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1 **Predictions of fruit shelf life and quality after ripening: Are quality traits measured at harvest**
2 **reliable indicators?**

3

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12

13

14 **Abstract**

15 Nondestructive methods such as near infrared spectroscopy (NIRS) are increasingly used in sorting
16 lines to assess quality traits of unripe fruit, i.e. dry matter (DM) and total soluble solid (TSS) contents,
17 in order to create homogenous batches of fruit. The use of this approach is based on the assumption
18 that fruit quality traits at harvest are reliable indicators of their post-harvest behavior and their
19 quality after ripening. The present study tested this assumption by analyzing the relationships
20 between quality traits at harvest and after ripening. In parallel, models were developed to determine
21 the capacity of NIRS measurements on unripe fruit at harvest to predict their shelf life and quality
22 after ripening.

23 The quality traits DM, TSS content, pulp color (PC) and titratable acidity (TA) of 92 mangoes from
24 different harvests, production years, and orchards were compared at harvest and after ripening.
25 Previously developed NIRS models were used to nondestructively assess the quality traits of the
26 mangoes at harvest. New partial least squares (PLS) regressions using different variable selection
27 procedures and preprocessing techniques were used to predict fruit shelf life and fruit quality after
28 ripening based on NIRS measurements at harvest.

29 Weak relationships ($r^2 < 0.41$) were found between fruit quality traits measured at harvest and after
30 ripening, except for DM content ($r^2 = 0.61$). The PC of mango measured at harvest was found to be
31 the best indicator of fruit shelf life. Errors of PLS regressions to predict the TSS content (RMSEV =
32 1.1%), titratable acidity (RMSEV = 0.52%), and the Hue angle of the flesh (RMSEV = 1.86 °) were in the
33 same range as those of linear regressions based on quality traits assessed at harvest except for PC.
34 This work provides evidence that fruit maturity and quality should be assessed using different
35 indicators.

36

37 **Keywords:** *Mangifera indica*; Near-infrared spectroscopy; Non-destructive prediction; Eating quality;

38 PLSR

39 Introduction

40 The heterogeneity of quality and maturity of fruit at harvest is a widespread problem in numerous
41 species that needs to be addressed all along the supply chain to reduce postharvest losses and to
42 insure constant quality for consumers. After harvest, fruit are generally sorted and graded to create
43 homogenous batches based on the assumption that their post-harvest behavior and quality will be
44 similar after ripening. To improve quality assessments based on visual rating, i.e. absence of defects,
45 size, color and shape, several nondestructive methods have been developed to assess other fruit
46 quality descriptors at the time of measurement such as total soluble solid (TSS) content, titratable
47 acidity (TA), and the dry matter (DM) content. These methods include the electronic nose (Lebrun *et al.*,
48 2008), near infrared spectroscopy (NIRS) (Jha *et al.*, 2012a; Nordey *et al.*, 2017; Saranwong *et al.*,
49 2004; Subedi *et al.*, 2007), visual spectroscopy (Jha *et al.*, 2006), and specific gravity (Kapse and
50 Katrodia, 1996). Sorting fruit using quality traits measured at harvest assumes that the fruit
51 composition at this stage is a reliable descriptor of its quality after ripening, and of its shelf life, i.e.
52 the length of the period between harvest and the ripe fruit stage. This assumption relies on the fact
53 that the quality of ripe fruit is determined at harvest since the accumulation of dry matter and water
54 in fruit stops once the fruit is picked. Fruit dry matter contains the preliminary metabolites and
55 precursors of secondary metabolites that undergo considerable changes during fruit ripening and
56 hence determine the quality of ripe fruit. In a few days, ripening processes increase fruit quality to its
57 optimum, which then decline until the fruit become inedible due to over ripening. Metabolic
58 pathways of preliminary and secondary metabolites are controlled by a balance of different
59 phytohormones, including ethylene, abscisic acid and gibberellins. The metabolism of these
60 phytohormones and their involvement in ripening processes are used to differentiate climacteric
61 fruit from non-climacteric fruit. Managing fruit shelf life is essential to insure optimum fruit quality
62 for consumers, especially in the case of highly perishable climacteric fruit such as mango, banana and
63 avocado. The shelf life and the quality of fruit after ripening are known to be closely related to their
64 stage of maturity at harvest since the shelf life of fruit harvested early is longer but their quality is

65 reduced, i.e. they are smaller, have a lower sugar content, paler pulp, than fruit harvested later (Joas
66 *et al.*, 2012; Nordey *et al.*, 2016).

67 Although the quality of fruit varies considerably with their stage of maturity, this does not mean that
68 fruit composition is a reliable indicator of fruit maturity since the concentration of primary and
69 secondary metabolites is known to vary considerably depending on the growing conditions, e.g.
70 irrigation, the fruit to leaf ratio, and the position of the fruit in the canopy (Léchaudel and Joas,
71 2007). For this reason, several studies on mango (Lechaudel *et al.*, 2010), papaya (Urbano Bron *et al.*,
72 2004), and apple (Song *et al.*, 1997) preferred to use the optical properties of chlorophyll in the fruit
73 peel assessed with a fluorometer as an indicator of fruit maturity rather than fruit quality descriptors.
74 Although several studies on mango (Saranwong *et al.*, 2004; Subedi *et al.*, 2007), apple (Palmer *et al.*,
75 2010), and kiwifruit (Jordan *et al.*, 2000; McGlone *et al.*, 2002b) focused on the relationship between
76 DM content and TSS content at harvest and after ripening, few investigated relationships with other
77 quality traits such as TA and pulp color (PC), which are also of importance in consumers' perception
78 of quality.

79 The first objective of the present study was to investigate the validity of the assumption that fruit
80 quality descriptors measured at harvest are reliable indicators of the shelf life of fruit and of their
81 quality after ripening. Mango was used as a model since numerous studies have underlined the
82 capacity of NIRS measurements to non-destructively measure several fruit quality traits in mango:
83 TSS content, dry matter content, titratable acidity and pulp color (Cortés *et al.*, 2016; Jha *et al.*,
84 2012b; Marques *et al.*, 2016; Nagle *et al.*, 2010; Nordey *et al.*, 2017; Rungpichayapichet *et al.*, 2016;
85 Schmilovitch *et al.*, 2000). We took advantage of previously developed NIRS models to analyze the
86 relationships between the quality traits measured at harvest and after ripening in a set of mango
87 fruit sampled from different orchards, harvests and production years. Although numerous studies on
88 mango focused on the use of NIRS to measure fruit quality traits (see above mentioned studies) and
89 maturity (Cortés *et al.*, 2016; Nagle *et al.*, 2010; Rungpichayapichet *et al.*, 2016; Subedi *et al.*, 2007)
90 at the time of measurement, only a few investigated the potential of NIRS measurements at harvest

91 to predict the quality of ripe fruit (Subedi et al., 2007) and shelf life. The second aim of this study was
92 thus to evaluate the accuracy of NIRS measurements for such predictions. The results of this study
93 should help stakeholders of fruit value chains choose reliable indicators to assess fruit shelf life and
94 quality after ripening.

95

96 **Material and methods**

97 Samples

98 A total of 92 mango fruit (*Mangifera indica* cv. 'Cogshall') harvested during the 2010–2011 and 2014–
99 2015 production seasons in four orchards in the northwest, west and southwest of Reunion Island
100 (20°52'48''S, 55°31'48''E) were used. Tree size, spacing and ages differed between orchards, as did
101 fertilization, irrigation and pruning. Fruit were harvested between 90 and 120 days after full bloom to
102 account for the wide range of variation in the stage of maturity at harvest from the green mature to
103 the yellow point stage considered as the onset of fruit ripening for Cogshall mangoes (Lechaudel et
104 al., 2010). A NIR spectrum was collected for each fruit at harvest, after which the fruit was weighed
105 and left to ripen at 20 °C and 80% relative humidity (RH).

106 The mangoes were destroyed for composition analysis after ripening. To ensure that ripe fruit was
107 the same physiological age for analysis, respiratory metabolism and climacteric rise were used as
108 indicators. Previous studies on the Cogshall cultivar (Joas *et al.*, 2009; Joas et al., 2012; Joas *et al.*,
109 2010) showed that the fruit quality traits TSS content and TA, firmness vary according to the
110 climacteric stage of the fruit. In line with these studies, mangoes were considered to be ripe with
111 correct quality and taste three days after they had reached their highest respiration rate. Respiration
112 rates were measured daily on each fruit by placing the mango in an individual 3 L airtight jar, and CO₂
113 concentration was measured at 20 min intervals for 1 hour by gas chromatography using an Agilent
114 M200 instrument (SRA, Marcy l'Etoile, France).

115 Measurements of fruit quality

116 At the ready to eat stage, mango cheeks were cut off longitudinally to measure the PC with a Minolta
117 Chroma Meter CR300 (Konica Minolta, Osaka, Japan) and described using the Hue angle criterion.
118 Variations in TA, DM content and TSS content within mangoes (Nordey *et al.*, 2014) were taken into
119 account through measurements made on a puree obtained by blending the fruit flesh in a Grindomix
120 blender (Retsch, Haan, Germany). Fresh juice was extracted by filtering the puree through gauze to

121 measure the TSS content using an ATC-1E refractometer (Atago, Tokyo, Japan) and TA. TA, expressed
122 as mass percentage of citric acid (%), was measured using an automated titrimer (TitroLine easy,
123 Schott, Mainz, Germany) with a 0.05 mol L⁻¹ NaOH solution. The DM content of the flesh was
124 calculated from the dry mass measured after lyophilization compared with fresh mass.

125 Chemometrics

126 At harvest, NIR spectra measurements were collected on the surface of the fruit near the apex over
127 the 600–2300 nm wavelength range using a portable spectrometer equipped with a contact probe
128 (LABSPEC 2500, Analytical Spectral Devices, Inc., Boulder, CO, USA). In line with our previous studies
129 NIR measurements were made on the fruit apex since peel color changes in this part of the fruit is
130 used as an indicator of the fruit maturity for cogshall mangoes (Lechaudel et al., 2010; Nordey et al.,
131 2017).

132 NIR measurements were used to non-destructively measure the fruit quality traits DM, TA, TSS and
133 PC at harvest using previously developed partial least square (PLS) models (Nordey et al., 2017). The
134 accuracy of the models was expected to be satisfactory since they were calibrated on mangoes taken
135 from similar orchards in the same year of production as the ones used in the present study. Spectral
136 measurements collected at harvest were also used to predict the shelf life of the fruit and their
137 quality after ripening by establishing new PLS models.

138 Samples were divided into calibration and validation sets at an 80:20 ratio for each quality trait
139 evaluated, i.e., DM and TSS content, PC and TA, by random sampling on percentiles of the quality
140 attribute values. Partial least squares regressions (PLSR) were established using the PLS package
141 (Mevik and Wehrens, 2007) of the R software (R Development Core Team, 2012) using the
142 methodology described by (Cornillon, 2010). The number of PLSR factors was determined to reduce
143 the prediction error by cross validation on 20% of the calibration set using the mean square error of
144 prediction as an indicator.

145 Several spectral data pre-processing and variable selection methods developed in our previous study
146 (Nordey et al., 2017) were tested to improve the prediction performance of PLSR. The preprocessing

147 methods tested were first and second derivatives using the Savitzky-Golay smoothing filter with a
148 second-order polynomial and a 10-nm window size using the prospectr package (Stevens and
149 Ramirez-Lopez, 2013). Interval partial least square (IPLS) regressions, associated with the stepwise
150 and the backward methods, were performed to select the combination of wavelength windows that
151 best predicted performance. Algorithms for IPLS regressions were designed following the
152 methodology presented by Andersen and Bro (2010). As proposed by Nicolai *et al.* (2007), the root
153 mean square error (RMSE) was used as an indicator to evaluate the predictive performance of PLSR
154 using the calibration (RMSEC) and prediction (RMSEP) datasets.

155 Statistical analysis

156 Covariance analyses were performed to assess the impacts of growing conditions, i.e. years of
157 production and orchards, on relationships between quality traits measured at harvest and after
158 ripening.

159 A principal component analysis (PCA) was performed to analyze variations in raw NIR spectra
160 collected on fruit at harvest using the FactoMineR package (Lê *et al.*, 2008). Fruit shelf life was
161 plotted as a supplementary categorical variable and the positions of the shelf life categories were
162 plotted on the PCA plot with their confidence ellipses at 95%. Simple and multiple linear regressions
163 were calibrated and tested using the same calibration and prediction data sets as those used for
164 PLSR. A variable selection procedure was applied to the accuracy of multiple linear regressions
165 following the methodology suggested by Cornillon (2010) based on the LEAPS package (Lumley and
166 Miller, 2009) and on the Bayesian information criterion (BIC). The root mean square error (RMSE)
167 was used as an indicator to evaluate the predictive performance of linear regressions for the
168 calibration (RMSEC) and prediction (RMSEP) datasets. A relative RMSEP was calculated as the ratio
169 between the RMSEP and the mean of all measurements.

170

171 Results

172 Changes in fruit quality attributes between harvest and after ripening

173 Figure 1 shows the relationships between the fruit quality traits TSS content, dry matter content, TA
174 and PC measured at harvest using NIRS spectra and after ripening using destructive measurements.

175 Results revealed marked variations in quality at harvest since fruit weight varied between 170 g and
176 665 g (data not shown), TSS content varied between 4.5 and 20%, TA varied between 2.25 and
177 12.22%, DM content varied between 12.2 and 23.9%, the hue angle of the PC varied between 83.5
178 and 116.7 °. Fruit were ripe from two to 17 days after harvest and their fresh mass varied between
179 156 and 637 g (data not shown), DM content varied between 10.8 and 21%, TA varied between 0.35
180 and 4.35%, TSS content varied between 10.2 and 22%, and the hue angle of the PC varied between
181 80.15 and 92.7 °. Weak relationships were found ($r^2 < 0.41$) between quality traits at harvest and
182 after ripening, except for DM content ($r^2 = 0.61$). The TSS content in ripe fruit was correlated ($r^2 =$
183 0.67, Figure 1E) with the DM content measured at harvest, in contrast to TA (Fig. 1F) and PC (Figure
184 1G).

185 The fruit shelf life was related to the PC ($r^2 = 0.7$, Figure 1J) and to the TSS content ($r^2 = 0.62$, Fig. 1H)
186 and to a lesser extent to TA ($r^2 = 0.5$, Figure 1I) and to the DM content ($r^2 = 0.45$, Figure 1K) measured
187 at harvest. All relationships established between quality traits measured at the harvest and after
188 ripening were found to vary significantly with growing conditions, i.e. the year of production and/or
189 the orchard.

190 The accuracy of linear regressions between quality traits at harvest and after ripening is shown in
191 Table 1. The variable selection procedure made it possible to increase the accuracy of multiple linear
192 regressions to predict fruit quality traits after ripening. This approach showed that PC and DM
193 content of the ripe fruit were best predicted using DM content at harvest as the only indicator.
194 Although the TSS content in ripe fruit was well predicted using DM content at harvest as the only
195 explanatory variable, our results showed that including TA and PC in the multiple linear regression
196 slightly increased prediction accuracy. TA of fruit after ripening was found to be best predicted using

197 PC and TA measured at harvest. In line with previous results, PC at the harvest was shown to be the
198 best indicator of fruit shelf life.

199

200 Use of NIRS measurements at harvest to predict the quality of ripe fruit and shelf life

201 NIRS spectra measured on fruit from 600 nm to 2,300 nm at harvest (Figure 2A) were used to predict
202 their shelf life at 20 °C and 80% RH, as well as their quality traits after ripening.

203 Reflectance spectra acquired at harvest varied with the shelf life of the fruit (Figure 2A) and a
204 principal component analysis on raw NIR spectra was performed to highlight these variations (Figure
205 2B). Principal component analysis revealed more variation in the NIR spectra acquired on fruit with a
206 longer shelf life.

207 PLSR were developed to predict the quality of fruit after ripening and their shelf life at harvest using
208 NIR measurements. The results of the preliminary analyses displayed in Figure 3A to 3E underline the
209 difference in the capacity of NIR windows to predict fruit quality traits and shelf life. These figures
210 also show that quality traits in ripe fruit are linked to different regions in the NIR spectra. Different
211 data preprocessing methods (first and second derivative) as well as variable selection procedures
212 (IPLS backward and stepwise) with different sized windows in the NIR spectra (10, 25, 50 and 100)
213 were used to increase the prediction accuracy of PLSR (Table 2). The models with the least prediction
214 errors were selected for the calibration and validation datasets. Models with similar accuracy but
215 fewer factors were selected to increase the robustness of the results. In line with Figure 3A to 3E,
216 different regions in the NIR spectra were selected in the models to predict quality traits (Figure 3F to
217 3J). Predictions of the TSS content in ripe fruit were found to rely on reflectance measurements at
218 harvest from 1,000 nm to 1,200 nm, as well as on reflectance measurements around 1,800 nm.

219 Similar results were found for DM content since reflectance measurements around 1,000 nm were
220 selected by the variable selection procedure to predict this trait. Predictions of PC and TA in ripe fruit
221 were both related to measurements in the NIR region from 1,600 to 1,800 nm. Reflectance

222 measurements in the visible region (around 800 nm) were found to be of importance only for the
223 prediction of fruit shelf life.

224 Prediction accuracies of the selected PLSR are shown in Figure 4. A RMSEP of 1.1%, 0.52%, 1.86 °,
225 1.26% and 1.78 days were found for the TSS content, TA, the hue angle of the PC, DM content and
226 the shelf life, respectively. Marked discrepancies were found between the accuracy of models since
227 relative RMSEP of 6.9%, 46%, 2.1%, 8%, 18.3%, and 18.3% were obtained for the TSS content, TA, the
228 hue angle of the PC, DM content, and the shelf life, respectively.

229 Errors of the same order of magnitude were obtained when predicting quality traits and shelf life
230 using PLSR and linear regressions based on the quality traits assessed at harvest, except for the PC,
231 i.e. RMSEV = 1.86 ° versus 3.17 °.

232

233

234

235 Discussion

236 Are fruit quality traits at harvest reliable indicators of fruit shelf life and quality after ripening?

237 Our results show that the color of the pulp is a good indicator of fruit shelf life (Fig. 1J, Table 1).
238 This result is in line with previous measurements made on mango by Subedi *et al.* (2007), who
239 reported that fruit maturity was better correlated with PC ($r^2 = 0.79$) than with DM content ($r^2 =$
240 0.66). Previous studies showed that the color of mango flesh is closely linked with its carotenoid
241 contents (Vasquez-Caicedo *et al.*, 2005), mostly represented by all-trans-carotene, all-trans-
242 violaxanthin, and 9-cis-violaxanthin (Litz, 2009; Rosalie *et al.*, 2015). The biosynthetic carotenoid
243 pathway is known to be triggered during fruit ripening leading to marked changes in the color of the
244 mango flesh. The better capacity of PC to predict the fruit shelf life than the other traits studied
245 could be explained by the lower sensitivity of the carotenoid metabolism to fruit growing conditions
246 than the sensitivity of sugars and acids (Joas *et al.*, 2012; Rosalie *et al.*, 2015) and by the impact of
247 phytohormones in the carotenoid metabolism that drive fruit ripening (McAtee *et al.*, 2013).

248 Not surprisingly, our results showed that fruit DM contents at harvest and after ripening were
249 closely correlated. Although the composition of fruit DM undergoes major changes during ripening,
250 its content varies only slightly due to water losses and fruit respiration (Nordey *et al.*, 2016).
251 During ripening, the starch that accumulates in mangoes throughout their development on the tree
252 is converted into soluble sugars, i.e., saccharose, glucose and fructose, thereby increasing the fruit
253 TSS content (Léchaudel *et al.*, 2005). In line with the results of previous studies (Saranwong *et al.*,
254 2004; Subedi *et al.*, 2007), our results indicated that TSS content at the harvest is not a reliable
255 indicator of the TSS content in fruit after ripening, which is better predicted by DM content at
256 harvest. Several modeling approaches have been developed on mango (Léchaudel *et al.*, 2007),
257 peach (Lescourret *et al.*, 2011), and tomato (Liu *et al.*, 2007) to predict changes in fruit DM during
258 fruit growth and ripening. These models predict the DM composition of fruit by simulating changes in
259 the fruit maturity stage and its dry mass balance. Empirical relationships used in the modeling
260 approaches developed on mango can roughly predict mango glucose, fructose and sucrose contents,

261 and malic, citric, pyruvic and oxalic acid contents, since correlation coefficients (r^2) obtained between
262 predictions and observations ranged between 0.43 and 0.66 (Léchaudel *et al.*, 2007). One of the main
263 problems involved in predicting changes in the composition of fruit DM is simulating the impacts of
264 ripening. Further work combining modelling approaches to simulate the metabolism of
265 phytohormones involved in fruit ripening (Génard and Gouble, 2005) and their impacts on metabolic
266 pathways of primary and secondary metabolites is thus needed to better predict changes in the DM
267 composition of the fruit during ripening.

268 In contrast to TSS content, fruit TA after ripening was poorly correlated with predicted fruit DM
269 content at harvest (Figure 3F). Numerous organic acids are responsible for variations in TA in mango,
270 but citric and malic acids are known to have the most influence (Léchaudel *et al.*, 2005; Medlicott
271 and Thompson, 1985). Some modelling approaches have also been developed to simulate TA and the
272 pH in fruit flesh during fruit growth and ripening (Etienne *et al.*, 2013; Lobit *et al.*, 2003). These
273 approaches are hampered by the number of organic acids in fruit and by the lack of knowledge on
274 the mechanisms involved in their metabolism and storage. These models succeeded in underlining
275 the close relationship between organic acid metabolism and fruit respiration. This relationship was
276 used by our team to hypothesize that the observed variations in TA among mangoes after ripening
277 can be partly explained by differences in the climacteric respiratory crisis observed between fruit,
278 depending on their stage of maturity at harvest (Nordey *et al.*, 2016). Interestingly, the multiple
279 linear relationships we established in the present study (Table 1) reinforce this hypothesis, since, as
280 mentioned above, TA in the fruit after ripening was better predicted using both TA and PC at
281 harvest, and the latter was the best indicator of fruit maturity (Table 1, Figure 1J).

282 Like TA, PC after ripening was poorly correlated with DM content and PC at harvest. This is in
283 agreement with the results obtained by Joas *et al.* (2012), who already underlined the lack of
284 proportionality between the carotenoid content in fruit at harvest and in ripe fruit (Figure 1C). In
285 contrast to DM and TSS contents, these authors reported that the carotenoid content in mango flesh
286 at harvest did not vary either with the fruit carbon supply (Joas *et al.*, 2012) or with the fruit water

287 supply (Rosalie et al., 2015) but did vary with the stage of maturity at harvest (Joas et al., 2012). The
288 impact of carbohydrate availability in fruit on the metabolism of carotenoids was discussed by
289 Poiroux-Gonord *et al.* (2012), who suggested that carotenoid biosynthesis was not promoted by
290 higher concentrations of carbohydrate precursors. Our results confirm their hypothesis, since PC
291 after ripening was not correlated with TSS or DM content at harvest.

292 Finally, the results of the present work confirm that fruit DM content at harvest is a reliable
293 indicator of TSS content in ripe fruit, which is known to be closely correlated with their sugar content.
294 Nondestructive measurements such as specific gravity and NIRS have already been successfully used
295 to accurately predict the DM content of several fruit species including mango (Nordey et al., 2017;
296 Saranwong et al., 2004) and kiwi (Jordan et al., 2000; McGlone et al., 2002b). In the present study, all
297 relationships between fruit quality traits at harvest and after ripening were found to vary with fruit
298 growing conditions, i.e. with the orchard and/or year of production. To avoid the need to develop
299 specific relationships for each growing condition, the robustness of these linear regressions could be
300 improved by including samples of several seasons and growing regions within the
301 calibration.

302 Our results also showed that DM content at harvest was not a reliable indicator of TA or PC after
303 ripening. The PC at harvest was found to be the best indicator of fruit shelf life. TA in ripe fruit was
304 found to be linked to PC and TA at harvest, suggesting that it varied with the stage of maturity at
305 harvest. Our results underline the fact that although the stage of maturity of fruit and their quality
306 are closely related, they should not be assessed using the same indicators.

307

308 Use of NIRS to predict fruit quality after ripening and shelf life at harvest

309 Unlike other nondestructive measurements such as weight or density, NIRS spectra are collected in
310 specific locations in the fruit. Like in previous studies (Lechaudel et al., 2010; Nordey et al., 2017) NIR
311 measurements were made on the fruit apex, whereas in other studies, measurements were made on
312 the mango shoulders (Saranwong et al., 2004), or in the center of the fruit cheek (Rungpichayapichet

313 et al., 2016), or at several different locations (Jha *et al.*, 2014; Marques et al., 2016). Since marked
314 variations in both mango quality and maturity were measured previously (Nordey et al., 2014), we
315 would have expected predictions of quality and maturity to vary according to the position the
316 measurements were made on the fruit. In contrast to previous studies (Nordey et al., 2014;
317 Saranwong et al., 2004), NIR measurements collected in the present study were used to predict the
318 quality and maturity of the fruit as a whole and not of the fleshy part of the measuring area. It is so
319 assumed through the approach used in the present study that quality and maturity in the apex part
320 of the fruit are reliable indicators of the quality and maturity of the whole mango. It is worth noting
321 that automation of the proposed method would be hampered by the need of make NIR
322 measurements at a specific position on the fruit. However, this challenge could be overcome by
323 developing new models based on several NIR spectra randomly collected on the fruit surface.
324 The accuracy of predictions of fruit quality after ripening made at harvest using NIRS spectra (Table
325 2) was found to be of the same order of magnitude as linear regressions based on the prediction of
326 quality attributes at harvest, except for the color of the pulp, i.e. RMSEV = 1.86 ° versus 3.17 °.
327 In contrast to other quality attributes, the accuracy of PLSR to predict TSS content in fruit after
328 ripening was lower than the accuracy of PLSR previously developed to predict the fruit quality at the
329 time of measurement: 1.1% versus 0.6%. This can be explained by the smaller difference in quality
330 attributes between ripe fruit than between unripe fruit harvested at different stages (from green
331 mature to fully ripe).

332 Like in other fruit, mango spectra were dominated by a water spectrum with overtone bands of OH
333 bonds at 970, 1450 nm and a combination band at 1940 nm (Figure 2)(Nicolai et al., 2007). The near
334 infrared spectrum of mango is also composed of overtones and combination bands of organic
335 compounds. In line with previous studies, NIR measurements made at harvest at around 1000 nm
336 played an important role in predicting dry matter content and TSS content in ripe mangoes. This
337 region of the NIR spectra was linked to overtone starch at 990 nm. This result supports the results

338 previously obtained by Saranwong *et al.* (2004) suggesting that the starch content of mango at
339 harvest is a good indicator of TSS content in ripe fruit.

340 PLSR using NIR spectra at harvest predicted DM content (Fig. 4D) and TSS content (Figure 4A) in ripe
341 fruit better than PC (Figure 4C) and TA (Figure 4B). Our results confirm the conclusions of previous
342 studies concerning the limited accuracy of NIR models to predict TA in mangoes that may be
343 hampered by the number of different organic acids in this species as well as by changes in the ratio
344 of the two main organic acids during ripening (Marques *et al.*, 2016; Nordey *et al.*, 2017; Schmilovitch
345 *et al.*, 2000). Similar results have also been reported in apple (McGlone *et al.*, 2002a) and in passion
346 fruit (Maniwaru *et al.*, 2014). The TA and PC of ripe fruit were found to be best predicted in PLSR
347 using NIR measurements at 1600-1800 nm. Previous studies using NIRS showed that the β carotene
348 content in mango (Rungpichayapichet *et al.*, 2015) and Chinese kale (Chen *et al.*, 2009) was related
349 to absorbance of around 1750 nm. This is in agreement with linear regressions showing that
350 titratable acidity in ripe fruit is linked to PC at harvest.

351 The NIR models developed in the present study succeeded in predicting fruit shelf life with an
352 average error of less than two days. These results are satisfactory compared with the measurement
353 error of shelf life using fruit respiration, which is around one day. The results in Figure 4J show that
354 the region of the spectrum near 800 nm is important to predict fruit shelf life. This region is related
355 to absorption by chlorophyll pigments, which are known to be a reliable descriptor of mango
356 maturity (Lechaudel *et al.*, 2010). The chlorophyll content in mango peel is known to increase during
357 the first stages of mango development and to decrease during fruit ripening (Medlicott *et al.*, 1986).

358 Although several authors used NIR measurements to predict the stage of maturity of mangoes
359 (Cortés *et al.*, 2016; Nagle *et al.*, 2010; Rungpichayapichet *et al.*, 2016; Subedi *et al.*, 2007), to our
360 knowledge, this is the first report on the use of NIRS to predict fruit shelf life at harvest. It should be
361 noted that the fruit shelf life of fruit predicted in the present study is for storage at 20 °C and 80%
362 RH. In any other post-harvest conditions, PLSR would need to be recalibrated to predict fruit shelf
363 life. Our results provide evidence that NIR models can help predict some quality traits of ripe fruit,

364 i.e. dry matter, TSS content and shelf life. Future studies should use more samples to improve the
365 robustness and the accuracy of the models, especially for predictions of TA of ripe fruit at harvest.

366 **Conclusions**

367 The quality and the maturity of fruit are two notions that are often confused since similar indicators
368 are used to assess them. The present work used NIR models to analyze the relationship between
369 mango quality traits at harvest and after ripening. Our results provide evidence that fruit DM content
370 at harvest is a useful indicator of TSS content in fruit after ripening but not of TA or PC. Pulp color at
371 harvest was found to be the best indicator of fruit shelf life because of its relative insensitivity to
372 growing conditions. The NIR models we developed enabled prediction of fruit shelf life, TSS content
373 and DM content in ripe fruit. Prediction accuracy was nevertheless lower for fruit acidity and PC.

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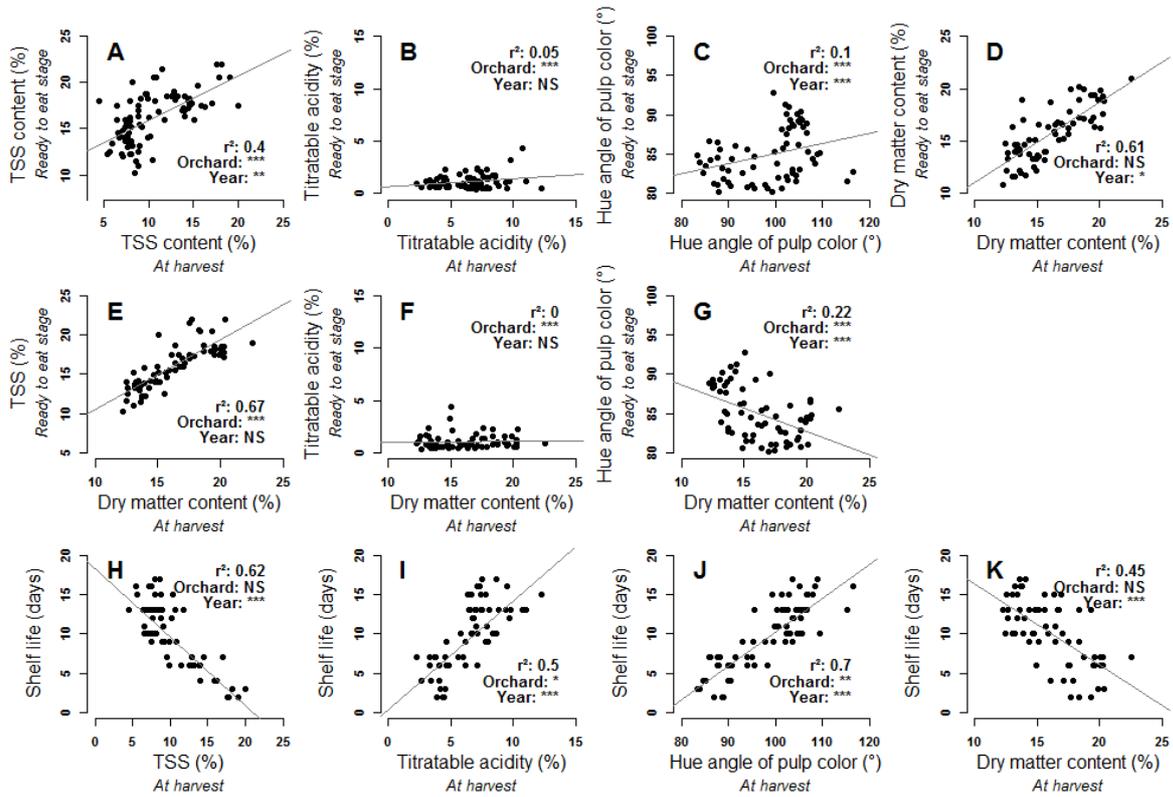
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388 **Tables and figures**



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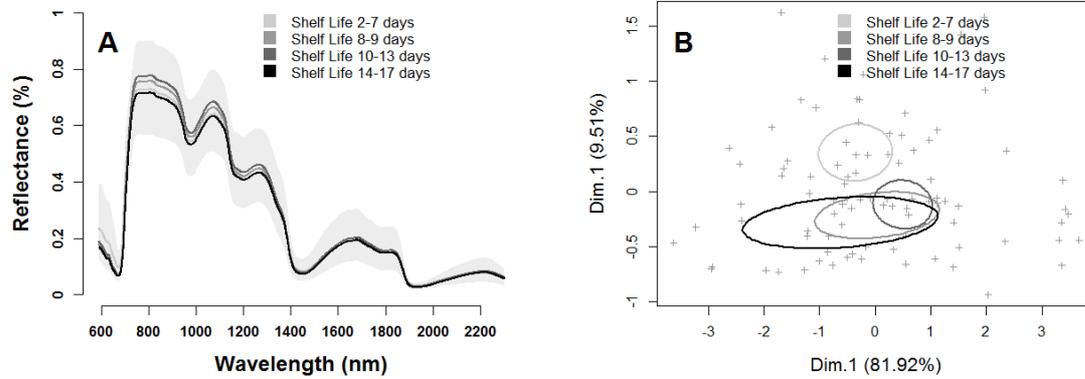
390 **Figure 1:** Relationship between (i) quality traits measured at harvest and after ripening (A to D), (ii)

391 quality traits measured after ripening and dry matter content measured at harvest (E to G) and (iii)

392 shelf life and quality traits measured at harvest (H to K). Correlation coefficients (r^2) are indicated in

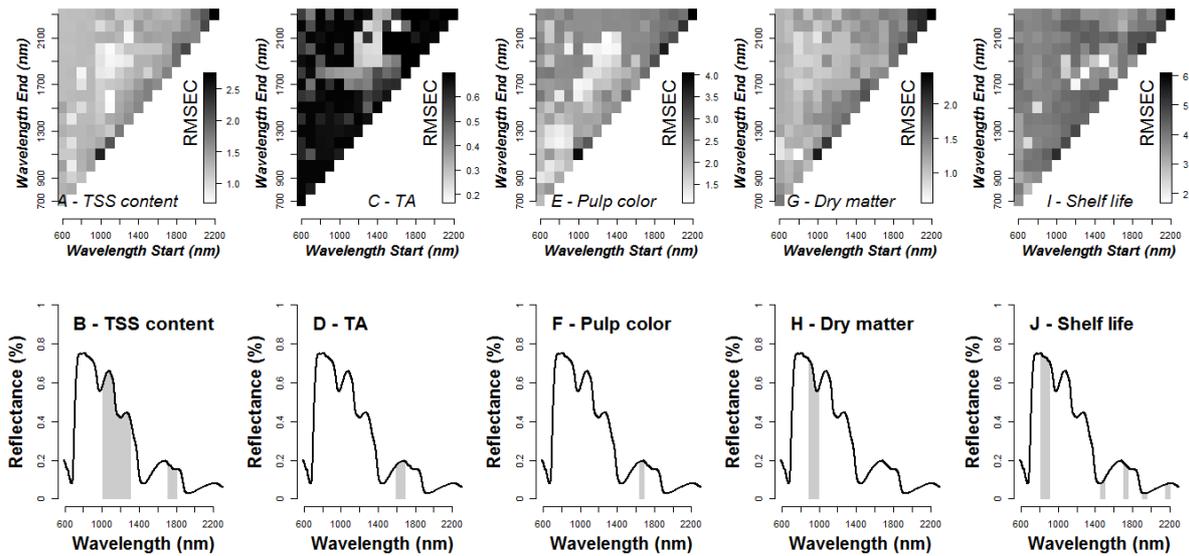
393 the figures and asterisks indicate whether years and orchard significantly impact relationships

394 displayed with p. values of 0.001 ***, 0.01**, and 0.05*.



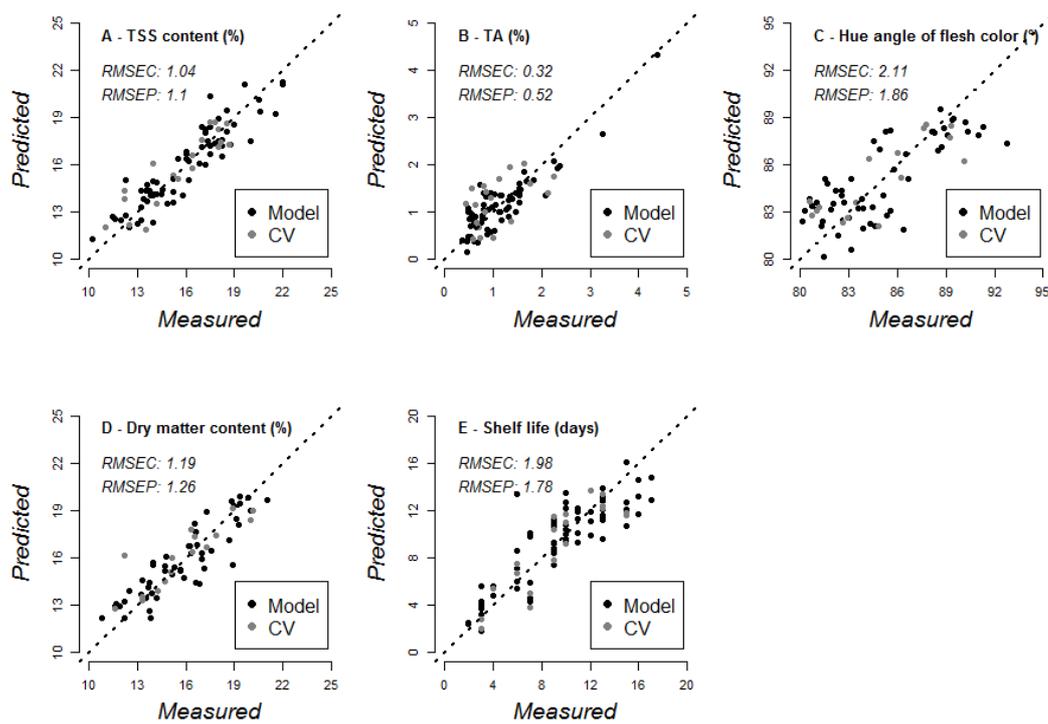
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396 **Figure 2:** Raw NIR spectra acquired on the peel at the apex of the mango fruit at harvest with
 397 averages calculated by range of self-life (A) and their scores in the principal component analysis (B).
 398 Average fruit shelf life is shown as supplementary categorical variables with their confidence ellipses
 399 at 95%.



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401 **Figure 3:** Prediction performances of the selected PLSR regressions, in terms of root mean square
 402 standard error of calibration (RMSEC), for different wavelength windows (from a starting point to an
 403 end point) and the NIR regions selected for percentage total soluble solid (TSS) content (A-B),
 404 percentage titratable acidity (TA) (C-D), percentage pulp color (PC) (E-F), percentage dry matter
 405 (DM) content (G-H) and shelf life (in days) in the best models (I-J).



406

407 **Figure 4:** Accuracy of selected partial least square (PLS) regressions in predicting total soluble solid
 408 (TSS) content (A), titratable acidity (TA) (B), pulp color (C), dry matter content (D) and shelf life (E)
 409 with calibration and validation data sets.

410

411 **Table 1:** Accuracy of linear regressions based on quality attributes measured at harvest: percentage
 412 titratable acidity (TA), percentage dry matter content (DM), percentage TSS content, and hue angle
 413 of the pulp color (in °) to predict the shelf life and quality of fruit after ripening.

Quality traits in ripe fruit	Quality traits measured at harvest	RMSEC	RMSEP
Titratable acidity	<i>Titratable acidity</i>	0.13	0.09
	<i>Dry matter content</i>	0.13	0.1
	<i>TSS content</i>	0.13	0.1
	<i>Pulp color</i>	0.13	0.1
	<i>All</i>	0.1	0.16
	<i>Pulp color & titratable acidity</i>	0.12	0.07
Pulp color	<i>Titratable acidity</i>	3.21	3.60
	<i>Dry matter content</i>	2.84	3.17
	<i>TSS content</i>	3.14	3.30
	<i>Pulp color</i>	3.13	3.23
	<i>All</i>	2.16	3.91
Dry matter content	<i>Titratable acidity</i>	2.26	1.84
	<i>Dry matter content</i>	1.67	1.06
	<i>TSS content</i>	2.03	1.78
	<i>Pulp color</i>	1.84	1.50
	<i>All</i>	1.22	1.62
TSS content	<i>Titratable acidity</i>	2.47	2.07
	<i>Dry matter content</i>	1.53	1.22
	<i>TSS content</i>	2.13	1.82
	<i>Pulp color</i>	1.91	1.49
	<i>All</i>	1.06	1.57
	<i>Titratable acidity & Dry matter content & Pulp color</i>	1.41	1.18
Shelf life	<i>Titratable acidity</i>	2.83	2.57
	<i>Dry matter content</i>	3.04	2.08
	<i>TSS content</i>	2.55	2.05
	<i>Pulp color</i>	2.27	1.56
	<i>All</i>	1.91	1.79

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417 **Table 2:** Capacity of partial least squares regressions (PLSR) to predict quality of fruit after ripening and their shelf life at harvest using NIR spectra
 418 with different variable selection and preprocessing methods. The root mean square error (RMSE) was used as an indicator to evaluate the predictive
 419 performance of PLSR for calibration (RMSEC) and prediction (RMSEP) datasets.

		DM (%)			TSS content (%)			Titratable acidity (%)			Hue angle of pulp color (°)			Shelf life (days)		
		RMSEC	RMSEV	Factors	RMSEC	RMSEV	Factors	RMSEC	RMSEV	Factors	RMSEC	RMSEV	Factors	RMSEC	RMSEV	Factors
<i>Raw spectra</i>	<i>No variable selection</i>	0.91	1.57	9.00	1.12	1.42	11.00	0.17	0.68	20.00	2.14	2.90	5.00	2.02	1.75	12.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_10</i>	1.45	1.77	8.00	1.93	1.68	3.00	0.66	0.50	1.00	2.74	2.76	3.00	3.43	2.62	3.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_25</i>	1.44	1.42	4.00	2.14	2.21	3.00	0.67	0.52	1.00	2.78	3.12	3.00	3.36	2.29	2.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_50</i>	1.40	2.05	7.00	2.19	2.13	5.00	0.67	0.51	1.00	1.72	2.75	7.00	3.26	2.61	4.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_100</i>	1.19	1.26	5.00	1.54	1.44	6.00	0.46	0.46	6.00	2.21	2.57	4.00	2.78	1.94	5.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_10</i>	1.41	1.46	7.00	1.11	1.69	10.00	0.52	0.66	7.00	1.99	3.93	7.00	2.50	1.48	7.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_25</i>	1.25	1.83	6.00	1.09	2.01	11.00	0.22	0.54	15.00	1.86	2.78	7.00	2.82	2.14	4.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_50</i>	1.38	1.98	5.00	0.99	1.27	11.00	0.63	0.45	3.00	2.11	1.86	4.00	2.46	1.84	7.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_100</i>	0.63	1.69	13.00	1.64	1.59	6.00	0.32	0.52	12.00	1.87	2.54	6.00	2.48	1.76	4.00
<i>First derivative</i>	<i>No variable selection</i>	0.88	1.62	7.00	1.24	1.66	6.00	0.21	0.58	15.00	1.53	2.38	9.00	0.94	2.62	18.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_10</i>	1.13	1.53	6.00	1.37	1.59	9.00	0.61	0.53	3.00	2.67	3.09	4.00	2.69	2.66	4.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_25</i>	2.38	2.16	2.00	2.12	2.40	3.00	0.66	0.53	1.00	1.63	2.06	12.00	3.55	3.15	3.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_50</i>	1.44	1.96	10.00	2.13	2.21	4.00	0.63	0.48	2.00	2.52	2.49	6.00	2.96	3.53	6.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_100</i>	1.47	1.31	3.00	1.84	1.27	3.00	0.62	0.45	5.00	2.29	2.39	7.00	2.21	2.19	9.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_10</i>	0.71	1.87	10.00	1.25	1.78	9.00	0.54	0.48	6.00	2.34	2.57	8.00	2.19	2.12	10.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_25</i>	1.14	1.93	10.00	0.99	1.48	11.00	0.62	0.45	3.00	2.24	3.68	5.00	2.66	2.58	7.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_50</i>	1.05	1.68	9.00	1.13	1.15	9.00	0.51	0.54	5.00	2.16	2.72	4.00	1.98	1.78	5.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_100</i>	1.14	1.27	5.00	1.04	1.10	9.00	0.35	0.53	10.00	1.92	2.28	7.00	2.03	1.64	6.00
<i>Second derivative</i>	<i>No variable selection</i>	0.86	1.62	8.00	1.01	1.20	9.00	0.21	0.55	14.00	0.29	3.07	20.00	0.66	2.65	19.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_10</i>	1.49	2.12	4.00	1.62	1.80	6.00	0.61	0.46	4.00	2.26	3.29	5.00	2.50	1.62	3.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_25</i>	1.38	1.81	7.00	2.54	2.27	2.00	0.62	0.49	2.00	2.20	2.84	5.00	2.47	1.79	3.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_50</i>	1.39	1.65	5.00	1.35	1.26	6.00	0.66	0.47	2.00	2.76	2.86	1.00	2.72	2.45	5.00
	<i>IPLS_Backward_100</i>	1.55	1.87	5.00	1.86	1.45	3.00	0.62	0.47	3.00	1.95	2.11	7.00	2.92	2.19	3.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_10</i>	1.21	1.66	7.00	1.25	1.82	11.00	0.57	0.60	6.00	1.93	2.94	9.00	1.81	2.65	12.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_25</i>	1.39	1.60	3.00	1.00	1.75	13.00	0.63	0.47	1.00	1.56	3.45	10.00	2.40	2.17	6.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_50</i>	1.13	1.67	5.00	1.12	1.14	7.00	0.61	0.50	2.00	1.84	3.05	9.00	2.36	1.41	4.00
	<i>IPLS_Stepwise_100</i>	1.31	1.36	5.00	1.17	1.11	5.00	0.65	0.53	1.00	1.85	2.44	4.00	2.12	1.86	7.00

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