Association mapping of starch physicochemical properties with starch synthesis 1 related gene markers in nonwaxy rice (Oryza sativa L.) 2 3 Feng Yang^{1#}, Yaling Chen^{2#}, Chuan Tong², Yan Huang², Feifei Xu², Kehu Li¹, Harold 4 Corke¹, Mei Sun^{1*}, Jinsong Bao^{2*} 5 6 7 ¹ School of Biological Sciences, The University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong 8 Kong SAR, P.R. China 9 ² Institute of Nuclear Agricultural Sciences, Zhejiang University, Hua Jiachi Campus, 10 Hangzhou, 310029, P. R. China; 11 12 [#]These authors contributed equally to this work. 13 *Corresponding author, E-mail: meisun@hku.hk; jsbao@zju.edu.cn; 14 and Tel:+86-571-86971932; Fax: +86-571-86971421 15 16

Abstract

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Starch physicochemical properties strongly influence eating and cooking quality of 19 rice. The CAPS, dCAPS and InDel markers for 13 starch synthesis related genes 20 21 (SSRGs) were developed, and together with markers developed before, there are 35 markers tagged for 23 SSRGs, with each gene tagged with at least one marker. These 22 and 108 other markers were used for association mapping for 20 starch 23 physicochemical property parameters. A total of 64 main-effect loci or QTLs were 24 detected. In addition, 56 and 62 loci were identified under the Wx and SSIIa 25 background, respectively. Wx was a major main-effect QTL for AAC, pasting 26 viscosity, gel texture, and retrogradation property (P < 0.0001). SSIIa was a major 27 main-effect QTL for pasting temperature, thermal and retrogradation properties (P < 28 29 0.0001), but it was a minor main-effect QTL for some pasting viscosity parameters, such as BD, CS, Stab and SBratio. Four other SSRGs, SSIIa, BE1, SSIIc and GBSSII 30 31 were detected for AAC under Wx background. Wx was detected for Tc and Δ Hg under the SSIIa background. PUL was detected for HD as main-effect QTL and under SSIIa 32 background. AGPL2 and ISA1 were detected respectively for ΔHg and retrogradation 33 as main-effect QTL as well as under both Wx and SSIIa backgrounds. This study 34 suggested that retrogradation properties were mainly controlled by Wx, SSIIa and 35 ISA1 with the relative effects in the order of SSIIa > Wx > ISA1. These results have 36 37 direct applications to quality breeding programs.

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Keywords: Rice; eating quality; amylose; gelatinization temperature; RVA pasting

viscosity; association mapping; QTL

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Abbreviations used:

AAC, apparent amylose content; ADH, gel adhesiveness; ASV, alkali spreading value; 42 43 BD, breakdown viscosity; BE, starch branching enzyme; CAPS, cleaved amplified 44 polymorphic sequences; dCAPS, derived CAPS; COH, gel cohesiveness; CPV, cold

paste viscosity; CS, consistency; DBE, debranching enzyme; DSC, differential

scanning calorimetry; GBSS, granule-bound starch synthase; GT, gelatinization 46 temperature; HD, gel hardness; HPV, hot paste viscosity; ISA, isoamylase; PT, pasting 47 48 temperature; PV, peak viscosity; PUL, pullulanase; QTL: quantitative trait locus; R%, 49 retrogradation percentage; RVA, rapid visco analyser; SB, setback viscosity; SBratio, 50 setback ratio. Stab: stability; SS, starch synthase; SSRG, starch synthesis related genes; T_{o} , onset temperature; T_{p} , peak temperature; T_{c} , conclusion temperature; ΔHg , 51 enthalpy of gelatinization; ΔHr , enthalpy of retrogration; $\Delta T_{1/2}$, width at half peak 52 53 height.

Introduction

Rice serves as a staple food for about half of the world's people. New varieties with
high yield, high quality and high resistance to biotic and abiotic stresses are bred and
released continuously in order to meet the ever-increasing demand for more food as
consequence of human population growth coupled with the decrease in arable land
Improvement of rice quality is among the most important goals in current breeding
programs, especially its eating and cooking quality as most rice is consumed a
cooked rice. Starch is the major component of rice grain, the content and fine
structure of its two constituents, amylose and amylopectin, determine rice eating and
cooking quality. Biochemically, four classes of enzymes are involved in starch
biosynthesis, i.e. ADP-Glucose pyrophosphorylase (AGPase), starch synthase (SS)
starch branching enzymes (BEs), and starch de-branching enzymes (DBEs
(Nakamura, 2002; James et al. 2003; Hannah et al. 2008). AGPase convert
ADP-glucose to glucose-1-phosphate in rice kernel, provides substrate for starch
synthase. Granule bound starch synthase-I enzyme (GBSS1) is a primary enzyme
responsible for amylose production in rice endosperm while other SS (soluble starch
synthase), BEs and DBEs work together but with distinct roles to synthesize
amylopectin. Many of these enzymes have multiple isoforms. The AGPase consists of
four large (AGPL1-4) and two small (AGPS1, AGPS2) subunits (Ohdan et al. 2005
Lee et al. 2007). There are a total of 10 isoforms for starch synthase enzymes: GBS.
(I, II), SSI, SSII (SSIIa, SSIIb, SSIIc), SSIII (SSIIIa and SSIIIb), and SSIV (SSIVa and
SSIVb) (Hirose and Terao 2004; Tetlow et al. 2004; Ohdan et al. 2005; Zhang et al.
2011). Rice BE has three isoforms: BEI, BEII (BEIIa, BEIIb) (Nakamura 2002; Ohdar
et al. 2005). Two types of DBE: isoamylase and pullulanase are both found involved
in amylopectin biosynthesis in rice endosperm (Nakamura et al. 1996; Kubo et al
1999; Fujita et al. 2003; Wong et al. 2003; Ohdan et al. 2005).

Genetic studies indicated that the starch physicochemical properties, such as AAC, gelatinization temperature, gel consistency, RVA pasting viscosity, gel texture, DSC

thermal property, and retrogradation, might be controlled by one or a few genes with major effects (He et al. 1999; Bao et al. 2000; Bao et al. 2004a; Wan et al. 2004; Fan et al. 2005). Linkage mapping of the quantitative trait locus (QTL) for AAC and pasting viscosity (Bao et al. 1999; He et al. 1999; Bao et al. 2000, 2003; Larkin et al. 2003; Septiningsih et al. 2003; Aluko et al. 2004; Wan et al. 2004; Fan et al. 2005; Wang et al. 2007; Lapitan et al. 2009; Traore et al. 2011) shows that they are largely controlled by the Wx locus on chromosome 6. Since GBSSI is responsible for amylose synthesis, GBSS1 alleles correlated with variation in AAC of rice grain is not surprising. Linkage mapping studies have identified only one major QTL, i.e. the alkali degeneration (alk) locus on chromosome 6, as having major responsibility for different gelatinization temperatures in diverse rice germplasm (He et al. 1999; Aluko et al. 2004; Bao et al. 2004b; Fan et al. 2005; Tian et al. 2005; Wang et al. 2007; Lapitan et al. 2009). Map-based cloning of the alk locus reveals that it encodes SSIIa, which is the major gene responsible for GT (Gao et al. 2003). QTL mapping shows that the amylopectin chain length distribution is also controlled by the SSIIa locus (Umemoto et al. 2002). The function of SSIIa is to elongate the short A and B1 chains with degree of polymerization (DP) < 10 to form long B1 chains of amylopectin (Nakamura et al. 2005). Although the functions of several genes in determining the rice eating and cooking qualities have been gradually clarified, such as Wx and SSIIa, many of others still remain unknown even though their functions in starch biosynthesis have been revealed.

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In addition to Wx and SSIIa, the contribution of other genes to rice eating and cooking quality is derived from analysis of allele variations and their association with the quality parameters. Association analysis is a popular method to test the relationship between specific sequence polymorphisms in candidate genes and phenotypic variations (Thornsberry et al. 2001; Gupta et al. 2005). Molecular markers specific to a simple sequence repeat polymorphism with respect to (CT)n repeats and to a single nucleotide polymorphism of Wx gene have been successfully designed to distinguish rice varieties with low amylose content from varieties with intermediate or high

amylose content (Ayres et al. 1997). Likewise, a marker specific to a SNP of SSIIa can differentiate varieties with low gelatinization temperature from those with intermediate or high gelatinization temperature (Bao et al. 2006b). By sequencing starch biosynthesis related genes, more and more allele variations have been revealed either in coding regions or un-translated regions of genes. For association analysis, previous studies (when SNP data were not available) focused more on the allele variations occurred in un-translated regions (Bao et al. 2006a), but recent studies have focused on the SNP of coding regions (Tian et al. 2009; Kharabian-Masouleh et al. 2012; Teng et al. 2013). Since starch biosynthesis is a complex network of many isoforms, both types of allele variations should be incorporated into a systematic association analysis. Furthermore, recently others genes have also been reported to affect the production of amylose or amylopectin. For instance, a SNP of glucose-6-phosphate translocator 1 gene has been reported as highly associated with amylose content and retrogradation properties (Kharabian-Masouleh et al. 2012).

Previous studies often focused on three parameters affecting eating and cooking quality, apparent amylose content (AAC), gelatinization temperature (GT) and gel consistency. However, starch physicochemical properties consist of many parameters such as pasting, textural, thermal and retrogradation properties; and few genetic studies of other physicochemical properties have been conducted. Previously, we have established an association mapping panel consisting of 416 rice accessions (Jin et al. 2010) and genotyped the markers tagged for *Wx*, *SS1*, *BE1*, *BEIIb* (Bao et al. 2006a), *SSIIa* (Bao et al. 2006b), and *AGPase* (Bao et al. 2012). In this study, we aim to develop more markers for tagging other starch synthesis related genes (SSRGs), and to investigate the associations between SSRG markers and starch physicochemical properties. The results from this study will enhance our understanding of the genetic control of starch physicochemical properties, and provide markers for carrying out molecular breeding to improve rice grain quality.

Materials and Methods

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Rice materials and physicochemical properties

Of the 416 rice accessions developed for association mapping (Jin et al. 2010), 379 146 accessions are nonwaxy rice with measured AAC, RVA pasting viscosity parameters and gel texture properties (Bao et al. 2006c), and 205 accessions with measured 148 thermal and retrogradation properties (Bao et al. 2007). In brief, RVA pasting profile 150 was determined using a Rapid Visco Analyser (RVA, Model 3-D, Newport Scientific, Warriewood, Australia) with the parameters including peak viscosity (PV), hot paste viscosity (HPV), cool paste viscosity (CPV) and their derivative parameters 152 breakdown (BD, = PV-HPV), setback (SB, = CPV-PV), consistency (CS, =CPV-HPV), 153 154 stability (Stab, =HPV/PV), and setback ratio (SBratio, =CPV/HPV), and pasting temperature (PT). The viscosities were measured in Rapid Visco Units (RVU). Gel 155 texture properties including hardness (HD, g), adhesiveness (ADH, g.s) and 156 cohesiveness (COH) were measured on a TA-XT2i Texture Analyzer (Texture 158 Technologies Corp., Scarsdale, NY) equipped with the Texture Expert software program (Version 5.16). Thermal properties were analyzed using a DSC 2920 thermal 159 analyser (TA Instruments, Newcastle, DE, USA) and the parameters included onset 160 (T_0) , peak (T_p) , and conclusion (T_c) temperature, width at half peak height $(\Delta T_{1/2})$ and enthalpy (\Delta Hg) of gelatinization. The retrogradation properties were measured with 162 163 the same sample after measurement of the thermal properties, stored, and rescanned 164 with DSC. The enthalpy (Δ Hr) of the retrograded starch was used to calculate the percentage of retrogradation (R%) as $(\Delta Hr)/(\Delta Hg) \times 100$. 165

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DNA isolation

- Fresh leaf tissue was harvested at the flowering stage from plants grown in the field. 168
- DNA was extracted following a CTAB procedure (Doyle 1991). 169

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Development of CAPS, dCAPS, and InDel markers and genotyping

Development of the cleaved amplified polymorphic sequences (CAPS) and derived

173 CAPS (dCAPS) follow the methods of Konieczny and Ausubel (1993) and Neff et al. (1998).174 175 The primers for PCR were synthesized by the Shanghai Shenggong BioTech Co. Ltd. 176 (Table 1). The PCR was carried out in a total volume of 20 µL containing 10 mM 177 178 Tris-HCl (pH 9.0), 50 mM KCl, 0.1% Triton X 100, 2 mM MgCl₂, 0.1 mM dNTPs, 200 nM primers, 1 unit of Taq polymerase, and 30 ng of genomic DNA. All 179 amplifications were performed on a PTC-100 thermal cycler (MJ Research, Inc.) 180 181 under the following conditions: 5 min at 95°C; 35 cycles of 1 min at 95 °C, 45 s at 55 °C and 1 min at 72 °C; and a final extension step at 72 °C for 10 min. 182 183 184 Amplified PCR products were digested using suitable restriction endonucleases in a total volume of 20 µL according to the manufacturer's instructions (Table 1). The 185 digests were resolved by electrophoresis in 1.5–2.0% agarose gel and visualized using 186 187 a VersaDoc imaging system (Bio-Rad) after staining with ethidium bromide. 188 **Statistical analysis** 189 The polymorphism information content (PIC) values were determined using 190 PowerMarker version 3.25 (Liu and Muse 2005). Nei's genetic distance (Nei et al. 191 1983) was calculated and used for unweighted pair-group method with arithmetic 192 193 means (UPGMA) analysis as implemented in PowerMarker, with the UPGMA tree viewed using MEGA 4.0 (Tamura et al. 2007). 194 195 196 Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and principal component analysis were performed 197 using the SAS System for Windows version 8 (SAS Institute Inc., Cary, NC, USA). Duncan's multiple range test was conducted for comparison of means at P < 0.05. 198

Cluster analysis of the starch properties parameters were performed in SPSS Statistics

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20 (Windows) using Ward's method based on squared Euclidean distance.

Association mapping

The population structure (Q) was determined using the STRUCTURE program (Pritchard et al. 2000), with 100 simple sequence repeat (SSR) markers (Jin et al. 2010), and the kinship coefficients (K) between accessions were estimated using the SPAGeDi program (v. 1.2g) (Hardy and Vekemans, 2002) with the same set of SSR markers (Shao et al. 2011). Association analysis between marker alleles and different starch physicochemical properties was performed with TASSEL Version 2.1 software, taking the gross level population structure (Q) and kinship (K) into account (Yu et al. 2006; Bradbury et al. 2007). The P-value determining whether a marker is associated with a trait was set at P<0.01.

Results

Marker development for starch biosynthesizing genes and their genotypes

In addition to available SNP, InDel, and SSR markers tagged for *Wx*, *SSI*, *BEI*, *SSIIa*, and all *AGP* genes (two small subunits and four large subunits) by Bao et al. (2002, 2006a, 2006b, 2012), we further developed CAPS, dCAPS and InDel markers for tagging other starch biosynthesis related genes, i.e. *GBSSII*, *SSIIc*, *SSIIb*, *SSIIIa*, *SSIIIb*, *SSIVa*, *SSIVb*, *BEIIa*, *BEIIb*, *ISA1-3* and *PUL* (Table 1) in this study. Most of SNPs tagged were derived from the study of Tian et al. (2009) who reported many functional SNPs for starch genes. All 13 new gene-specific markers (Table 1) produced two or more alleles each, with the polymorphic information content (PIC) ranging from 0.005 (InDel marker *SSIVb*) to 0.500 (marker *ISA2*). A deletion of 23bp in *SSIVb* was reported by Tian et al. (2009) in rice Suyunuo; we developed the primers to genotype this InDel in our rice accessions, and also found only Suyunuo had this deletion. Due to its low PIC, we adapted another CAPS marker from Tian et al. (2010) and Yan et al. (2011) to genotype this gene and found this marker had the PIC value of 0.381 among all rice accessions.

In total, there are 35 markers tagged for 23 starch synthesis related genes (SSRGs), with each gene tagged with at least one marker. The UPGMA tree made with these 35 SSRG markers showed that all the 416 rice could be assigned into two large groups, representing *indica* and *japonica* subspecies, respectively (Supplementary Fig. 1), with rice BP459, BP464, BP465, BP470, BP474, BP476, BP487 and BP532 loosely affiliated with the *japonica* group. These same accessions were also assigned to the *japonica* group based on 100 SSRs, but with a much smaller membership probability (Jin et al. 2010). The waxy rice could also be classified into *indica* and *japonica* groups using the SSRGs markers (Xu et al. 2013). These results clearly indicated that SSRGs have diverged between the two subspecies during domestication and/or improvement.

The association mapping panel has been genotyped with 100 SSRs before with a few additional SSRs and other gene markers, such as *Gnla*, *fgr*, *Ra*, and *Rc* (Shao et al. 2011). In total, there are 143 markers that can be used for association mapping. Fig. 1 shows the position of each marker in the chromosome of rice genome in physical distance.

Phenotypes of starch properties of nonwaxy rice

The starch physicochemical properties of each nonwaxy rice used in the present analysis were based on Bao et al. (2006c, 2007). It is not surprising that this set of association panel harbors wide genetic diversity in all starch physicochemical properties. AAC had significant correlation with pasting viscosity and gel texture traits except for PV, but had no relationship with thermal properties such as To, Tp, Tc and ΔHg. Tp had no correlation with HPV, SB and ADH, but had significant correlation with PV (P<0.05), CPV (P<0.05), CS (P<0.01), Stab (P<0.01), and SBratio (P<0.01) (Supplementary Table 1). From the correlation analysis, all the traits could be divided into two groups, AAC related traits (pasting viscosity and gel texture) and gelatinization temperature (GT) related traits (thermal property). Retrogradation

trait could be related with both groups. As a result, after normalization of all the trait value to between 0 and 1, a cluster analysis based on Ward's method showed that all the traits could be classified into three groups (Fig. 2). Group 1 includes To, Tp, Tc and PT, Group 2 includes BD, Δ Hg, COH, Δ T_{1/2}, and ADH, while Group 3 includes HPV, CPV, PV, AAC, Stab, SB, CS, SBratio, Δ Hr, R% and HD. Thus, Group 1 represents the GT-related traits, Group 3 represents AAC-related traits, while Group 2 is a mixture of AAC and GT related traits (Fig. 2).

Since the AAC and GT were the most important factors affecting other traits, the AAC-GT combination for each rice accession could be clearly visualized in the plot for both AAC and GT (Fig. 3). For the low AAC rice accessions (AAC<20%), the GT could be divided into high GT and low GT classes. The high GT rice had the peak temperature (Tp) ranging from 77.6 to 79.8 °C, while the low GT rice ranging from 65.8 to 71.0 °C. For the high AAC rice accessions, the GT could also be divided into two groups. One is intermediate GT group with GT ranging from 72.8 to 76.6 °C, and the other is the low GT group with GT ranging from 63.2 to 67.7 °C. It should be noted that the two low GT groups with contrasting AAC differed in the range of temperature, with the high-AAC rice having much lower GT than the low-AAC rice (Fig. 3).

All the rice accessions have been divided into seven groups or subpopulations (Jin et al. 2010). The difference in each starch property parameter among these seven subpopulations is listed in Table 2. For apparent amylose content and pasting viscosity parameters, POP3 and POP6 had higher AAC as well as higher PV, HPV, and CPV than other subpopulations. POP7 had the lowest AAC and SB, but had the highest PV and BD among the seven subpopulations. For gel texture parameters, POP3 had the highest HD and the lowest ADH and COH, and by contrast, POP5 and POP7 had the lowest HD but the highest ADH and COH. For pasting temperature (PT) and thermal property parameters, POP1 and POP2 had similarly lower PT than the other five

subpopulations. Similar results were also found for the thermal property parameters, i.e. POP 1 and POP2 had lower To, Tp, Tc and Δ Hg than the others. POP5 had the highest mean Δ T_{1/2} and POP3 had the lowest mean Δ T_{1/2}. For retrogradation property parameters, POP3 had the highest mean Δ Hr and R%, whereas POP5 and POP7 had the lowest Δ Hr and R% (Table 2).

QTLs for starch physicochemical properties

Association mapping of starch physicochemical property parameters were performed using the 35 SSRG markers and 108 other markers (mostly SSRs) based on the Q+K model. The identified QTLs are hereafter called main-effect QTLs. To uncover more QTLs concealed by the *Wx* and *SSIIa* loci for the starch physicochemical traits, further association mapping were conducted with *Wx* (G/A) and SSIIa (GC/TT) SNPs as covariate based on the same Q+K model. The QTLs identified are called QTLs in the *Wx* or *SSIIa* background. The results are summarized in Table 3 and Fig. 4.

302 AAC

A total of five main-effect QTLs were detected for AAC. Wx gene locus was detected as a major QTL ($P=1.45\times10^{-95}$). SSI locus, RM122, RM346 and RM222 were also detected. Using Wx SNP (A/G) as a covariate, six QTLs were detected including four SBRGs, GBSSII, BE1, SSIIc, and SSIIa. Using SSIIa SNP (GC/TT) as a covariate, the same five main-effect QTLs were detected.

Pasting viscosity

As expected, the *Wx* locus was detected as a main-effect QTL for all the pasting viscosity parameters. SS1 was detected for SB and CS; *SSIIa* was detected for BD, CS,

- 312 Stability and SBratio. In addition, RM346 was detected for CPV, SB, CS, and
- 313 SBratio.
- 314 Under the Wx locus background, no main-effect QTL was detected for PV, HPV and
- 315 CPV. SSIIa was still detected with much smaller P value for BD $(P=3.72\times10^{-8})$,
- SBratio (P=0.0062) and Stability ($P=8.24\times10^{-8}$). No other SSRGs were detected for
- pasting viscosities. More SSRs were detected for BD (RM237, RM276, RM340,
- 318 RM48 and RM507) and Stability (RM209, RM237, RM276, and RM507).
- Under the SSIIa locus background, the QTLs identified for each trait were similar to
- 320 those of main-effect QTLs; the only difference was that one less QTL (SSI) for CS
- and one more QTL (GS3) for SBratio were detected.
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- 323 Gel texture
- 324 Wx was the common main-effect QTL for HD, ADH and COH, while SSI was
- detected as the main-effect QTL for HD and COH. PUL was detected for HD.
- 326 Under the Wx locus background, GBSSII, RM252 and RM3 were detected for HD,
- and only RM252 was detected for COH, while no QTL was detected for ADH.
- 328 Under the SSIIa locus background, the QTLs identified for each trait were the same as
- those of main-effect QTLs.
- 330 Thermal property and pasting temperature (PT)
- For the thermal property and PT, SSIIa was a common main-effect QTL. Other
- SSRGs, SSIIIb (PT), AGPL2 (Δ Hg), and Wx (Δ T_{1/2}) were also detected. In addition,
- some SSRs were detected for PT (RM276, RM253 and RM346), To (RM346), To
- 334 (RM484), Δ Hg (RM1 and RM48) and Δ T_{1/2} (RM161 and RM346).

335 Under the Wx locus background, all the QTLs identified for each trait were the same as those of main-effect QTLs except that one more QTL for Tc (RM484) and ΔHg 336 337 (RM152), and one less (RM346) for $\Delta T_{1/2}$. Under the SSIIa locus background, it was interesting to find that Wx locus was 338 339 detected for Tc (P=0.0018) and Δ Hg (P=0.0016). However, Wx was not detected for $\Delta T_{1/2}$, and instead, other SSRGs, such as SSIIb and AGPL3 were detected for $\Delta T_{1/2}$. 340 AGPL2 was also detected for ΔHg. RM346 was still detected for PT, To and Tp, and 341 342 RM1 and RM161 were still detected for Δ Hg and Δ T_{1/2}, respectively. More additional SSRs were identified for PT, To, Tp, Tc and $\Delta T_{1/2}$. 343 344 Retrogradation property 345 For the retrogradation property, five common SSRGs, Wx, SSIIa, ISA1, AGPL3 and BEIIa, were identified as main-effect QTLs for both ΔHr and R%. RM346 and 346 RM161 for Δ Hr and RM346 for R% were also detected. 347 Under the Wx locus background, ISA1 and SSIIa were still identified as QTLs for both 348 ΔHr and R%. By contrast, BEIIa was only significant for R%. Another SSRG 349 350 (AGPL2) and RM87 were detected for both traits. 351 Under the SSIIa locus background, the QTLs identified were similar to those of main-effect QTLs: Wx, ISA1, AGPL3 and RM346 were significant for both traits, but 352 BEIIa was only detected for R%. 353 354

Discussion

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Association mapping has become a robust technology for quickly identifying the genotype-phenotype relationships among diverse germplasms. The success of association mapping depends on the diversity of the germplasms being investigated, the marker coverage of the target genome, and the appropriate methodologies used.

New advances in association mapping has been made in plants recently, with some great achievements coming from rice, such as mapping genes for cooking quality (Tian et al. 2009) and agronomic traits (Huang et al. 2010; Zhao et al. 2011).

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Due to the diverse origins of the rice accessions used in different studies, a wide range of variations has always been found in different populations, for example, from the African and USA germplasm (Asante et al. 2013), Italian germplasm (Caffagni et al. 2013) and Korean germplasm (Lu et al. 2012a, 2012b; Zhao et al. 2013). The present study covers more than 20 starch physicochemical property traits that have been measured for 379 rice accessions. Compared with other studies on eating and cooking quality of rice, our research ranks the highest in both number of traits and accessions analyzed. In addition to the wide genetic diversity revealed for each trait, we found that all the traits could be classified into three groups: AAC-related traits, GT-related traits, and the mixture (Fig. 2). In another linkage mapping study, Wang et al. (2007) also found that eating and cooking traits of rice could be divided into two groups: the first class consists of AC, GC, and most of the paste viscosity parameters that form a major determinant of eating quality, the second class includes alkali spreading value, pasting temperature and pasting time, which characterize the cooking process. Furthermore, with plotting AAC and GT (measured as the Tp), we have another important finding that both AAC and GT could be divided into two classes, and in combination, there are four classes among nonwaxy rice (Fig. 3). For the low AAC rice accessions (AAC<20%), the GT could be divided into high GT, and low GT class. For the high AAC rice accessions, the GT could also be divided into two groups. The GT of low-AAC- low-GT group are much higher than the high-AAC-low-GT group (Fig. 3). The GT of waxy rice is similar to that of low-AAC rice that have high and low GT classes (Xu et al. 2013). Juliano and Villareal (1993), Juliano (1998) have long before indicated that high-AAC rice usually has intermediate or low-GT; low-AAC rice or waxy rice usually has high or low-GT among rice accessions. By contrast, it is difficult to find the combinations of high-AAC and high-GT rice, and low-AAC and intermediate-GT rice (Juliano and Villareal 1993; Juliano, 1998). No other genetic analyses have indicated this fact. The tight link between AAC and GT suggests that there might be interaction between AAC and GT. However, in depth screening of rice germplasm may find other rare combinations of AAC and GT. For example, Juliano et al. (2009) found the combination of high-AAC and high-GT rice.

These diverse materials provide precious resources for further genetic studies and molecular analysis of the related genes.

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Many studies have focused on the genetic basis of the starch physicochemical properties in relation to the cooking and eating quality of rice. AAC is mainly controlled by the Wx region on chromosome 6 (He et al. 1999; Tan et al. 1999; Bao et al. 2000; Lanceras et al. 2000; Septiningsih et al. 2003; Aluko et al. 2004). GT and thermal properties are genetically determined by a major QTL, i.e. the alkali degeneration (alk) locus on chromosome 6, also known as SSIIa (He et al. 1999; Aluko et al. 2004; Bao et al. 2004c; Fan et al. 2005; Tian et al. 2005; Wang et al. 2007). Genetic analysis with QTL mapping approach showed that the RVA parameters are mainly controlled by the Wx gene (Bao et al. 1999, 2000, 2003; Larkin and Park 2003; Wang et al. 2007; Traore et al. 2011). Gel texture parameters were also mainly controlled by the Wx locus (Bao et al. 2000; 2004a). The aforementioned results mostly came from linkage analyses. Association mapping for these traits have been conducted recently (Chen et al. 2008a, 2008b; Tian et al. 2009; Lu et al. 2012a, 2012b; Zhao et al. 2013). Similar results of main-effect QTLs have been reported, i.e. Wx and SSIIa controlled AAC-related traits and GT-related traits, respectively (Chen et al. 2008a, 2008b; Tian et al. 2009; Caffagni et al. 2013). However, due to different germplasms used, some of the studies have not identified the Wx for AAC (Lu et al. 2012a, 2012b; Zhao et al. 2013). Lu et al. (2012a, 2012b) detected AGPS1, AGPL4 and SSIIb for AAC and pasting viscosity in their rice materials. Kharabian-Masouleh et al. (2012) reported that a SNP of glucose-6-phosphate translocator gene was highly associated with amylose content and retrogradation property. This study also found some new loci for starch physicochemical properties, such as SSIIIb for PT, PUL for HD, AGPL2 for ΔHg; BEIIa and AGPL3 for retrogradation properties (Table 3). The retrogradation property traits were comprehensively studied for the first time, and we identified five common SSRGs, Wx, SSIIa, ISA1, AGPL3 and BEIIa, as main-effect QTLs for both Δ Hr and R%. Either under the Wx locus or SSIIa backgournd, ISAI

could also be identified for both Δ Hr and R%. Thus, it can be concluded that retrogradation properties are mainly controlled by Wx, SSIIa and ISA1. Their relative effects are in the order of SSIIa > Wx > ISA1. However, the effects of other SSRGs such as BEIIa, AGPL2 and AGPL3 could not be neglected.

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Genetic linkage mapping studies showed that Wx not only controls AAC, gel consistency and pasting viscosity, but also affects GT (Wang et al. 2007; Lapitan et al. 2009), and the QTL cluster at SSIIa locus also contains individual QTL for gel consistency and some paste viscosity parameters (Wang et al. 2007). Tian et al. (2009) reported by association mapping that Wx not only affects AAC and gel consistency as a major gene but also regulates GT as a minor one; SSIIa plays an essential role not only in controlling GT, but also AC and gel consistency (Tian et al. 2009). In this study, we analyzed the effects of Wx and SSIIa background QTLs using the two functional SNPs for Wx (G/A) and SSIIa (GC/TT) as an additional covariate on the physicochemical property traits by association mapping. We found that more QTLs that were concealed by the Wx and SSIIa could be discovered. In the SSIIabackground, the AAC-related traits were found to be controlled by similar QTLs as the main-effect QTLs, but it is possible to detect more other QTLs for the GT-related traits. Specifically, the Tc and Δ Hg were found to be controlled by Wx. RM447 on chromosome 8 and RM17 on chromosome 12 were found to control PT, To, Tp and Tc. SSIIb and AGPL3 were identified for $\Delta T_{1/2}$. Similarly, under the background of Wx, the GT-related traits were found to be controlled by similar main-effect QTLs, while it is possible to detect more QTLs for the AAC-related traits. Specifically, AAC was found to be controlled by more SSRGs, such as SSIIa, BE1, SSIIc and GBSSII. The Stab was found to be controlled by more SSRs. Zhao et al. (2013) also detected a locus near SSIIa (RM276) for AAC. All these findings confirm the importance of Wx and SSIIa in determining the eating and cooking quality of rice, and suggest that there might be epistatic interaction between Wx and SSIIa. Tian et al. (2009) introduced an antisense and sense Wx RNA to a high AAC rice and waxy rice respectively, and they found that GT changed simultaneously with significant decrease or increase in AAC. Tian et al. (2009) and Gao et al. (2011) introduced SSIIa gene to low-GT rice by transgenic engineering and found that it also affected the AAC, gel consistency and

pasting properties, suggesting that *SSIIa* is a modifier gene for AAC, gel consistency, and pasting properties in rice. These genetic transformation studies provide supporting evidence for the hypothesized interaction between *Wx* and *SSIIa*. However, it is also possible that the complex effects of *Wx* and *SSIIa* are derived from their close physical position in the chromosome 6, as suggested by strong linkage disequilibrium for these starch related traits. Thus, the exact roles played by *Wx* and *SSIIa* remain to be untangled.

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Biochemically, starch biosynthesis in the cereal endosperm involves complex interactions among multiple isoforms of starch synthase, branching and debranching enzymes, leading to a fine amylopectin structure (Jeon et al. 2010; Tetlow et al. 2011). Multi-enzyme complexes (protein-protein interactions) have been indentified in wheat and maize endosperms during the period of grain filling (Tetlow et al. 2004, 2008; Hennen-Bierwagen et al. 2008, 2009). The multi-enzyme complex components in the normal maize endosperm include SSI, SSIIa, BEI, BEIIa, BEIIb, and SP (starach phosphorylase) (Liu et al. 2009). Based on the facts that Wx and SSIIa exert joint control over both AAC and GT, and the complex AAC and GT combinations exist in rice germplasm, Bao (2012) proposed a multi-enzyme complex model to explain the interaction between GBSSI (Wx protein) and SSIIa, and how they contribute to diverse combination of AAC and GT in rice germplasm. The model hypothesizes that BEIIb, SSI and SSIIa are the major multi-enzyme complex components in the intermediate-GT (SSIIa active) rice, the high activity of GBSSI in the stroma negatively regulates the function of the multi-enzyme complex, resulting in the synthesis of high-AAC intermediate-GT starch. In low-AAC high-GT rice, the lower GBSSI activity and hence the higher activity of the multi-enzyme complex, allows the synthesis of more chains with DP>12, thus producing high-GT starch. Low-GT rice can have high, intermediate, low or zero (waxy rice) AAC. Due to the loss of function of SSIIa, the components that comprise the multi-enzyme complex are unknown and thus need to be further studied. However, the multi-enzyme complex in SSIIa-active rice grains should be clarified first before a more realistic hypothesis can be put forward.

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Undoubtedly, our results have direct applications to rice quality breeding programs.

The well-known markers of Wx and SSIIa genes have been used in rice breeding in

which they greatly facilitate the precise picking of the desirable alleles from the good quality parent using marker-assisted selection (Wang et al. 2007; Jin et al. 2010). This study also points to a new direction in rice grain quality research, that is, to identify the protein-protein interactions among the related enzymes during grain filling. The knowledge gained from these new researches will enhance our understanding of starch biosynthesis, and ultimately contribute to the improvement of rice cooking and eating quality.

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d. Legends for Figures The position of markers in physical distance on 12 chromosomes of rice genome Fig. 2 Dendrogram generated with the starch properties parameters using Ward's method based on squared Euclidean distance Fig. 3 Plot of AAC-GT combination for nonwaxy rice accessions Fig. 4 Plots of main-effect QTLs (A), QTLs identified in the Wx background (B) and SSIIa background (C) for 20 starch physicochemical properties. The SSRGs with the largest $-\log(P)$ values were highlighted with red (Wx), blue (SSIIa), green (ISAI) and pink (SSIIb) colors

Fig 1

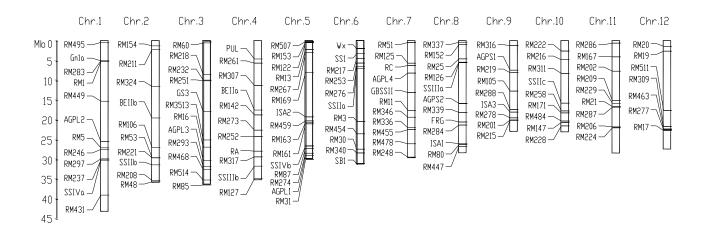


Fig 2

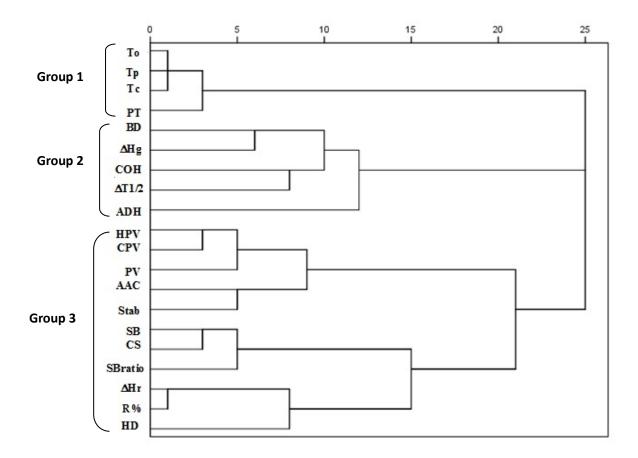


Fig 3

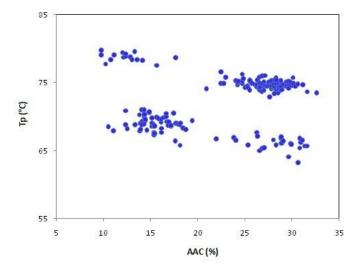
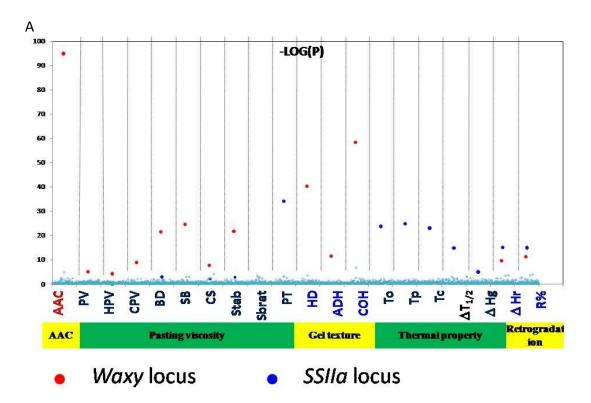
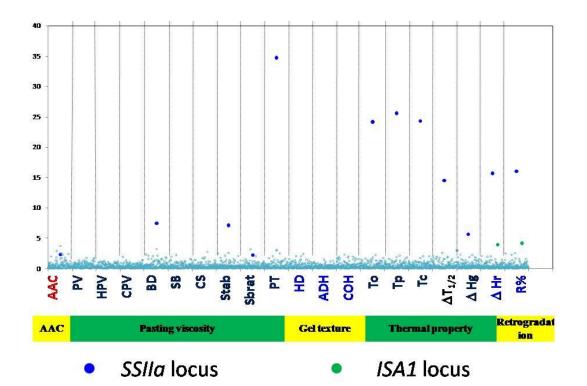
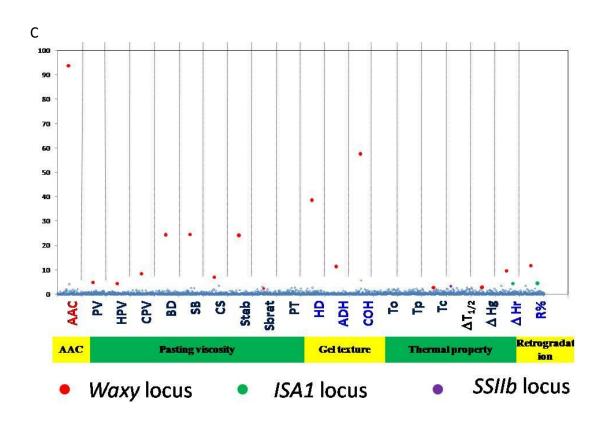


Fig 4.



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Table 1 Summary of CAPS, dCAPS and InDel markers for starch synthesizing genes used in this study

Genes Chrom osome		Forward primer	Reverse primer	R.E. 1	Allele size (bp)	PIC ¹
GBSSII	7	TGACCTGAAAATCATATTATTAC	CACTTTCGTTTGGTGCATCTG	SpeI	180 (A), 158 (T)	0.473
SSIIc (SSII-1)	10	CGGTGGCAAGGAGAGCCGGGGT	GCGGCACGGATCTGGAGAAG	MboII	210 (G); 181 (T)	0.109
SSIIb (SSII-2)	2	TTCGCAAAGCATGAGACAATAAG	GAGGCCCAAGTCATTCAACAA	-	InDel (155; 172)	0.280
SSIIIb (SSIII-1)	4	AGCAGAATGAATCTGACAATCTAG	CGTGATTTCCACCATAAGAGCAA	XbaI	182 (AG), 164+20(AGAG)	0.302
SSIIIa (SSIII-2)	8	TGTTAAAATTTCCCCCCAAGTAC	GCATAATGTTCAACTGTAGATAAAGAA G	MobII	203(C); 166+37(T)	0.471
SSIVa (SSIV-1)	1	GTCGCTTCCTAGGAGGGCAACGT	GATAACTGCTAAGATATTGAGAG	Acl	198 (C); 176 (T)	0.260
SSIVb (SSIV-2)	5	CCAAGTGGGGATCATCAACCTC	CCCGCAAAAATGAAGCTAAGC	-	InDel (252; 230)	0.005
	5	${\tt CTTCTGATTGATGGTTGC^2}$	GGAAGAATAATCTCTACTAGGTGGC	SphI	728 (G); 523+205 (A)	0.381
BEIIb (SBE3)	2	GCATCCTCAACCTAAAAGACCA	GAATCAACCATCCAGCAAAGG	Scal	301 (G); 140+160 (A)	0.462
BEIIa (SBE4)	4	CTGGGTGCTCCTGTTTGTTTCT	CGTGCTTATTCGCTGTATTCCT	MnlI	192 (C); 163 (G)	0.358
ISA1	8	CGCACTGGATTTCAAGATGAGC	TCCATAGATGCTTTCGGCTGT	AluI	213 (C); 191 (T)	0.305
ISA2	5	CAGGCGTGTAGCAAGATCACTCAT	TGACCCGGTTCTTTCCATGAC	Nla III	181 (A); 157(G)	0.500
ISA3	9	TGACTGATTGGATGCTGCTAAAC	GCCGCTCTTGTTTGGAAATG	HinfI	246 (A); 174+72 (G)	0.336
PUL	4	AGAGAAGGAGAAAGAAGTGGAGAC ²	GTCCAAACTGAATCACTCAATCG	-	InDel (128; 115)	0.334

^{1.} R.E: restriction enzyme; PIC: polymorphism information content.

^{2.} The CAPS (SSIV-2) and InDel (PUL) markers were adapted from Tian et al. (2010) and Yan et al. (2011).

Table 2 Comparison of the mean values of the phenotypic traits among seven subpopulations

Subpop	AAC	PV	HPV	CPV	BD	SB	CS	Stab	SBratio	PT	HD	ADH	СОН	То	Тр	Тс	□ ΔT1/2	□ΔHg	□∆Hr	R%
POP1	24.5 b	241.1 b	180.8 ab	319.6 ab	60.3 c	78.5 a	138.8 b	0.7 ab	1.8 bcd	73.7 b	29.2 cd	-30.0 bc	0.6 b	63.0 c	69.2 c	75.9 с	7.2 b	7.0 d	1.1 de	14.8 de
POP2	21.2 с	224.1 с	158.3 d	309.5 b	65.8 bc	85.3 a	151.2 a	0.7 cd	2.0 a	73.9 b	25.0 d	-6.2 ab	0.6 b	67.0 b	72.2 ab	78.7 ab	6.4 cd	7.8 c	1.8 cd	21.7 cd
POP3	28.4 a	257.4 a	189.8 a	336.9 a	67.7 bc	79.4 a	147.1 ab	0.7 abc	1.8 bcd	76.2 a	41.6 a	-36.1 d	0.5 c	69.4 c	74.1 a	80.1 a	5.9 d	9.1 a	3.6 a	38.9 a
POP4	24.9 b	245.3 b	176.4 bc	323.9 ab	68.9 bc	78.6 a	147.6 ab	0.7 bcd	1.8 b	75.9 a	32.2 c	-36.3 d	0.6 b	68.5 ab	73.8 a	80.0 a	6.4 cd	8.4 b	2.5 bc	28.7 bc
POP5	18.0 d	235.5 bc	163.9 d	280.5 с	71.6 b	45.0 b	116.6 с	0.7 d	1.7 d	76.3 a	17.1 e	-21.6 a	0.7 a	64.1 c	70.7 bc	77.9 b	8.0 a	7.8 c	0.9 e	10.5 e
POP6	27.6 a	244.4 b	184.3 ab	329.7 a	60.1 c	85.3 a	145.4 ab	0.8 a	1.8 bc	76.3 a	37.0 b	-33.3 cd	0.5 с	68.5 ab	73.6 a	79.8 a	6.3 cd	8.5 ab	2.9 ab	34.0 ab
POP7	17.7 d	258.4 a	166.3 cd	288.8 с	92.1 a	30.3 с	122.4 с	0.6 e	1.8 cd	75.1 a	18.6 e	-21.4 a	0.7 a	66.6 b	72.3 ab	78.6 ab	6.7 bc	8.2 bc	1.0 e	11.5 e

Different letters in the same column were significant at P < 0.05.

Table 3 The marker loci associated with starch physicochemical property traits detected with Q+K model and with Wx or SSIIa as additional covariate.

		N	Iain effe	ect loci		Wx cova	riate	SSIIa covariate			
	Trait	Locus	chro.1	p_Marker	Locus	Chro.	p_Marker	Locus	Chro.	p_Marker	
AAC											
	AAC	RM122	5	3.8×10^{-3}	RM507	5	1.3×10^{-3}	RM122	5	5.1×10^{-3}	
		Wx	6	1.45×10^{-95}	SSIIa	6	5.3×10^{-3}	Wx	6	2.14×10^{-94}	
		SS1	6	1.57×10^{-5}	RM276	6	2.1×10^{-4}	SS1	6	4.67×10^{-5}	
		RM346	7	4.6×10^{-3}	BE1	6	3.2×10^{-3}	RM346	7	9.0×10^{-3}	
		RM222	10	5.2×10^{-3}	GBSSII	7	5.5×10^{-3}	RM222	10	5.6×10^{-3}	
					SSIIc	10	4.1×10^{-3}				
Pasting vis	cosity										
	PV	Wx	6	1.18×10^{-5}				Wx	6	1.52×10^{-5}	
	HPV	Wx	6	6.46×10 ⁻⁵				Wx	6	4.92×10 ⁻⁵	
	CPV	Wx	6	1.52×10 ⁻⁹				Wx	6	4.88×10 ⁻⁹	
		RM346	7	7.9×10^{-3}							
	BD	Wx	6	3.92×10 ⁻²²	RM237	1	4.9×10 ⁻³	Wx	6	3.95×10^{-25}	
		SSIIa	6	1.2×10^{-3}	RM48	2	7.5×10^{-3}				
					RM507	5	9.3×10^{-3}				
					RM276	6	6.3×10^{-4}				
					SSIIa	6	3.72×10^{-8}				
					RM340	6	8.2×10^{-3}				
	SB	Wx	6	2.87×10 ⁻²⁵	RM317	4	6.2×10 ⁻³	Wx	6	2.83×10 ⁻²⁵	
		SS1	6	1.2×10^{-3}				SS1	6	1.6×10^{-3}	
		RM346	7	1.5×10^{-3}				RM346	7	2.6×10^{-3}	

	CS	RM161	5	4.5×10 ⁻³	RM346	7	1.8×10 ⁻³	RM161	5	5.9×10 ⁻³
		Wx	6	2.29×10^{-8}				Wx	6	1.26×10^{-7}
		SS1	6	9.9×10^{-3}				RM346	7	2.65×10^{-4}
		SSIIa	6	5.3×10^{-3}						
		RM346	7	8.77×10^{-5}						
	PT	SSIIIb	4	9.1×10 ⁻³	SSIIIb	4	9.9×10 ⁻³	RM346	7	1.9×10 ⁻³
		RM253	6	9.39×10^{-4}	RM253	6	1.1×10^{-3}	RM447	8	1.4×10^{-3}
		RM276	6	8.59×10^{-4}	RM276	6	8.02×10^{-4}	RM17	12	3.2×10^{-3}
		SSIIa	6	8.28×10^{-35}	SSIIa	6	2.06×10^{-35}			
		RM346	7	4.3×10^{-3}	RM346	7	3.1×10^{-3}			
	Stability	Wx	6	2.45×10 ⁻²²	RM237	1	3.5×10 ⁻³	Wx	6	6.67×10 ⁻²⁵
		SSIIa	6	1.3×10^{-3}	RM507	5	7.5×10^{-3}			
					RM276	6	2.4×10^{-3}			
					SSIIa	6	8.24×10^{-8}			
					RM209	11	8.4×10^{-3}			
	SBratio	RM161	5	3.74×10 ⁻⁴	RM161	5	7.37×10 ⁻⁴	GS3	3	6.6×10 ⁻³
		Wx	6	3.0×10^{-3}	SSIIa	6	6.2×10^{-3}	RM161	5	5.77×10^{-4}
		SSIIa	6	2.5×10^{-3}	RM346	7	1.0×10^{-2}	Wx	6	4.4×10^{-3}
		RM346	7	7.5×10^{-3}				RM346	7	7.7×10^{-3}
Gel texture										
	HD	PUL	4	4.6×10^{-3}	RM252	4	9.8×10^{-3}	PUL	4	3.0×10^{-3}
		Wx	6	5.68×10^{-14}	RM3	6	9.3×10^{-3}	Wx	6	2.48×10^{-39}
		SS1	6	3.32×10^{-4}	GBSSII	7	4.2×10^{-3}	SS1	6	1.4×10^{-3}
	ADH	Wx	6	3.58×10^{-12}				Wx	6	4.9×10 ⁻¹²
	СОН	Wx	6	4.96×10 ⁻⁵⁹	RM252	4	5.6×10 ⁻³	Wx	6	2.83×10 ⁻⁵⁸
		SS1	6	2.9×10^{-3}				SS1	6	4.7×10^{-3}

		RM346	7	6.4×10^{-3}				RM346	7	7.6×10^{-3}
Thermal prope	erty									
	To	SSIIa	6	2.0×10^{-24}	SSIIa	6	7.37×10^{-25}	RM346	7	5.5×10^{-3}
		RM346	7	9.1×10^{-3}	RM346	7	6.4×10^{-3}	RM447	8	8.7×10^{-3}
								RM215	9	6.5×10^{-3}
_								RM17	12	4.4×10^{-3}
	Тр	SSIIa	6	1.91×10^{-25}	SSIIa	6	2.67×10^{-26}	RM346	7	7.9×10 ⁻³
					RM346	7	7.3×10^{-3}	RM447	8	4.1×10^{-3}
_								RM17	12	4.7×10^{-3}
	Tc	SSIIa	6	9.87×10 ⁻²⁴	SSIIa	6	5.64×10^{-25}	Wx	6	1.8×10 ⁻³
		RM484	10	8.5×10^{-3}	RM346	7	9.9×10^{-3}	RM125	7	7.6×10^{-3}
_					RM484	10	9.1×10^{-3}	RM17	12	3.4×10^{-3}
	ΔHg	RM1	1	9.90×10^{-4}	RM1	1	1.0×10^{-3}	RM1	1	1.5×10 ⁻³
		AGPL2	1	1.4×10^{-3}	AGPL2	1	1.1×10^{-3}	AGPL2	1	4.6×10^{-3}
		RM48	2	5.1×10^{-3}	RM48	2	5.5×10^{-3}	Wx	6	1.6×10^{-3}
		SSIIa	6	1.24×10^{-5}	SSIIa	6	2.38×10^{-6}	RM224	11	3.9×10^{-3}
					RM152	8	6.2×10^{-3}			
	$\Delta T_{1/2}$	Gn1a	1	8.1×10^{-3}	Gn1a	1	9.3×10^{-3}	Gn1a	1	8.1×10^{-3}
		RM161	5	1.1×10^{-3}	RM161	5	2.5×10^{-3}	SSIIb	2	5.13×10^{-4}
		Wx	6	4.5×10^{-3}	SSIIa	6	3.47×10^{-15}	AGPL3	3	3.3×10^{-3}
		SSIIa	6	1.46×10^{-15}				RM161	5	2.3×10^{-3}
		RM346	7	5.5×10^{-3}				RM278	9	9.1×10^{-3}
								RM215	9	1.3×10^{-3}
								RM286	11	6.6×10^{-3}
								RM202	11	6.0×10^{-3}
								RM224	11	5.3×10 ⁻³

Retrogradation								
ΔHr	AGPL3 3	5.0×10^{-3}	AGPL2	1	8.8×10^{-3}	AGPL3	3	2.69×10^{-4}
	BEIIa 4	5.2×10^{-3}	RM87	5	1.02×10^{-2}	Wx	6	2.30×10^{-10}
	RM161 5	5.4×10^{-3}	SSIIa	6	2.22×10^{-16}	RM346	7	4.9×10^{-3}
	Wx 6	3.18×10^{-10}	ISA 1	8	1.18×10^{-4}	ISA 1	8	4.67×10^{-5}
	SSIIa 6	1.06×10^{-15}						
	RM346 7	4.33×10^{-4}						
	<i>ISA1</i> 8	2.03×10^{-4}						
R%	AGPL3 3	4.2×10^{-3}	AGPL2	1	3.4×10^{-3}	AGPL3	3	2.31×10 ⁻⁴
	BEIIa 4	2.5×10^{-3}	BEIIa	4	5.5×10^{-3}	BEIIa	4	5.1×10^{-3}
	Wx 6	7.28×10^{-12}	RM87	5	2.9×10^{-3}	Wx	6	2.25×10^{-12}
	SSIIa 6	1.32×10^{-15}	SSIIa	6	1.08×10^{-16}	RM346	7	3.2×10^{-3}
	RM346 7	2.25×10^{-4}	ISA 1	8	7.18×10^{-5}	ISA 1	8	3.59×10^{-5}
	<i>ISA1</i> 8	1.62×10^{-4}						

Chro.: chromosome.