温度 $26 \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$ ，相对湿度 80% ± 5%，光周期 L:D = 14 h:10 h)，每天观察工蚁存活情况及感染病虫的外部特征，将死亡工蚁保湿培养，分别于接种后第 12、24、36、48、72 和 96 h 依次取样，虫体长出菌丝或分生孢子后镜检是否为罗伯茨绿僵菌感染致死。

1.3 荧光显微观察样品制备与观察

参照王登杰等 (2015) 方法制备 FDA 荧光染料，将 1.2 中获得的感菌工蚁样品置于载玻片上，滴荧光染料工作液，盖上盖玻片，在激发光 450 ~ 490 nm、蓝色滤光片的荧光显微镜 (Zeiss, AxioScope A1) 400 倍物镜下观察拍照。

1.4 透射电镜样品制备及观察

将 1.2 中样品置于 2.5% 戊二醛进行前固定，固定好的工蚁以 0.1 M 磷酸缓冲液漂洗 3 次；1% 铁酸后固定，0.1 M 磷酸缓冲液漂洗 3 次；再以 30%、50%、70%、90%、95% 和 100% 的乙醇梯度脱水，以环氧丙烷过渡，Spurr 环氧树脂浸透、包埋、聚合。用超薄切片机 (Leica, EM UC7) 对虫体进行切片 (0.08 μm)，醋酸铀、柠檬酸铅双染色，在透射电镜 (Hitachi, HT7700) 下观察拍照。

2 结果与分析

2.1 红火蚁工蚁被罗伯茨绿僵菌 AUGM47 侵染后的荧光显微观察

红火蚁体表接种罗伯茨绿僵菌 AUGM47 后，在体表观察到分生孢子附着和萌发 (图 1-A)。接种 24 h 后可见菌丝发育，经几次弯折沿虫体壁方

向定向生长，超过孢子纵轴长度并出现分枝 (图 1-B)。接种 36 h 之后，菌丝开始增多，在虫体各部位包括触角也观察到菌丝缠绕现象 (图 1-C)。随着菌丝进一步生长，至接种后 48 h，菌丝形成次级分枝进行穿透，菌丝体几乎包围整个虫体 (图 1-D)，72 h 后，体表可见密集的网状菌丝，开始出现芽生孢子 (图 1-E)。此时大部分虫体已被真菌侵染致死，进一步保湿培养可见菌丝和大量分生孢子聚集成簇，虫体完全被菌丝体和分生孢子层覆盖 (图 1-F)。

2.2 罗伯茨绿僵菌 AUGM47 侵染红火蚁过程的菌体发育超微观察

透射电镜观察结果显示，罗伯茨绿僵菌分生孢子多为一端萌发。接种后 24 h，可观察到萌发芽管一端膨大形成附着胞，成功穿透宿主体壁 (图 2-A)。菌丝侵入皮细胞层并出现电子密度很低的光晕，光晕区组织结构消失，说明穿透过程中伴随着组织溶解 (图 2-B)。穿透菌体开始发育，出现数个无膜团状物，为营养物质多聚体。至接种后 32 h，穿透菌丝已发育至中期生长阶段，菌体沿表皮片层结构延伸，并在菌体末端侧向出芽，向皮细胞层进一步穿透 (图 2-D)，穿透过程伴随着菌体产生的机械压力的作用，使表皮结构发生变形。经一定时间后，菌体发育成熟，可观察到真核生物典型的细胞壁、细胞核、线粒体、高尔基体、液泡等细胞器 (图 2-E)。接种后 48 h，为菌体在血腔内的增殖阶段。细胞壁外侧可见较多黑色素 (图 2-F)，虫体器官组织受到破坏，侵入血腔的菌丝体以无隔、1 隔或 2 隔增殖，增殖中的菌丝体代谢活动旺盛，出现液泡 (图 2-G)，细胞内容物丰富 (图 2-G 和图 2-H)。

随着侵染进程，接种后 72 h，虫体基本丧失防御能力，菌丝体得以在血腔内大量增殖，虫体内充满菌丝体。菌体吸取寄主营养，使虫体器官和组织趋于解体。细胞器受到严重破坏，细胞变形并出现空泡 (图 2-I 和图 2-J)。接种后 96 h，分生孢子出现自噬特征，质膜内陷，细胞质中线粒体、高尔基体、核糖体等细胞器被裂解，菌体依靠细胞自噬，降解并回收分生孢子内的营养物质、细胞器等 (图 2-K, 图 2-L, 图 2-M 和图 2-N)，从而为孢子从体内穿出，在虫体外的晚期发育提供物质保证。

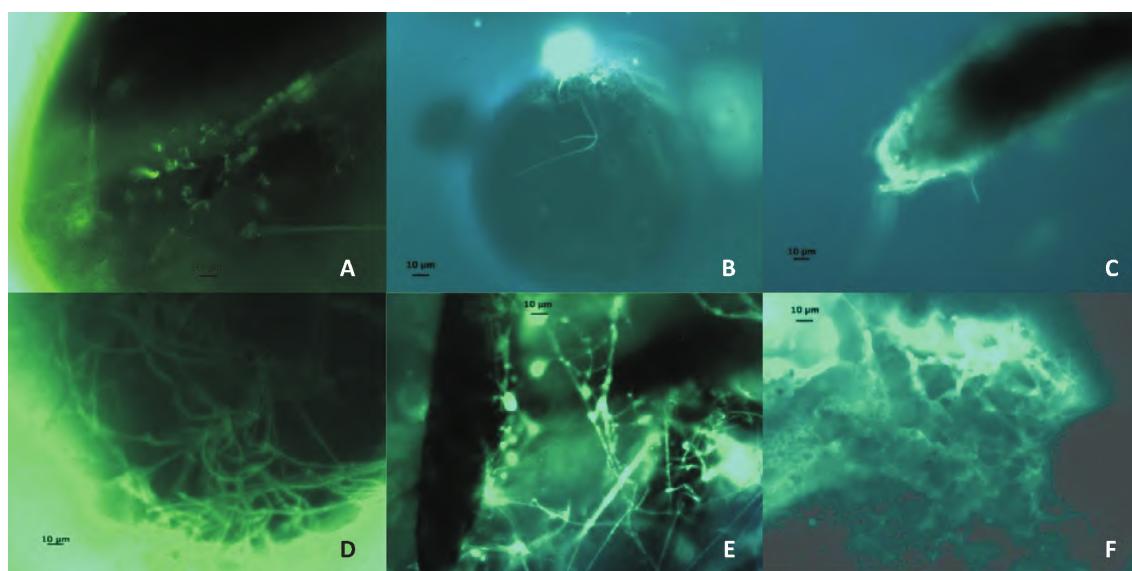


图1 罗伯茨绿僵菌在红火蚁工蚁体表的侵染过程观察

Fig. 1 Observation of *Metarhizium robertsii* infecting worker ants of *Solenopsis invicta*

注: A, 分生孢子在体表萌发产生芽管 (12 h); B, 菌丝生长 (24 h); C, 菌丝在触角周围缠绕 (36 h), D, 菌丝在体表形成致密的菌丝团 (48 h); E, 菌体从体内穿出, 菌丝发育、分枝并形成密集的网状结构 (72 h); F, 次级孢子大量增殖 (96 h)。Note: A, Conidia germinated to form a germ tube at 12 h after inoculation; B, Hyphae developed at 24 h after inoculation; C, Hyphae around the antenna at 36 h after inoculation; D, Development of hypha and formed densed mycelial mass on the cuticle at 48 h after inoculation; E, Hyphae penetrated the integument, Hyphae developed, branched, and formed a dense mycelial mass on the cuticle at 72 h after inoculation; F, Secondary conidiophore was developing at 96 h after inoculation.

3 结论与讨论

红火蚁对农业生产和自然生态造成影响的程度日益增加。目前红火蚁主要依靠化学防治, 有效的微生物控制可以作为防治手段上的有益补充。虽然微生物防治具有良好的应用前景, 但红火蚁的行为适应性给包括病原真菌在内的微生物控制蚁害提出了挑战。

由于真菌与寄主的主战场在体表, 而昆虫表皮是真菌侵染的主要屏障 (Keyhani, 2018), 直接且快速的穿透表皮, 缩短致病寄主时间对真菌致病性至关重要 (Dar et al., 2017)。目前关于昆虫病原真菌的侵染机制有两种解释 (Aw and Hu, 2017), 一种是酶类物质对表皮的降解作用, 如次级代谢物、胞外蛋白酶、几丁质酶和酯酶等 (Zhang et al., 2008; Safavi et al., 2010; Staats et al., 2013; Khan et al., 2016)。昆虫病原真菌能感知虫源性抗真菌化合物存在, 并通过合成胰凝乳蛋白酶和金属蛋白酶降解宿主防御分子

(Mukherjee and Vilcinskas, 2018)。另一种是穿透表皮的机械压力, 如孢子萌发时芽管定向生长产生的压力 (Fang et al., 2009); 大部分昆虫病原真菌通过产生侵染结构附着胞发挥作用, 附着胞对于建立病原菌与寄主之间的关系极其重要。由于附着胞是实行穿透寄主体壁的特异性结构, 因而其形成和功能分化被认为是加速真菌侵染进程、提高侵染效率的一种可行手段 (Talbot, 2019)。本研究观察到穿透过程中伴随着组织溶解, 说明有酶类物质对表皮的降解作用。观察到表皮发生变形, 说明穿透伴随着机械压力。感菌虫体血腔内产生空泡、细胞变形等变化, 可能与菌体分泌毒素有关 (Mizerska-Dudka and Andrejko, 2014)。有研究表明, 单向萌发的分生孢子能产生强壮的芽管且大多发育为附着胞结构, 而双向萌发的分生孢子则更倾向于生长为无穿透行为的菌丝 (Talaei-Hassanloui et al., 2007)。罗伯茨绿僵菌 AUGM47 分生孢子多以单向萌发并产生单附着胞, 具有比多向萌发的菌株具有更强的穿透能力, 这也许是该菌的一种高效侵染策略。此外, 本研究还观察

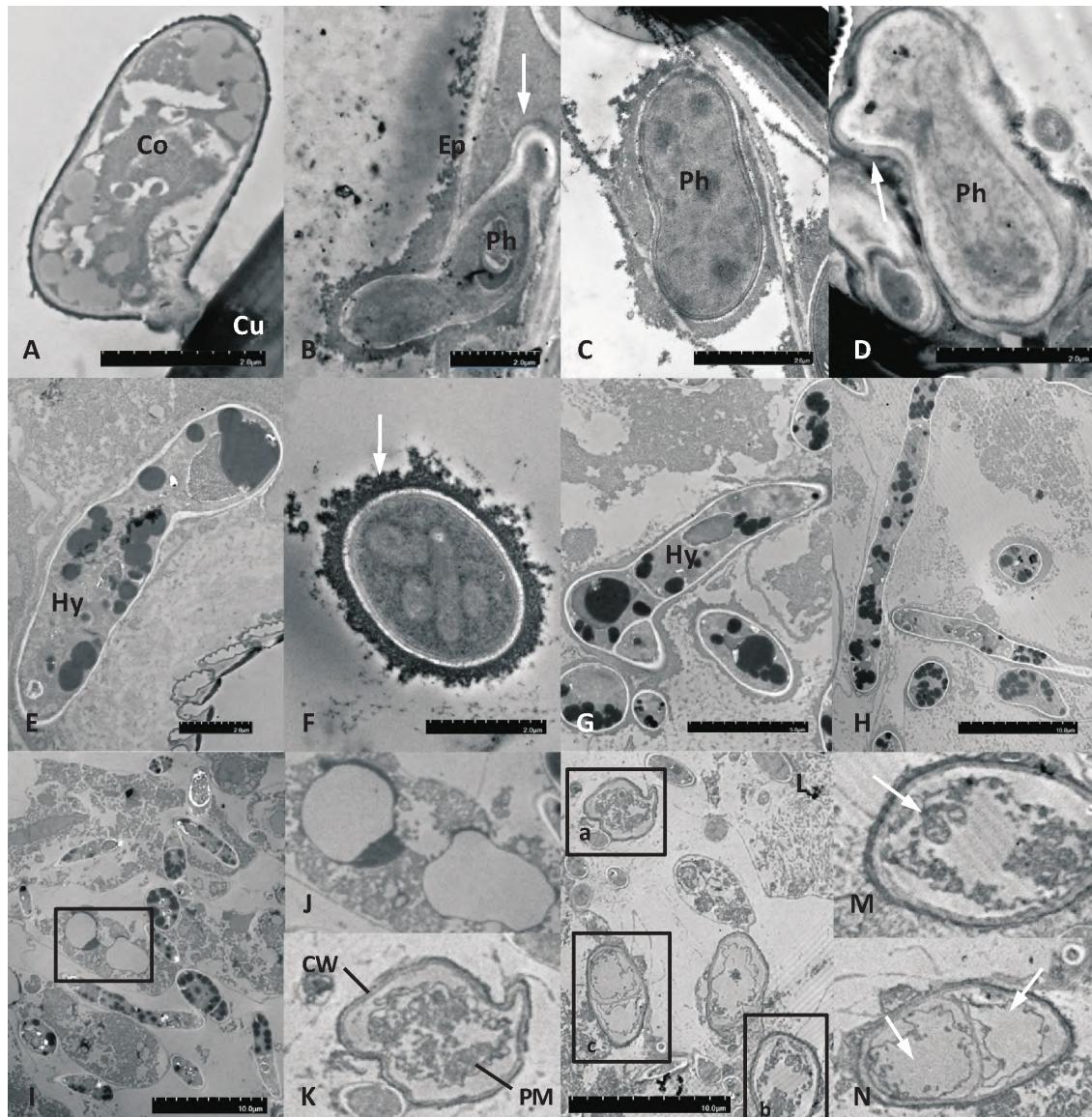


图 2 红火蚁体内不同发育时期分生孢子的超微结构观察

Fig. 2 Ultrastructure of the conidia of the *Metarhizium robertsii* at different developmental stages in *Solenopsis invicta*

注: A, 接种后 12 h, 分生孢子 (Co) 附着一端出现芽状突起分化形成附着胞, 穿透体壁 (标尺 = 2 μm) ; B, 接种后 24 h, 菌体侵入皮细胞层, 穿透菌丝周围出现光晕 (箭头) (标尺 = 2 μm) ; C, 发育中的穿透菌丝 (标尺 = 2 μm) ; D, 接种后 36 h, 穿透菌丝侧向出芽生长 (箭头) (标尺 = 2 μm) ; E, 接种后 48 h, 菌丝生长, 内含物丰富 (标尺 = 2 μm) ; F, 菌体周围出现黑色素 (箭头) (标尺 = 2 μm) ; G, 菌体以分隔方式增殖 (标尺 = 5 μm) ; H, 菌丝体内代谢活动旺盛 (标尺 = 10 μm) ; I, 接种后 72 h, 菌丝穿透破坏细胞器, 细胞形成空泡 (标尺 = 10 μm) ; J, 图 I 方框内空泡的放大图; K, 图 La 的的放大图, 细胞壁皱缩变形 (标尺 = 10 μm) 。CW, 细胞壁; PM, 质膜; L, 接种后 96 h, 菌体发生细胞凋亡, 显现自噬性死亡特征 (标尺 = 10 μm) ; M, 图 Lb 的的放大图, 质膜内陷, 细胞质进一步降解 (箭头); N, 图 Lc 的放大图, 细胞质内含物基本消失, 仅保留质膜和细胞壁。Note: A, Comidia (Co) attached to the cuticle of host, appressorium formed and penetrated through the integument (arrow) at 12 h after inoculation; B, Hyphapenetrated into epidermis at 24 h after inoculation, a low electron density are appeared (at arrow) at the top of the penetrant hypha (Ph); C, Penetrated hyphain a period of growth; D, Hypha sprouted laterally (arrow) at 36 h after inoculation; E, Hypha developed and associated with inclusion-rich growth at 48 h after inoculation; F, Flocculent solutes appeared around the penetrant hypha (arrow); G, Hypha proliferated from the plugged septa; H, Metabolism in hypha was vigorously; I, Organelles seriously damage destroyed by hyphae penetration, cells became vacuoles at 72 h after inoculation; J, Detailed of vacuoles were shown in box; K, Detailed of La, the cell wall shrinks and deform. CW, cell wall; PM, plasmalemma; L, Cell apoptosis occurred, autophagic cell death has been found in hyphae at 96 h after inoculation; M, Detailed of Lb, the plasmalemma shrinks, degradation of cytoplasm was marked with an arrow; N, Detailed of Lc, Cytoplasm inclusions had essentially disappeared, only the boundary of the plasma membrane and cell wall was visible.

到菌体的自噬现象, 自噬是真核生物中进化保守的对细胞内物质进行周转的重要过程, 也是一种防御和应激调控机制 (Mizushima, 2007; Kourtis and Tavernarakis, 2009)。细胞通过利用溶酶体降解途径进行自我吞食, 在营养不足等压力情况下维持生存的主要代谢。本研究中菌体在血腔内的自噬现象与真核生物自噬性死亡的超微结构变化基本吻合 (Kourtis and Tavernarakis, 2009; Galluzzi et al., 2017)。孢子发育与寄主争夺营养, 虫体被消耗而养分逐渐减少, 高水平的自噬可能与其回收氨基酸, 为细胞再循环和再利用提供必须原料, 从而为孢子从体内穿出, 在虫体外的晚期发育提供物质保证。

昆虫病原真菌发挥作用的另一个难点还在于侵染过程易受环境条件干扰, 包括自然环境温湿度、紫外线等。真菌需要数天时间穿透寄主的体壁, 在到达血腔之前, 还需要一段时间进行自我繁殖, 以达到克服寄主免疫反应的数量。由于真菌在寄主体内的发育几乎不受环境因素影响, 仅依赖菌体的固有属性, 因而可从加速表皮穿透进程的角度考虑, 在研制菌剂时通过如乳油、颗粒和可湿粉剂等剂型保持或增加分生孢子的活性 (Vega-Aquino et al., 2010; Hatting, 2012; Sharmila et al., 2015), 或通过遗传操作手段如过表达过氧化氢酶缩短萌发时间, 提高致病速度 (Hernandez et al., 2010)。此外, 一些化学农药如噻虫嗪与病原真菌的联合使用, 有助于增加真菌杀虫效率 (Li et al., 2018)。罗伯茨绿僵菌 AUGM47 早期发育超微结构观察证实了菌株的高致病性, 在红火蚁生物防治中具有较好的应用前景, 下一步工作应针对红火蚁的习性对该菌致病力及剂型进一步研究, 促进真菌杀虫剂今后在田间的使用。

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