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The Frontiers of Science and Technology in Crop Breeding and Production Conference

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CORRELATIONS OF HEADING TIME, CHLOROPHYLL CONTENT AND GRAIN YIELD IN A WHEAT COLLECTION

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Heading time significantly contributes to wheat adaptability and yield allowing drought escape during the critical developmental stages. Besides, chlorophyll content has been used to assess the level of drought stress and to predict yield. Our aim was to determine correlations among heading time, chlorophyll content and grain yield of 100 wheat genotypes from Europe, Asia and America. A field trial was performed at the Institute of Field and Vegetable Crops, Serbia using a completely randomised block design with three replications during two seasons. The relative chlorophyll index (CCI) was measured with a portable chlorophyll metre. Days to heading were calculated from January 1 to the date when the first spikelet was visible on 50% of the ears. Grain yield was determined at maturity from 5 m^2 plots and calculated at 10% moisture. Significant positive correlation was determined between CCI and yield, while there was no significant correlation between yield and heading time. The analysis of variance showed that the earliest heading was among the Asian genotypes (130.2 days), while the varieties from the western-central Europe had latest heading (135.3 days). The highest CCI was determined for the western-central (34.0) and southern-eastern European genotypes (33.4), while the smallest CCI was observed in American varieties (31.2). The western-central and southern-eastern European groups had the highest yields, whereas the Asian and American groups had significantly smaller yields. The medium heading genotypes had on average the highest CCI and yield, showing adaptation to Serbian agroecological conditions.

Key words: chlorophyll content, ear emergence, grain yield, wheat.

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