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Evaluation of epoxiconazole bioavailability in soil to the earthworm *Aporrectodea icterica*



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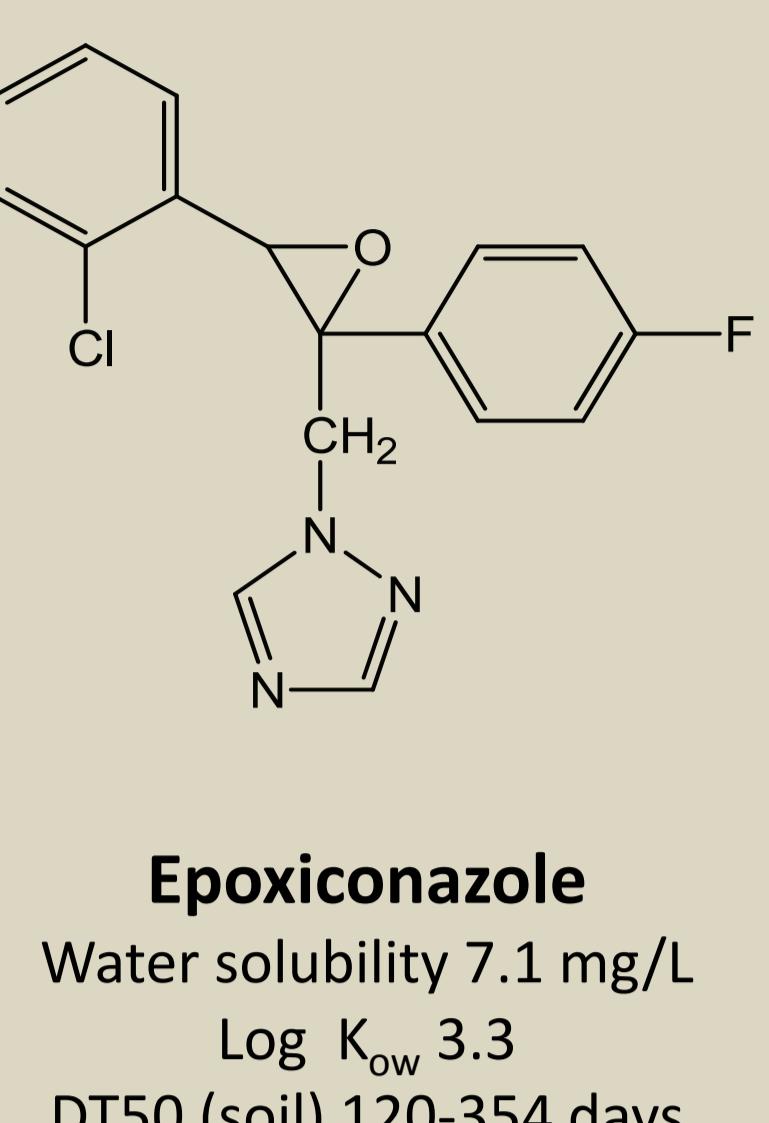
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SCIENCE & IMPACT

Context

- In soils, sorption processes limit the bioavailability of organic contaminants to organisms. This bioavailability restriction depends on the target organism, soil properties and several processes varying with time [1].
- Little attention has been paid to this bioavailability to earthworms even if they are key-organisms for the health of terrestrial ecosystem, as they influence soil structure and chemistry.
- Earthworms can be threatened by contaminants such as the persistent fungicide epoxiconazole (EPX), which has a chronic toxicity towards the resistant earthworm *Eisenia fetida* at a concentration close to the recommended dose. It could thus affect sensitive earthworm species found in cultivated fields, such as *Aporrectodea icterica* [2].



Objective and approach

→ Propose and apply a mild extraction method to estimate the environmental (bio)availability of epoxiconazole (EPX) for earthworms *A. icterica*.

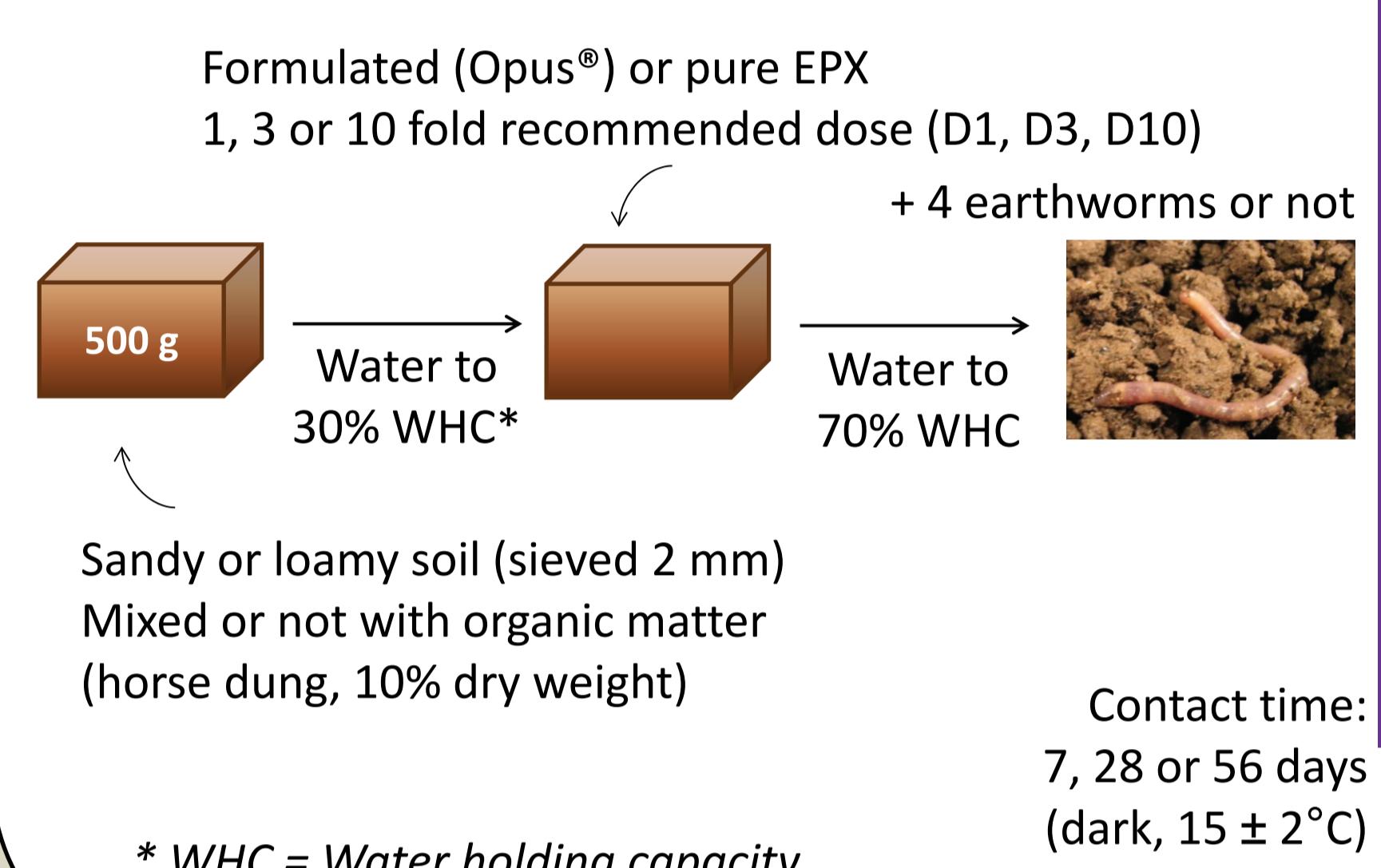
Step 1. Test of the **method sensitivity** to soil sorption capacities: the mild extraction yield should vary with organic matter content, soil texture and aging.

Step 2. Exploration of the relationship between EPX concentration in exposed *A. icterica* and available in soil: the relation should be linear, with a slope close to 1.

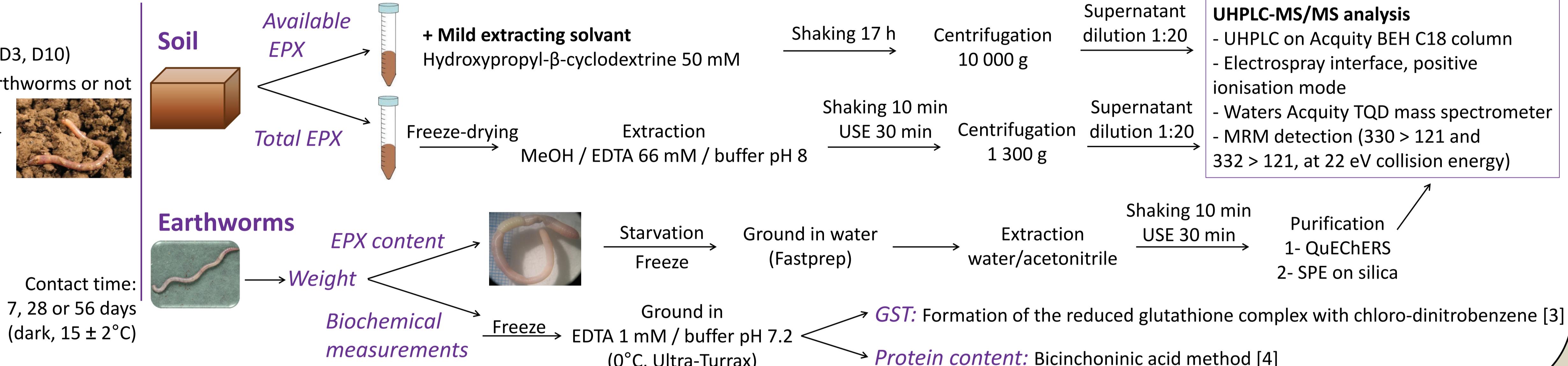
Step 3. Determination of EPX effects on *A. icterica*: sublethal effects should be observed.

Experimental

Preparation of incubations

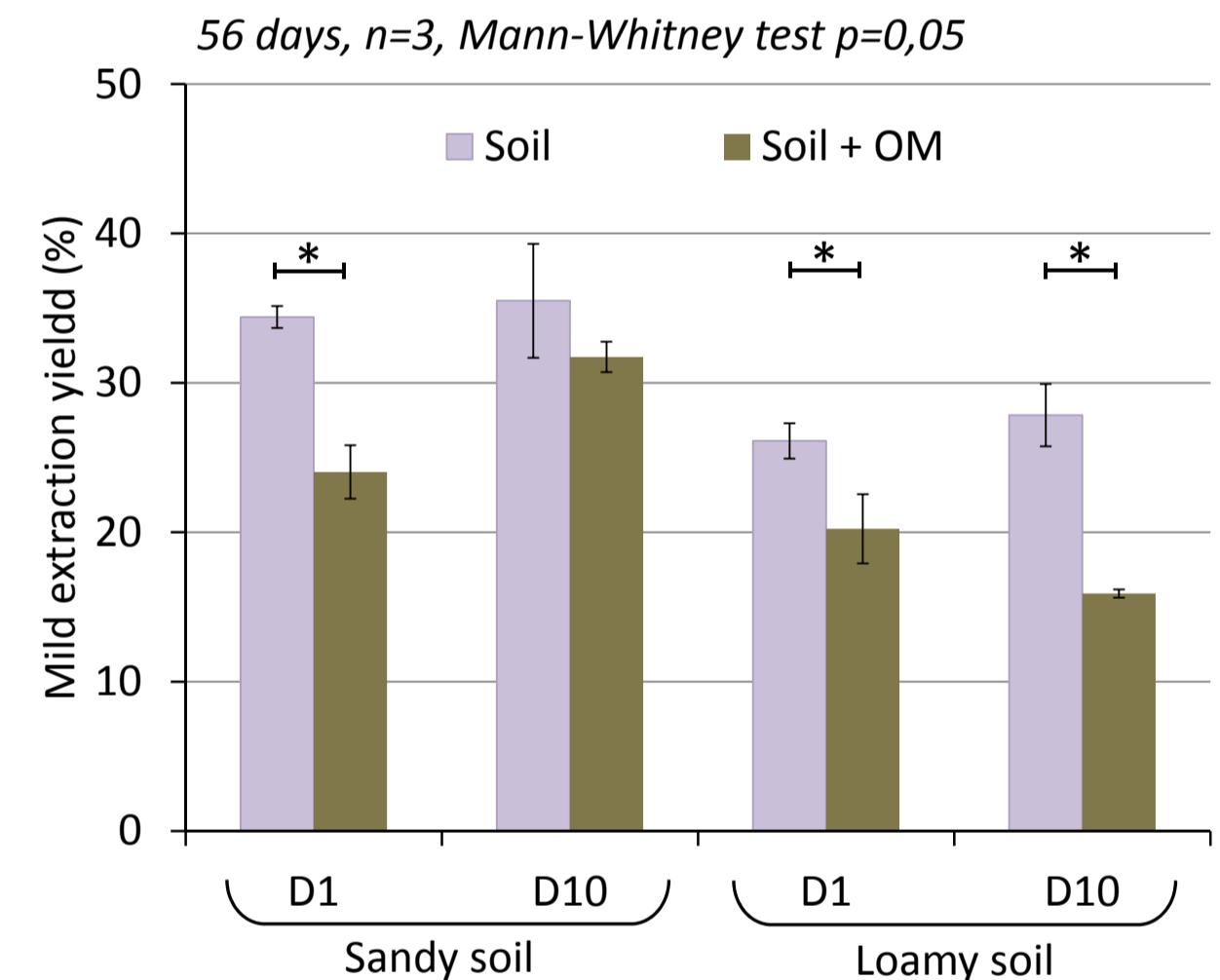


Extraction and analysis

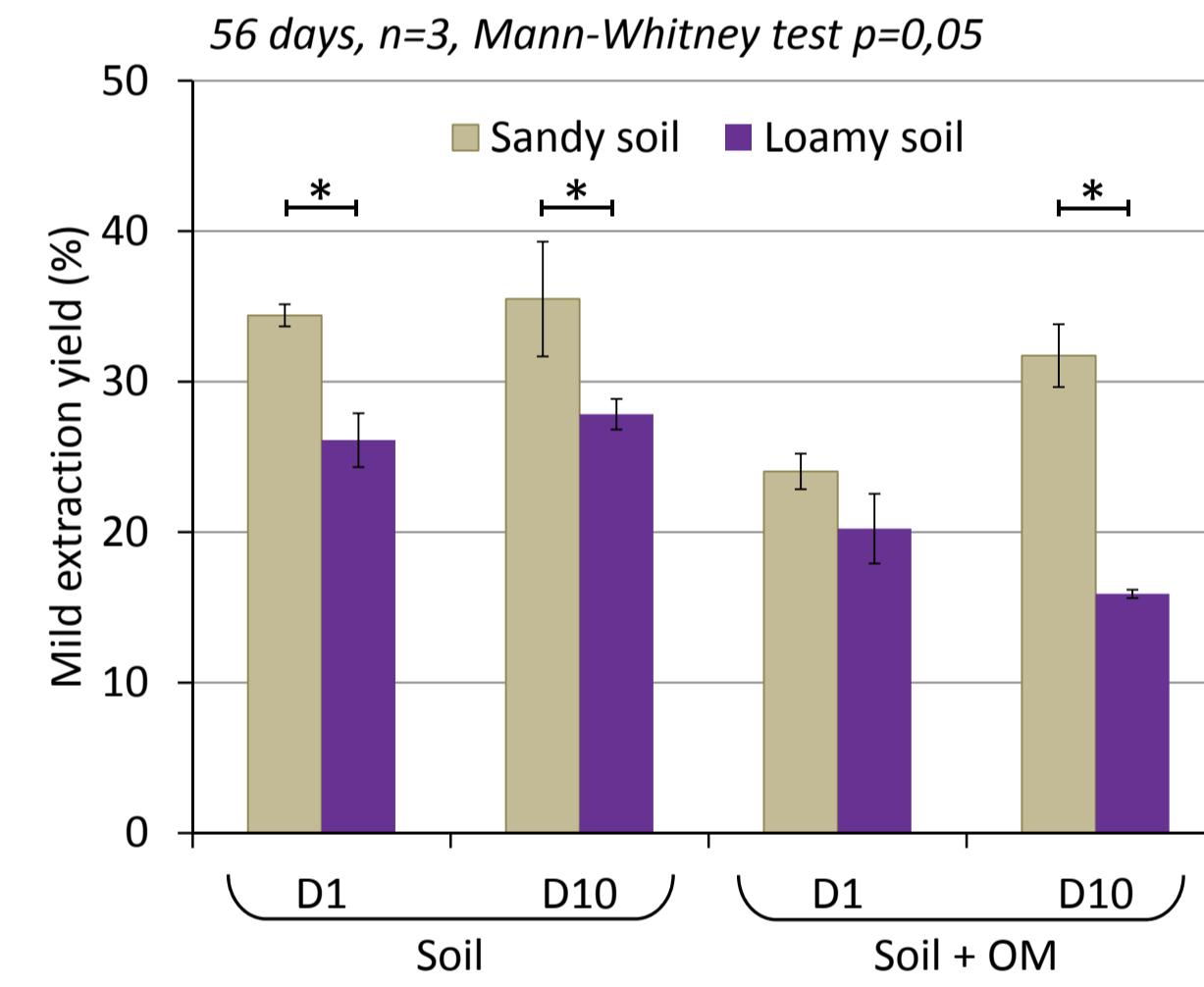


Results & discussion

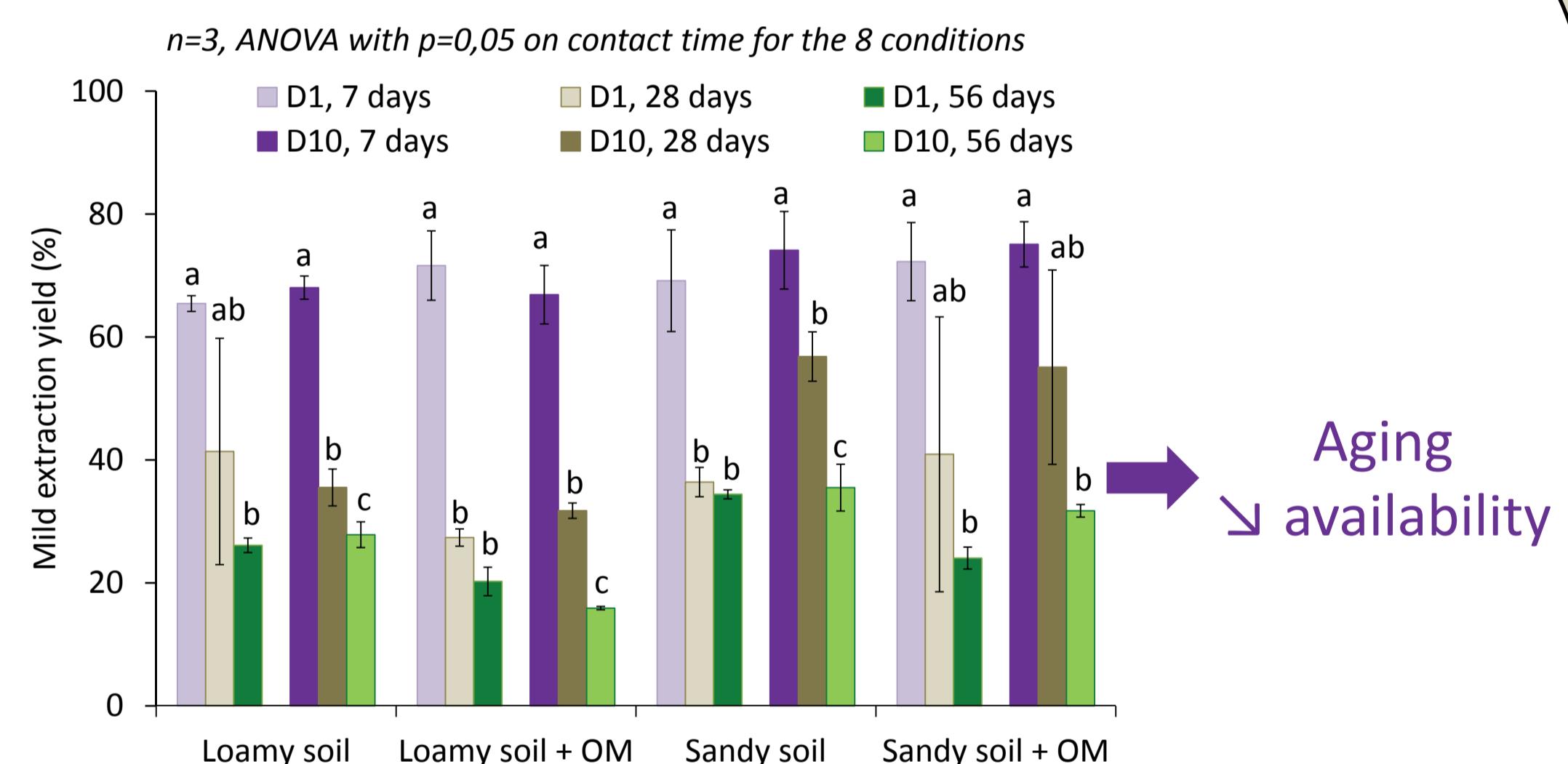
1 – Soil sorption capacities and aging effects on the epoxiconazole availability



Organic matter ↓ availability

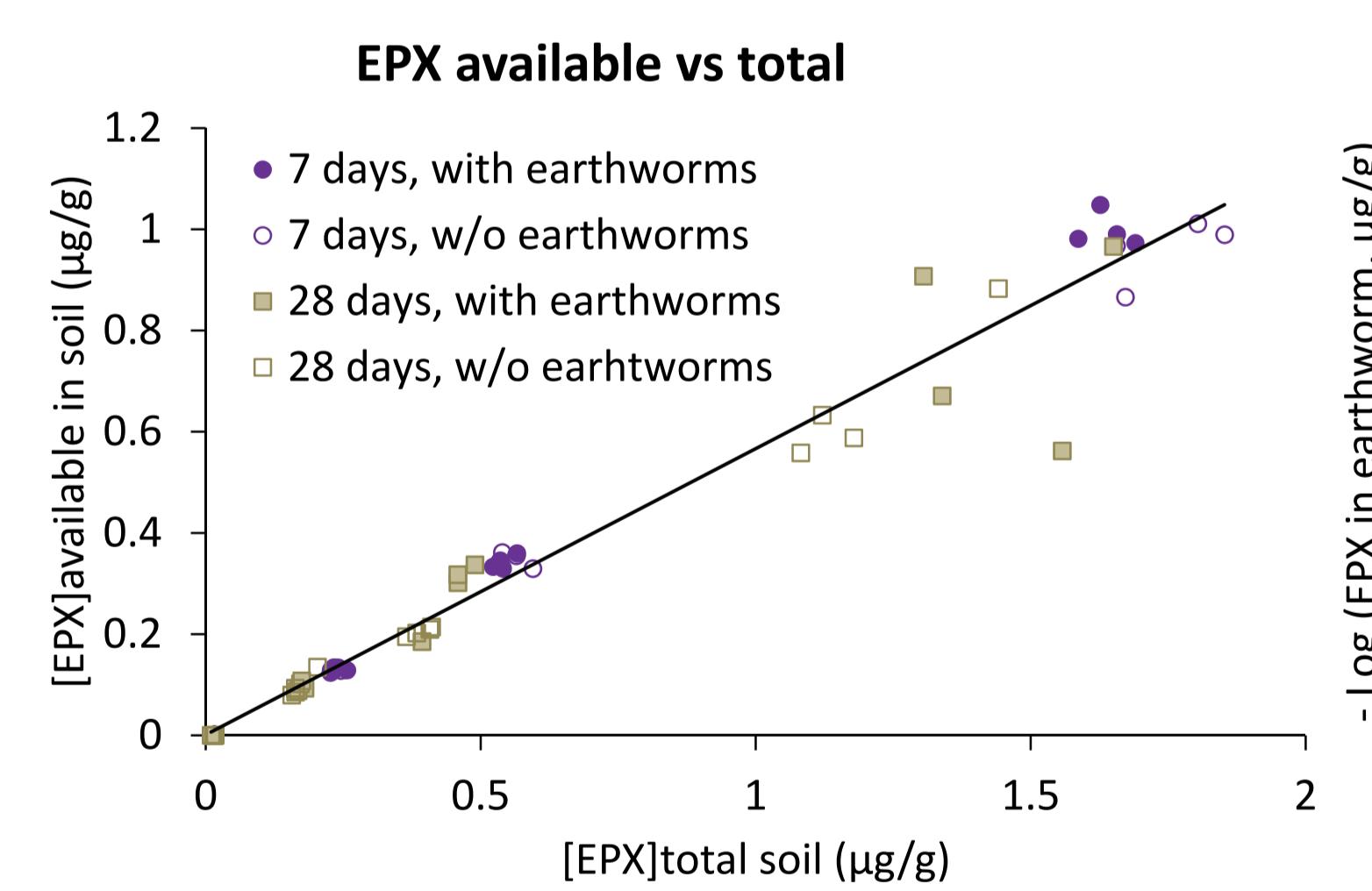


Loamy texture ↓ availability

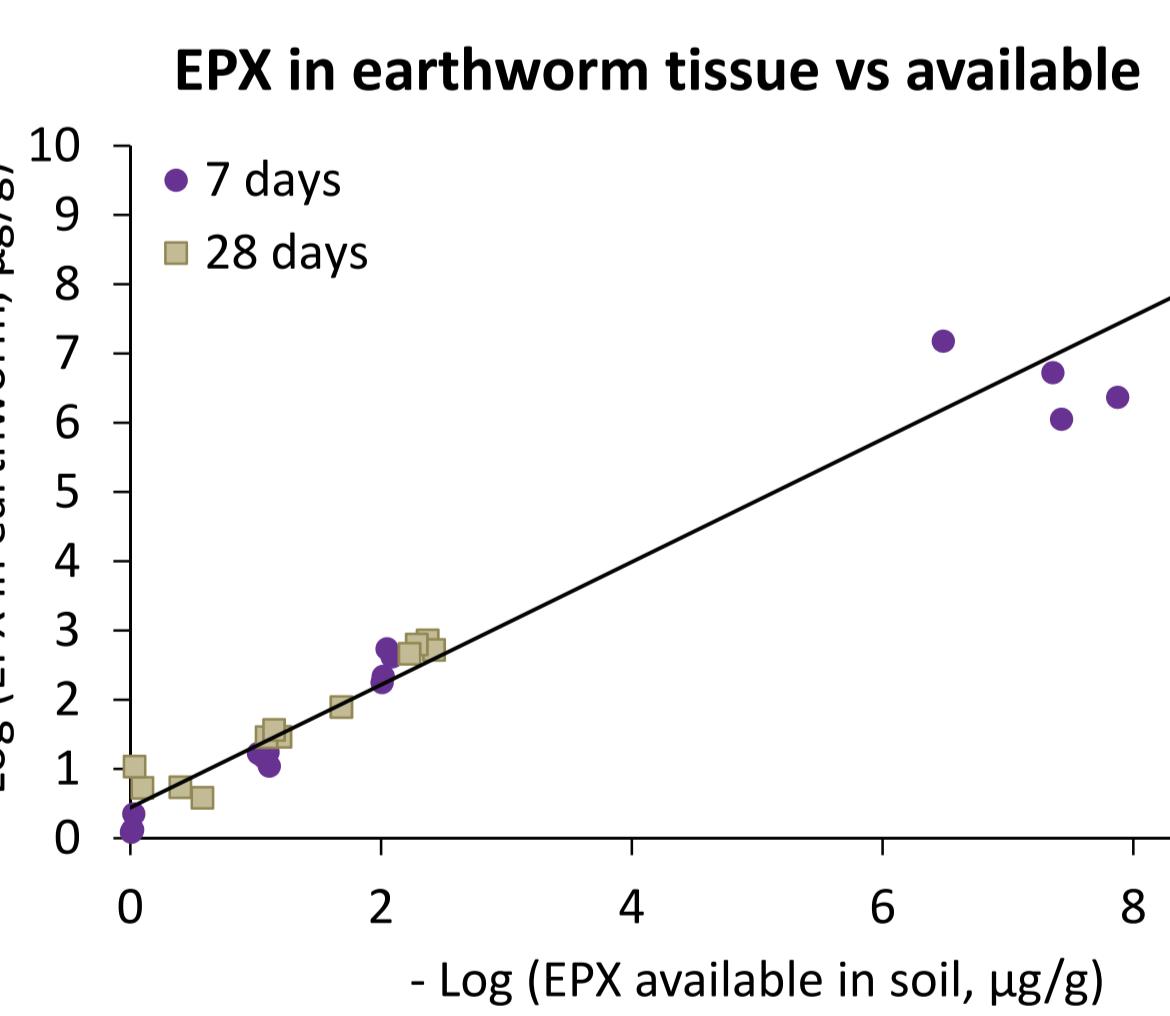


Aging ↓ availability

2 – Relationship between concentrations in soil and in earthworms



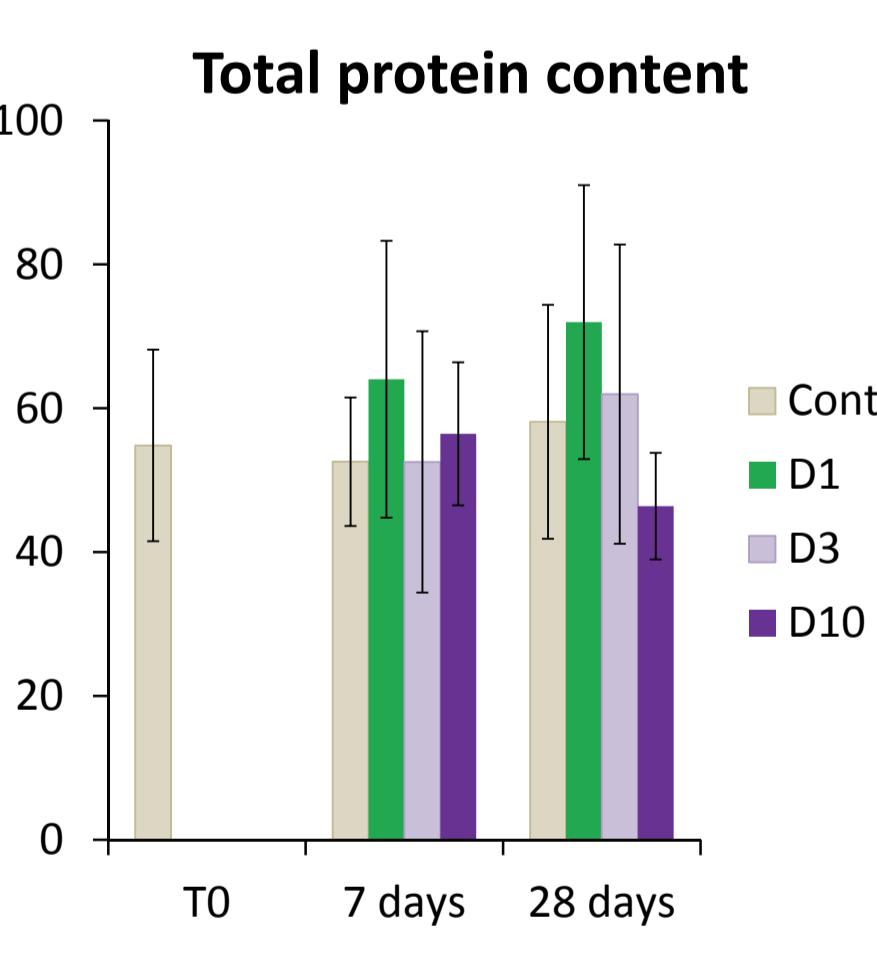
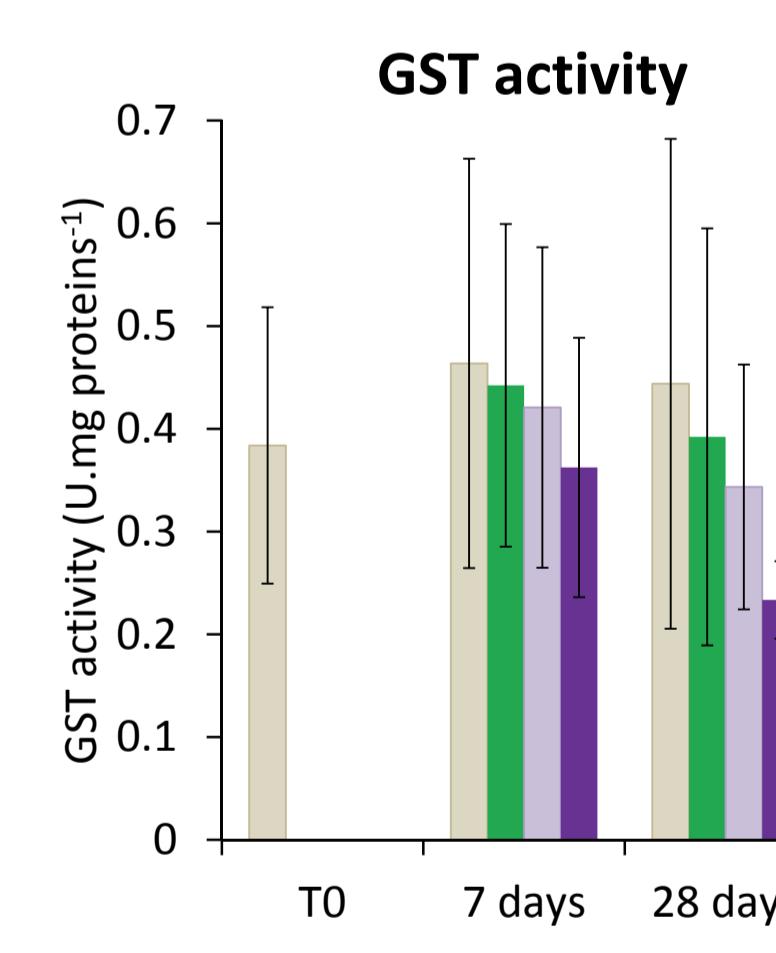
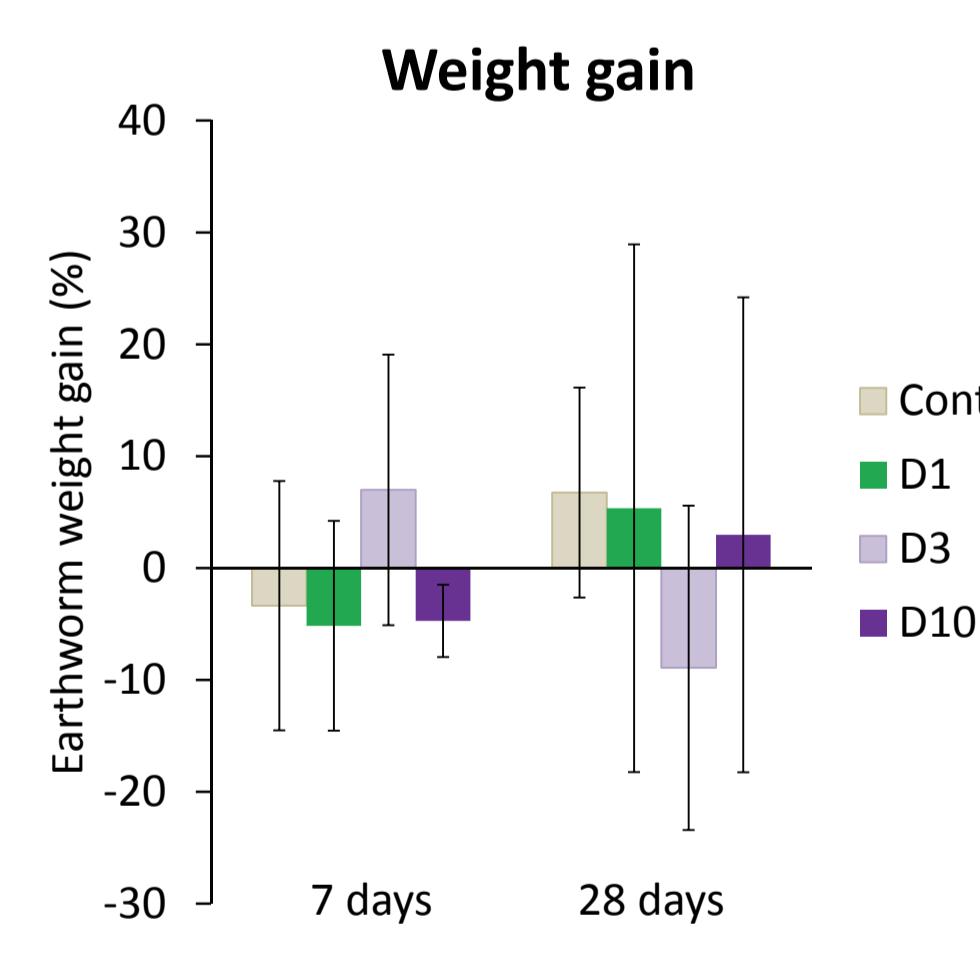
The mild extraction method allowed determining an EPX available concentration proportional to the total one, in all tested conditions.



Linear relation (R^2 0.98)
Slope close to 1 (0.96)

EPX bioavailability for earthworm is efficiently determined by the mild extraction method.

3 – Sublethal effects of epoxiconazole on earthworms



In this study EPX did not cause significant effects on earthworms, in contradiction with previous experiments [5, Poster MO258]. EPX toxicological bioavailability for earthworms could not be correlated to chemical determinations of environmental availability or environmental bioavailability.

Conclusions

- The mild extraction method based on hydroxypropyl-β-cyclodextrine, chosen to evaluate epoxiconazole availability in soil, fulfilled the criteria of the ISO 17402 norm [6].
- Extraction yields were demonstrated to be sensitive to soil sorption capacities and to aging.
- The mild extraction method mimicked efficiently the earthworm's uptake.
- In these experiments, the earthworms *A. icterica* were not sensitive to the presence of epoxiconazole.

References

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- ISO 17402 (2008) Soil Quality

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