

Sunflower Seedling Salinity Tolerance Assay

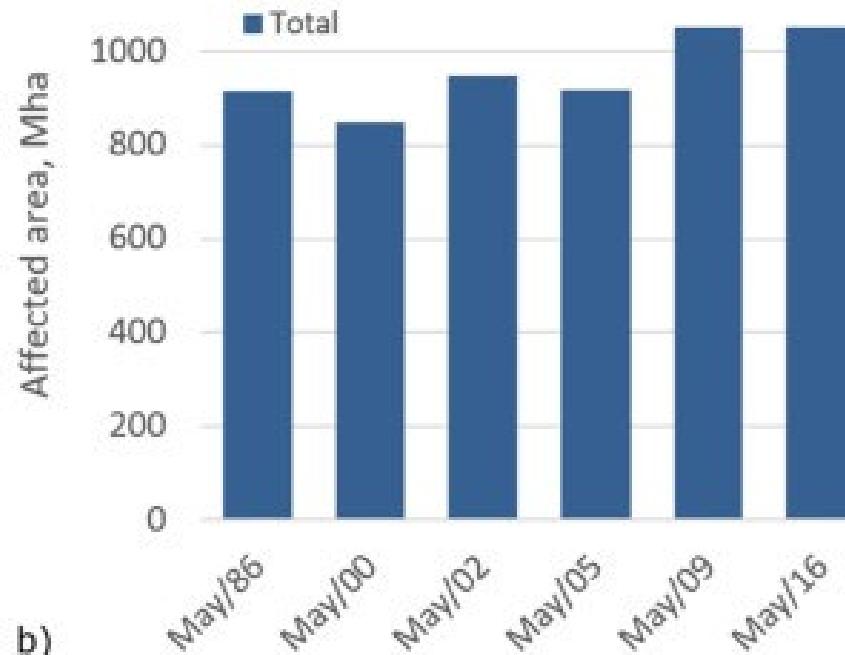
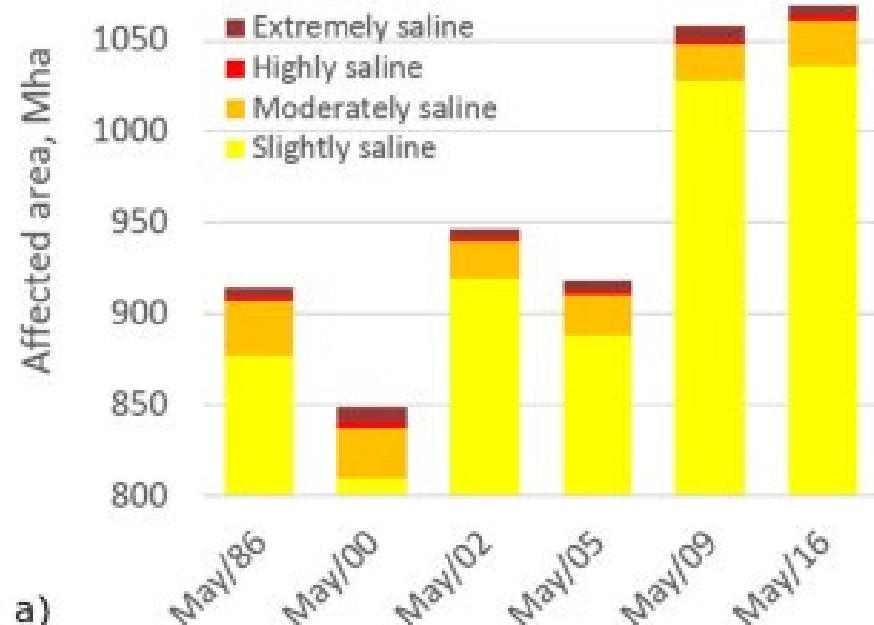
Joseph A.M. Barham
NDSU | Dept. of Plant Sciences
2026 NSA Research Forum
January 8th, 2026

An introduction...

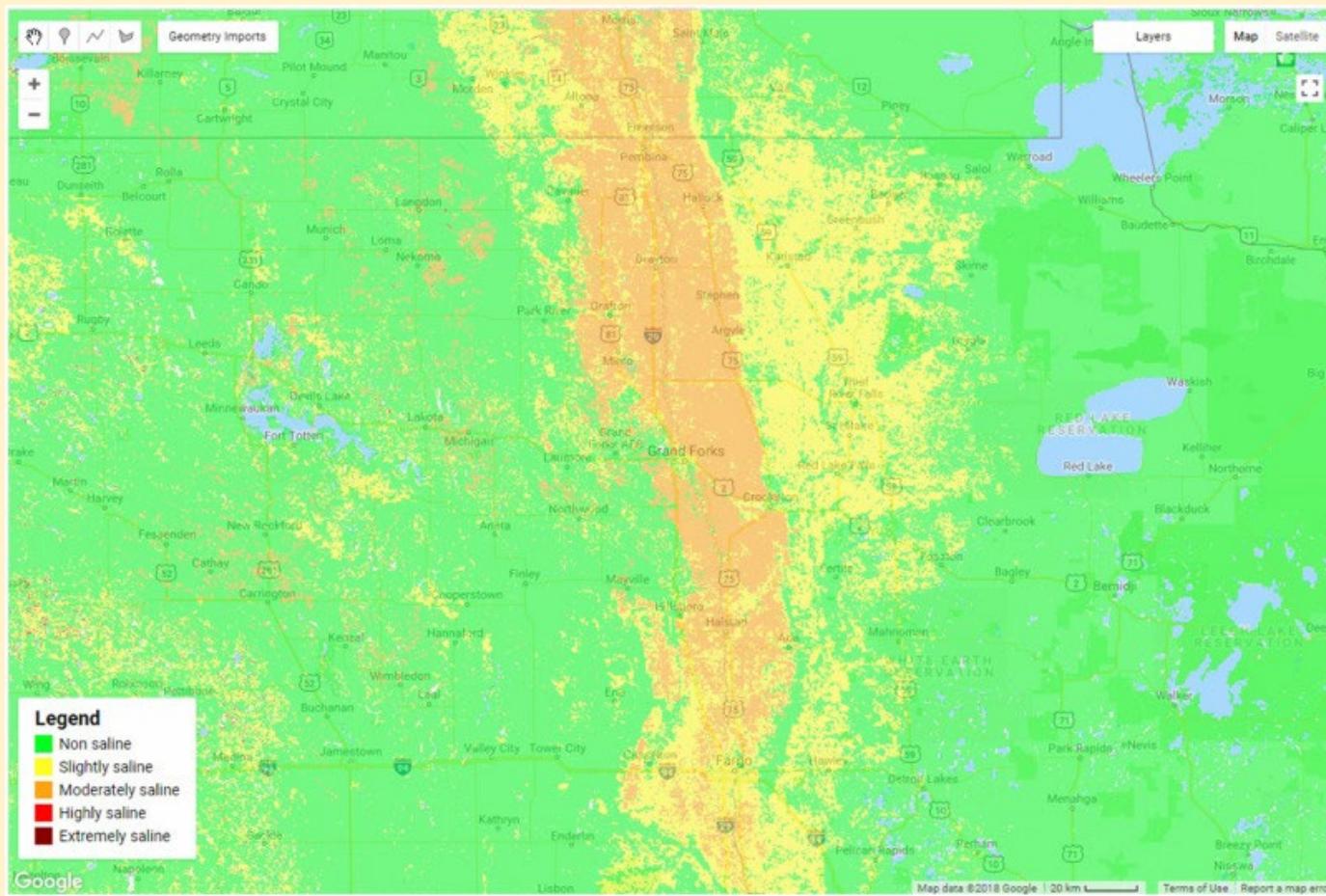


Franzen *et al.* (2024), www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/sites/default/files/2024-06/sf1087.pdf

Volatility in saline acreage globally

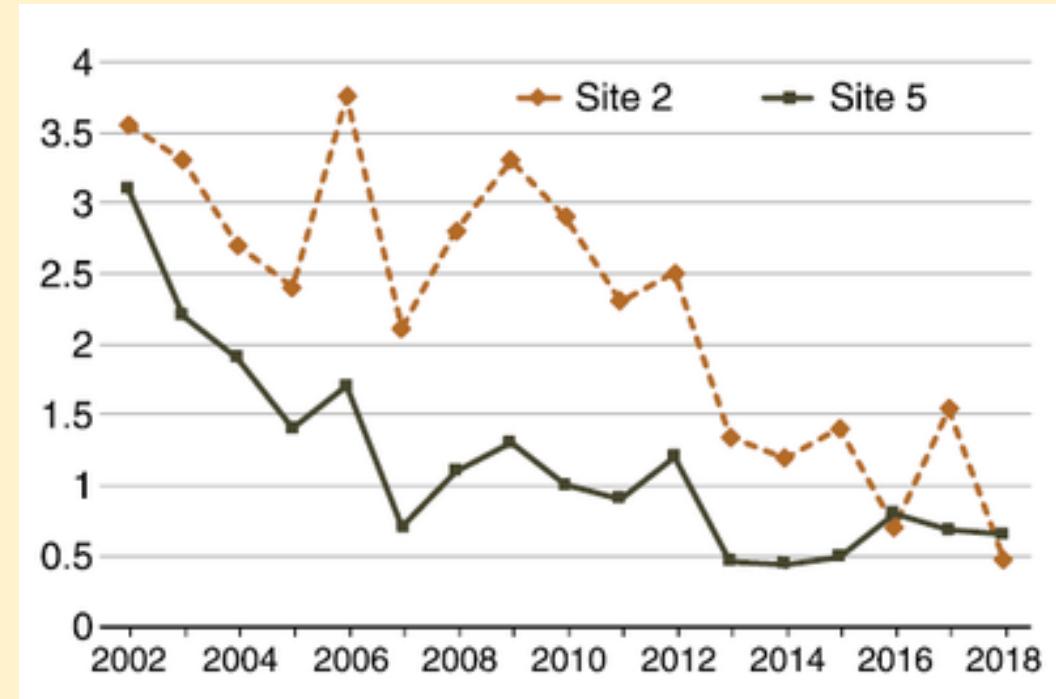


Clearer regional patterns



Strategies for salt mitigation

- Tile drainage.
- Maintaining crop coverage.
 - Keeping cash crops growing
 - Using cover crops
- Alfalfa buffer strips.
- Chemical treatments.



Franzen et al., 2024. www.ndsu.edu/agriculture/sites/default/files/2024-06/sf1087.pdf

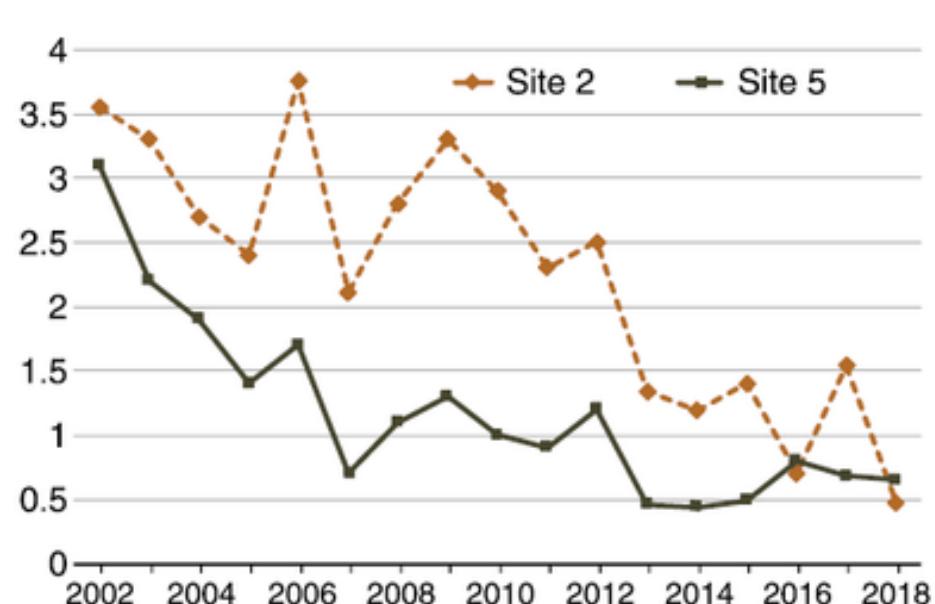
Wet spring, dry fall.

Sunflower's place in salt mitigation

- Already moderately salt tolerant, lots of variation to select on.
- Deeper root system than most crops
- Giving options for maintaining crop presence in saline fields.



Sunflower's place in salt mitigation



Difficulties in breeding for salt tolerance



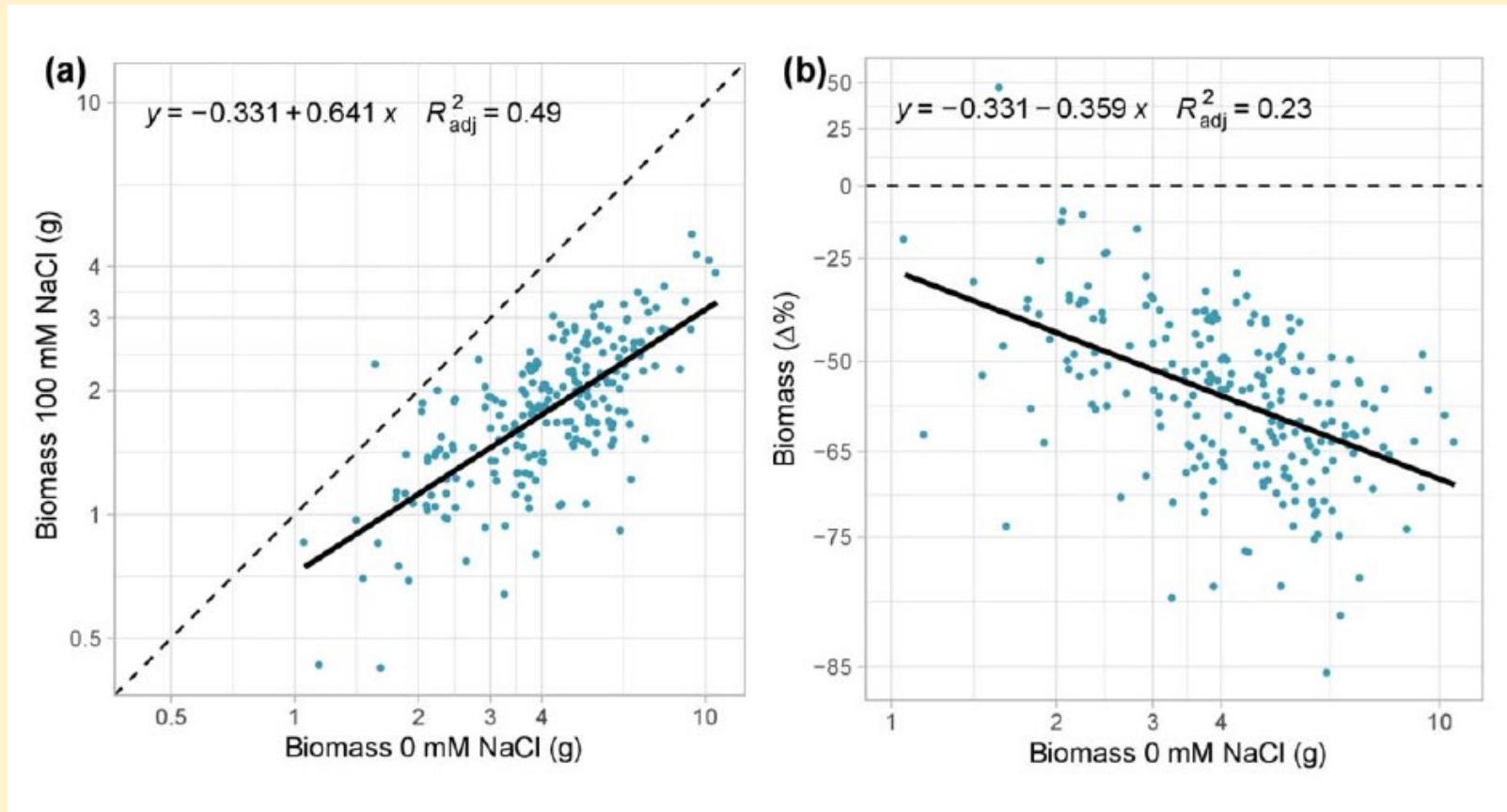
Previous work:

Key Traits and Genes Associate with Salinity Tolerance Independent from Vigor in Cultivated Sunflower¹[OPEN]

Andries A. Temme,² Kelly L. Kerr, Rishi R. Masalia, John M. Burke, and Lisa A. Donovan³

Department of Plant Biology, University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia 30602

Previous work: Temme *et al.* 2020



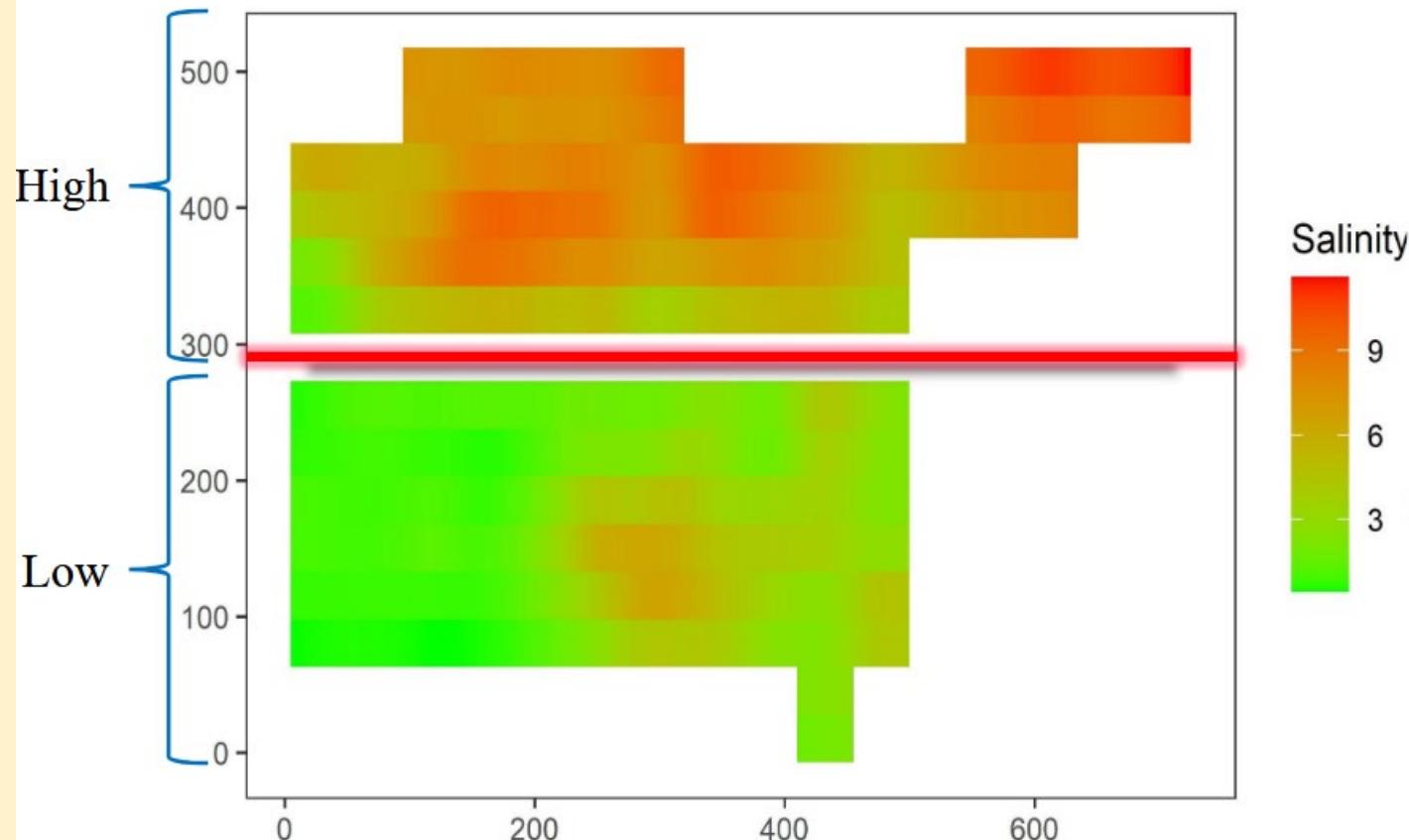
Previous work:

Association studies of salinity tolerance in sunflower provide robust breeding and selection strategies under climate change

James P. McNellie¹ · William E. May² · Loren H. Rieseberg³ · Brent S. Hulke¹ 

Received: 13 March 2024 / Accepted: 8 June 2024 / Published online: 15 July 2024

This is a U.S. Government work and not under copyright protection in the US; foreign copyright protection may apply 2024



2017
Depth: 6"-24"

Results of McNellie *et al.* and Temme *et al.*:

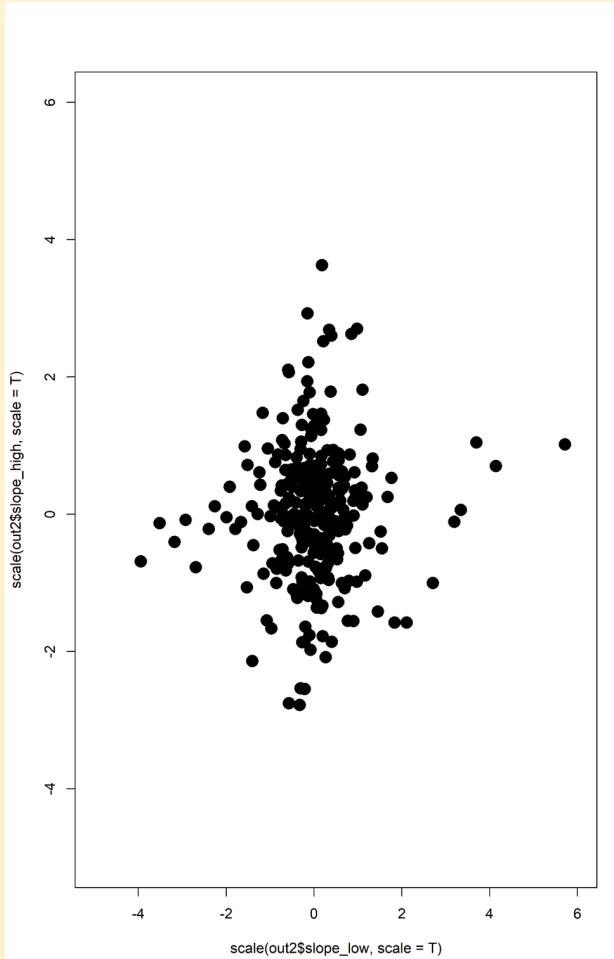
Trait	Salinity	Chr.	Position
Leaf Area	Slope	12	61,311,476
Leaf Weight (suggestive)	High	10	20,541,564



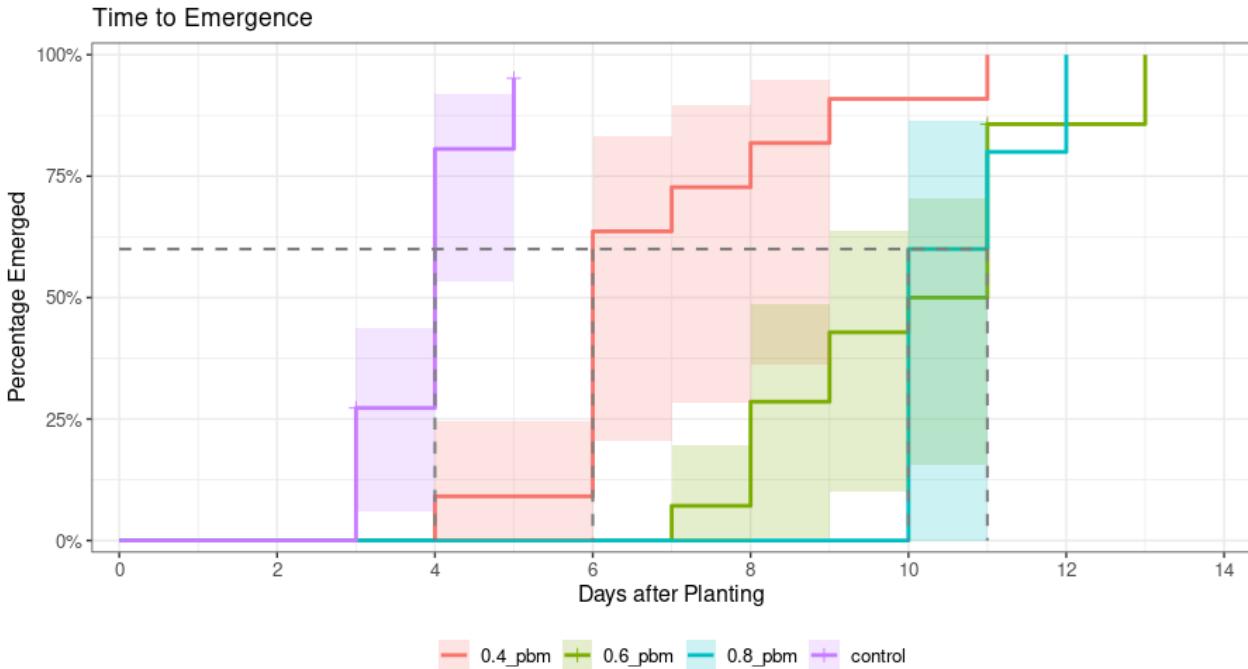
Temme et al. 2020

- Height & plant mass
- Leaf & plant mass

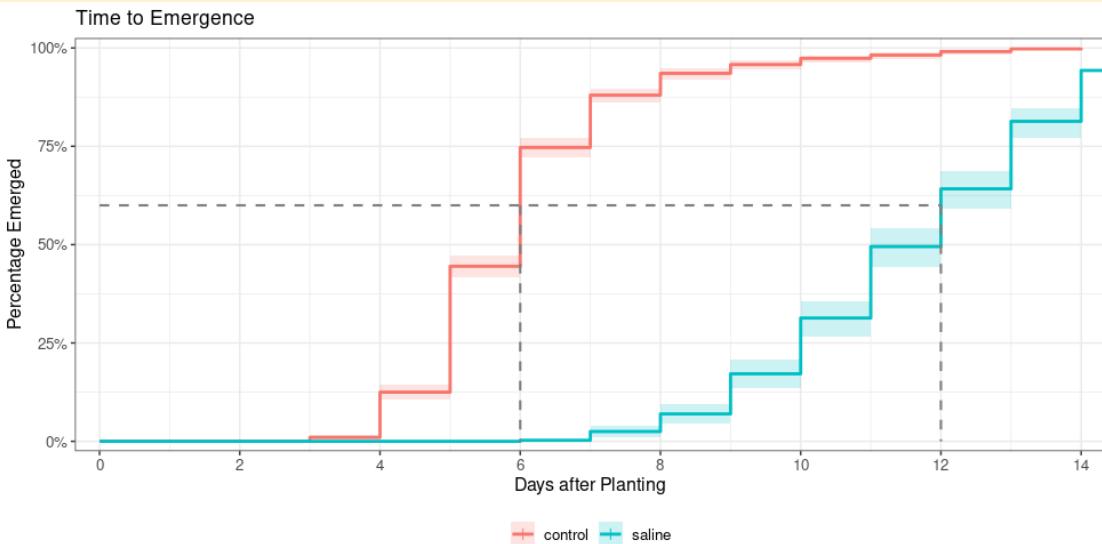
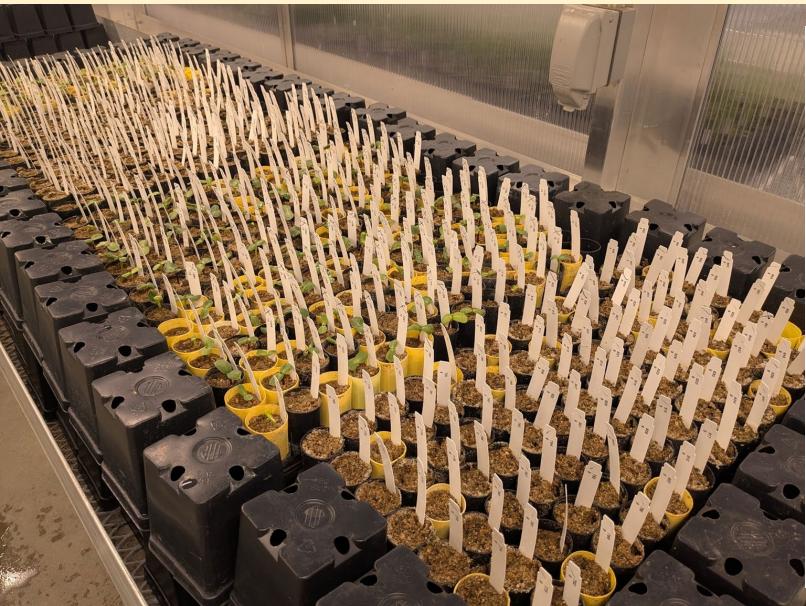
Motive for continuing the search



Methodology

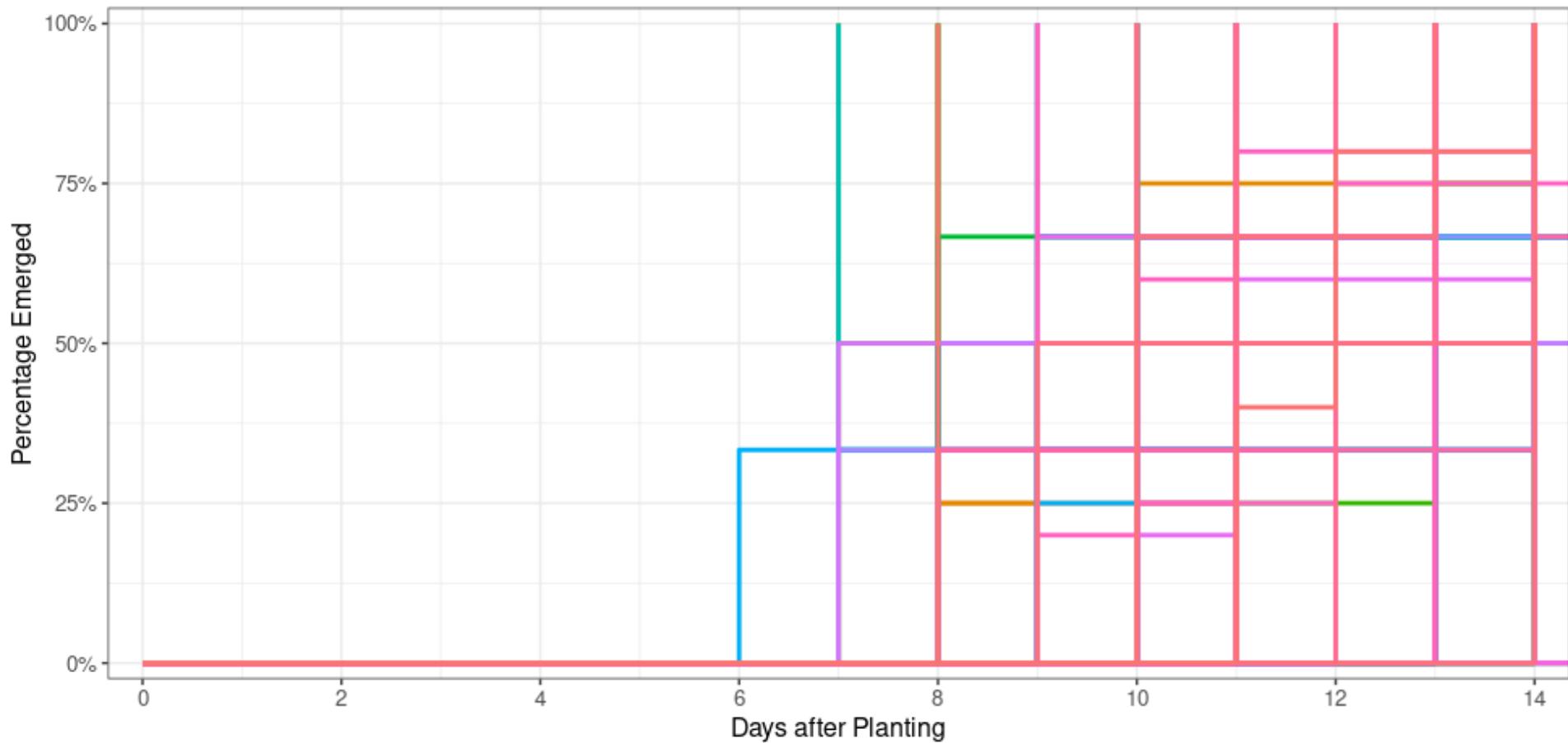


Preliminary Results



A truly ugly plot

Time to Emergence, 289 Genotypes in Saline Conditions



What's Next:

- With phenotyping winding down, the project should wrap up shortly.
- Some additional replicates may be necessary.
- Various models to test.
- Reconnecting this greenhouse work to field data.

Questions!

Authors:

Joseph A.M. Barham – NDSU
Brent Hulke – USDA
Qi Zhang – NDSU
Tom DeSutter – NDSU
James McNellie – USDA
(and likely more)

Acknowledgements:

Brian Smart (Data Scientist)
Aaron Ostland (Soil Scientist)
Brady Koehler (Technician)
Landon Johnson (Technician)
Zachary Tarble (Technician)
Zy Tippins (Technician)
Megan Schneider (Intern)
Paige Mertens (Intern)
And many more...

