



## Spatially mixed crops to control the stratified dispersal of airborne fungal diseases

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Titre Spatially mixed crops to control the stratified dispersal of airborne fungal diseases  
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Résumé en anglais	Intraspecific crop diversification is thought to be a possible solution to the disease susceptibility of monocultured crops. We modelled the stratified dispersal of an airborne pathogen population in order to identify the spatial patterns of cultivar mixtures that could slow epidemic spread driven by dual dispersal mechanisms acting over both short and long distances. We developed a model to simulate the propagation of a fungal disease in a 2D field, including a reaction-diffusion model for short-distance disease dispersal, and a stochastic model for long-distance dispersal. The model was fitted to data for the spatio-temporal spread of faba bean rust (caused by <i>Uromyces viciae-fabae</i> ) through a discontinuous field. The model was used to compare the effectiveness of eight different planting patterns of cultivar mixtures against a disease spread by short-distance and stratified dispersal. Our combined modelling approach provides a reasonably good fit with the observed data for the spread of faba bean rust. Similar predictive power could be expected for the management of resource-mediated invasions by other airborne fungi. If a disease spreads by short-distance dispersal, random mixtures can be used to slow the epidemic spread, since their spatial irregularity creates a natural barrier to the progression of a smooth epidemic wave. In the context of stratified dispersal, heterogeneous patterns should be used that include a minimum distance between susceptible units, which decreases the probability of infection by long-distance spore dispersal. We provide a simple framework for modelling the stratified dispersal of disease in a diversified crop. The model suggests that the spatial arrangement of components in cultivar mixtures has to accord with the dispersal characteristics of the pathogen in order to increase the efficiency of diversification strategies in agroecosystems and forestry. It can be applied in low input agriculture to manage pathogen invasion by intercropping and cultivar mixtures, and to design sustainable systems of land use.
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