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**INFLUENCE DE L'HYDROLOGIE, DU SUBSTRATUM
ET DE LA RESTAURATION D'UNE TOURBIÈRE
ABANDONNÉE SUR LA CROISSANCE DE LA
CHICOUTÉ**

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Résumé

La culture de la chicouté (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) connaît présentement un regain d'intérêt. Un guide de production a été publié en Norvège, mais les caractéristiques physiques et hydriques du sol y sont imprécises. La compatibilité avec la restauration de tourbières n'a jamais été testée, tout comme l'implantation de cultivars norvégiens au Canada. L'utilisation de deux niveaux d'eau recommandés n'a pas affecté la chicouté, bien que les propriétés physiques étaient différentes entre les deux conditions expérimentales. Plus de rhizomes ont été produits en tourbe fibrique qu'en tourbe mésique. L'implantation avec un paillis a réduit la production de feuilles. Le cultivar norvégien Fjordgull a obtenu le meilleur taux de survie. Ces résultats suggèrent que la chicouté devrait être implantée 2 à 3 ans après la restauration dans une tourbe fibrique ayant subi peu de perturbations, ceci permettant de conserver une meilleure porosité et de bonnes propriétés physiques du sol.

Abstract

Cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) cultivation is presently receiving more and more attention. A grower's guide is available in Norway. However, site selection is imprecise with regards to soil physical and hydrological properties. Furthermore, compatibility of peatland restoration techniques with cloudberry cultivation has not been tested, as well as the establishment of Norwegian cultivars in Canada. Water table levels did not affect cloudberry growth, although physical properties were different between the two experimental conditions. However, more rhizomes were produced in fibric peat than in mesic peat. Mulching decreased the production of leaves. The Norwegian cultivar Fjordgull had the highest survival. These results suggest that cloudberry should be planted 2 or 3 years after peatland restoration, as well as in fibric peat that has received a limited amount of machinery work, thus having better porosity and physical properties.

Avant-propos

J'ai rédigé le premier chapitre qui consiste en une revue de littérature. Les deuxième et troisième chapitres ont été écrits sous forme d'articles pour éventuelle publication.

Le dispositif expérimental du chapitre 2 a été élaboré par Line Rochefort, Line Lapointe et Philippe Jobin. Ce dispositif a dû être modifié lors de sa mise en place et j'ai participé à cette modification, tout comme à la mise en place du dispositif. J'ai décidé d'ajouter des analyses physiques de sols au dispositif initial, ainsi que le suivi des conditions hydriques du sol. Le dispositif du chapitre 3 a été conçu par moi, en collaboration avec Philippe Jobin.

J'ai effectué la collecte de donnée et fait les analyses de sol avec l'aide d'assistants. J'ai traité et analysé les données. J'ai finalement réalisé les étapes subséquentes, soit de nombreuses lectures et réflexion, de quoi a résulté ce mémoire, tant au niveau du texte que des graphiques.

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*À mon père, Marc,
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Table des matières

RÉSUMÉ	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
AVANT-PROPOS	iv
REMERCIEMENTS	v
TABLE DES MATIÈRES	vii
Liste des tableaux.....	ix
Liste des figures.....	xi
INTRODUCTION GÉNÉRALE.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	2
1.2 Biologie de la chicouté	2
1.3 Culture de la chicouté	5
1.3.1 Intérêt de la chicouté.....	5
1.3.2 Historique de la culture de la chicouté.....	5
1.3.3 Recommandations concernant la culture de la chicouté.....	6
1.4 Propriétés physiques et hydriques en tourbière et croissance des végétaux	7
1.4.1 Propriétés physiques et hydriques de sols tourbeux et organiques.....	7
1.4.2 Impact de perturbations sur les propriétés physiques et hydriques de milieux tourbeux	8
1.4.3 Impact des propriétés physiques du sol sur la croissance des plantes	9
1.5 Restauration des tourbières.....	11
1.5.1 Impact de la restauration des tourbières sur les propriétés physiques du sol ...	11
1.5.2 Utilisation de paillis pour la protection des plantes.....	12
1.6 Croissance d'un clone dans des milieux contrastants.....	13
1.7 Objectifs et hypothèses de recherche.....	14
CHAPITRE 2 - CLODBERRY CULTIVATION IN ABANDONED PEATLANDS: HYDROLOGICAL AND SOIL PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON THE GROWTH OF A VARIETY OF CLONES	15
2.1 Résumé.....	16
2.2 Abstract.....	17
2.3 Introduction.....	18
2.4 Material and methods.....	20
2.4.1 Study area	20
2.4.2 Experimental design	20
2.4.2.1 Fertilization.....	23
2.4.3 Growth measurements	23
2.4.4 Soil hydrological properties.....	24
2.4.4.1 Calibration of the WET-2 probe.....	24
2.4.5 Soil physical properties.....	24
2.4.6 Statistical analysis.....	26
2.5 Results.....	27
2.5.1 Survival and growth.....	27
2.5.2 Soil hydrological properties.....	33
2.5.3 Soil physical properties.....	37

2.6	Discussion.....	39
2.6.1	Effect of water table levels on cloudberry establishment.....	39
2.6.2	Compatibility with the dry harvested peatland restoration approach.....	40
2.6.3	Plant population origin.....	42
2.7	Conclusion.....	43
CHAPITRE 3 - PEAT DECOMPOSITION IMPACT ON CLOUDBERRY GROWTH AT DIFFERENT WATER		
TABLE DEPTHS.....		
3.1	Résumé.....	46
3.2	Abstract.....	47
3.3	Introduction.....	48
3.4	Material and methods.....	48
3.4.1	Experimental design.....	48
3.4.2	Growing conditions.....	49
3.4.3	Growth measurements.....	50
3.4.4	Soil physical properties.....	51
3.4.5	Statistical analysis.....	52
3.5	Results.....	52
3.5.1	Plant survival.....	52
3.5.2	Water levels and type of peat impacts of cloudberry growth.....	53
3.5.3	Soil physical properties.....	55
3.5.4	Soil water tension throughout the growing period.....	56
3.6	Discussion.....	57
3.7	Conclusion.....	59
CONCLUSION GÉNÉRALE.....		
4.1	Quel est le rôle des propriétés hydriques et physiques du sol sur la croissance de la chicouté?.....	62
4.2	L'implantation de rhizomes de chicouté est-elle compatible avec la restauration des tourbières?.....	63
4.3	Quel clone de chicouté faut-il planter en tourbière abandonnée?.....	64
4.4	Résumé des recommandations.....	64
BIBLIOGRAPHIE.....		
		66

Liste des tableaux

INTRODUCTION GÉNÉRALE

TABLEAU 1.1 Rendements en fruit de la chicouté (kg ha^{-1}) en nature, ainsi que le rendement moyen souhaitable en culture.	4
---	---

CHAPITRE 2 - CLOUDBERRY CULTIVATION IN ABANDONED PEATLANDS: HYDROLOGICAL AND SOIL PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON THE GROWTH OF A VARIETY OF CLONES

TABLE 2.1 Applied pressure head from the surface of the cores and delay before measurements for the cores' soil-water desorption curve, from Topp and Zebchuk (1979).	25
TABLE 2.2 Type III fixed effects of field water levels, mulching and type of clone on cloudberry survival, number of leaves and leaf diagonal, one (second implantation trial) or two years (first trial) after planting. Analysis were carried out with the MIXED procedure. QC: Pointe-Lebel clone; NB: New-Bruswick clone; FL: Fjellgull cv.; FD: Fjordgull cv.	32
TABLE 2.3 Type III fixed effects of water levels, mulching, sampling depth, and sampling date on field water content in the 2005 growing season. Analysis were carried out with the MIXED procedure.	35
TABLE 2.4 Type III fixed effects of water levels, mulching, sampling depth, and sampling date on field soil water tension in the 2005 growing season. To maintain adequate data homogeneity, data were pooled to form two groups: spring (3 days, June 12 to 14) and summer (4 days, July 11 to September 15). Analysis were carried out with the MIXED procedure.	36
TABLE 2.5 Some soil physical properties of the two terraces and of the cloudberry rhizome donor site. Donor site data are included for comparison and were not used for statistical analysis. Least square means with standard error in parenthesis. BD: Bulk Density; PD: Particle Density; θ_a : Total porosity.	38

CHAPITRE 3 - PEAT DECOMPOSITION IMPACT ON CLOUDBERRY GROWTH AT DIFFERENT WATER TABLE DEPTHS

TABLE 3.1 Applied pressure head from the surface of the cores and delay before measurements for the cores' soil-water desorption curve, based upon Topp and Zebchuk (1979).	51
--	----

TABLE 3.3	Type III fixed effects of peat type and pressure head on the water content during the soil core water desorption analysis. Analysis were carried out with the MIXED procedure.....	56
-----------	--	----

Liste des figures

CHAPITRE 2 - CLOUDBERRY CULTIVATION IN ABANDONED PEATLANDS: HYDROLOGICAL AND SOIL PHYSICAL IMPACTS ON THE GROWTH OF A VARIETY OF CLONES

FIGURE 2.1	Experimental design.....	22
FIGURE 2.2	Average survival and number leaves m^{-2} in the first implantation trial in relation to the water table level.....	29
FIGURE 2.3	Average survival and number of leaves m^{-2} for the second implantation trial	30
FIGURE 2.4	Average number of leaves m^{-2} and individual leaf area (cm^2) for plants in the bare peat or mulch treatment from the second implantation trial	31
FIGURE 2.5	Soil water content of the two terraces during the 2005 growing season for combined depth sampling measurements	33
FIGURE 2.6	Soil water tension throughout the growing season for the bare peat and the mulched plots, and for the two water level treatments	34
FIGURE 2.7	Water retention curves for the soil on each terrace and for the cloudberry rhizome donor site	37

CHAPITRE 3 - PEAT DECOMPOSITION IMPACT ON CLOUDBERRY GROWTH AT DIFFERENT WATER TABLE DEPTHS

FIGURE 3.1	Partial water release curve for the two types of peat used in the greenhouse experiment	55
FIGURE 3.2	Water tension in the different treatments between the 7 th and 36 th growing days	57

Introduction générale

1.1 Introduction

La culture de la chicouté (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) fait l'objet d'études depuis environ 50 ans. En Finlande, des projets de culture de la chicouté ont été démarrés afin de revitaliser l'économie de régions éloignées et ainsi développer ce fruit au potentiel nutraceutique. La chicouté serait aussi une espèce intéressante à réintroduire lors du réaménagement d'une tourbière abandonnée.

Récemment, un guide de production a été écrit en Norvège. Celui-ci fait état de diverses recommandations et regroupe les recherches effectuées sur la fertilisation, la sélection de clones productifs et sur diverses pratiques culturales. Les recommandations traitant des propriétés physiques et hydriques de la tourbe utilisée sont par contre peu définies. Ceci s'avère problématique dans le cadre de projets de restauration de tourbière abandonnée, où ces propriétés ont été perturbées. De plus, la compatibilité de la culture de la chicouté avec la restauration de tourbières n'a pas été étudiée, la chicouté ayant été cultivée pour l'instant principalement en milieu naturel ou sur tourbe fraîchement mise à nue. Enfin, les cultivars sélectionnés en Norvège n'ont jamais été implantés sous les conditions climatiques de l'est du Canada.

Cette étude devrait aider à mieux comprendre les interactions entre les propriétés physiques et hydriques du sol et la croissance de la chicouté, ainsi que sur la compatibilité de la culture de la chicouté avec les techniques de restauration des tourbières.

1.2 Biologie de la chicouté

La chicouté, *Rubus chamaemorus* L., est une plante herbacée dioïque de milieux tourbeux, retrouvée principalement en tourbière ombrotrophe à dominance de *Sphagnum fuscum* (Lohi 1974). Elle possède une distribution circumpolaire et circumboréale (Taylor 1971) et est retrouvée en abondance en Fennoscandie, en Russie, en Alaska et au Canada. Toutefois, aux limites de sa distribution, principalement au sud, elle produit peu de fruits (Mäkinen & Oikarinen 1974).

La chicouté se reproduit principalement végétativement à l'aide de son vaste réseau de rhizomes, représentant environ 95% de la biomasse totale d'un plant (Dumas & Maillette 1987). Un clone peut couvrir de grandes superficies et un plant peut avoir un réseau de rhizomes de plusieurs mètres carrés (Korpelainen *et al.* 1999; Jean & Lapointe 2001). Les rhizomes peuvent être retrouvés de façon quasi homogène près de la surface (jusqu'à 25 cm; Wallén 1986) et à la limite entre la mousse peu décomposée et la tourbe (Metsävainio 1931). En fait, les rhizomes s'observent surtout au-dessus de la limite supérieure de la nappe d'eau de tourbières ombrotrophes (obs. pers.). Les racines, quant à elles, peuvent être observées plus profondément que les rhizomes, jusque dans la nappe d'eau, et ce à cause de la présence d'aérenchymes (Metsävainio 1931; Wallén 1986). La profondeur moyenne observée par Metsävainio (1931) était de 47 cm, avec des observations de 15 à 60 cm.

Les tiges aériennes possèdent de 1 à 3 feuilles lobées (Resvoll 1929). Au printemps, le déploiement des feuilles se fait normalement en même temps que la floraison (Yudina 1993). La pollinisation se fait principalement par des hyménoptères (Apidae, Helictidae) et par des diptères (Muscidae, Syrphidae; Brown 2005). Le fruit est une polydrupe comestible, composée normalement en nature de 1 à 16 drupéoles (Jean 1998). Le rendement en nature est très variable et est influencé par plusieurs facteurs climatiques, le principal étant le gel des fleurs au printemps, ces dernières y étant très sensibles (Kortesharju 1993, 1995). Pour un même milieu, les rendements peuvent être très variables, comme pour les quatre différentes tourbières à *Sphagnum fuscum* présentées au tableau 1.1. Ce tableau présente aussi d'autres rendements obtenus en nature.

Tableau 1.1 Rendements en fruit de la chicouté (kg ha⁻¹) en nature, ainsi que le rendement moyen souhaitable en culture.

	Rendement (kg ha ⁻¹)		Source
	Moyen	Maximal	
Sites naturels			
<i>Finlande</i>			
Tourbière à <i>Sphagnum fuscum</i> , non drainée	0,5	2	(Kortesharju 1988)
Tourbière à <i>Sphagnum fuscum</i> , non drainée	5,7	20	Moyenne sur 4 ans
Tourbière à <i>Sphagnum fuscum</i> , non drainée	52,9	160	
Tourbière à <i>Sphagnum fuscum</i> , non drainée	0,1	0,4	
Tourbière à éricacées et pins sylvestres, drainée	0,1	0,3	
Tourbière à linaigrettes et pins sylvestres	27,5		(Jääskeläinen 1981)
Tourbière à éricacées et pins sylvestres	31,6		Données sur 1 an
Tourbière à haut rendement	300		(Mäkinen & Oikarinen 1974)
Estimé conservateur de rendement moyen	5		
Inari, Riutulan tie (sur 1 m ²)	3960		(Mäkinen 1972)
Inari, Riutulan tie (sur 1 ha)	12		
Bon rendement à partir de	30		(Kortesharju 1986)
<i>Russie</i>			
Tourbière ouverte		463	(Yudina 1993)
<i>Canada (Nord du Québec)</i>			
Tourbière	4,5		(Dumas & Maillette 1987)
Muscinaie	6,5		
Pessière	3,4		Données sur 1 an
Lichénaie herbacée	10,9		
Lichénaie arbustive	1,7		
<i>Canada (Basse-Côte-Nord, Québec)</i>			
Tourbière du lac aux Bouleaux	5,75		(van Bochove 1987) moyenne sur 2 ans
Sites en culture – Rendements attendus			
Fertilisation de sites naturels	50		(Rapp 2004)
Fertilisation et labour de sites naturels	100		
Plantation de cultivars productifs	150-200		

1.3 Culture de la chicouté

1.3.1 Intérêt de la chicouté

La chicouté est cueillie abondamment dans les régions où elle est présente. En Finlande, en 1997, 6100 T de chicouté ont été cueillies, dont seulement 900 T se sont retrouvées sur le marché, le reste étant utilisé pour consommation personnelle (Saastamoinen *et al.* 2000). Toutefois, le nombre de cueilleur diminue et l'âge moyen de ces cueilleurs augmente, les jeunes n'étant pas intéressés par cette activité exigeante et pouvant être peu rémunératrice (Saastamoinen 1998). C'est donc en partie à cause de ces problèmes qu'on tente de cultiver la chicouté. De plus, cette culture pourrait permettre de revitaliser des régions éloignées des grands centres (Kärenlampi *et al.* 2001; Korpelainen *et al.* 2006).

1.3.2 Historique de la culture de la chicouté

La chicouté ayant un rendement variable et le plus souvent faible en nature, on tente, depuis plus de 50 ans d'en améliorer le rendement. Les premiers essais d'importance eurent lieu en Norvège (Østgård 1964). Par la suite, en Fennoscandie, on a tenté de comprendre la biologie de cette plante (Lohi 1974; Kaurin *et al.* 1982; Kortesharju 1988, 1993) ainsi que de trouver des moyens pour en augmenter les rendements (Mäkinen & Oikarinen 1974; Kortesharju 1987). On a entre autres travaillé sur la fertilisation (Rapp & Steenberg 1977; Kortesharju & Rantala 1980), la production de fruits parthénocarpiques (Martinussen *et al.* 2002), ainsi que diverses techniques culturales (Rapp *et al.* 2000; Rapp *et al.* 2003; Rapp 2004). On a aussi développé deux cultivars femelles et deux cultivars mâles (Rapp 1991). Les cultivars femelles sont Fjordgull, provenant d'un clone de fjord norvégien, et Fjellgull, provenant d'une région montagneuse éloignée de la mer. Apolto et Apollen sont les cultivars mâles.

Plus récemment, des projets de culture ont débuté en Finlande, principalement dans le but de revitaliser l'économie de régions où le paysage est dominé par des fermes de petite taille (Kärenlampi *et al.* 2001; Korpelainen *et al.* 2006). Des projets ont aussi eu lieu en serre en Suède afin de réutiliser de vieux complexes de serres (Wendell 2005).

Au Québec, de petits essais ont été implantés en tourbière abandonnée au Lac-St-Jean et à Pointe-Lebel, sur la Côte-Nord. Toutefois, aucun essai d'envergure n'a été implanté d'après nos informations. Des projets de recherche ont par contre eu lieu, principalement sur l'écologie (Dumas & Maillette 1987; van Bochove 1987) et sur la physiologie de la plante (Jean & Lapointe 2001; Gauci en préparation).

1.3.3 Recommandations concernant la culture de la chicouté

Plusieurs recommandations ont été émises concernant la culture de la chicouté. La majorité de ces recommandations ont été regroupées dans un guide de production (Rapp 2004). Ce guide norvégien propose trois types de méthodes culturales, augmentant en intensité de travail : 1) fertilisation de milieux naturels, 2) labour et fertilisation de milieux naturels, et 3) labour, plantation de cultivars performants et fertilisation. Les deux premières méthodes se basent sur la présence de chicouté sur le site de culture. La troisième méthode est utilisée lorsqu'il n'y a pas assez de plants femelles de chicouté présents. Les rendements attendus par ces différentes méthodes sont présentés au tableau 1.1. Toutefois, la majorité des sites cultivés ayant été plantés dans les 4 dernières années, ces rendements n'ont pas été vérifiés. La présente étude étant consacrée à la culture de la chicouté en tourbière abandonnée, un milieu où la chicouté est absente, la troisième méthode est donc à privilégier comme ressource d'information. On recommande donc de planter la chicouté dans une tourbe à pH entre 3,5 et 4,5 et de type H2 à H4 sur l'échelle de von Post. Ces conditions sont celles normalement retrouvées en nature, bien que la chicouté peut croître dans des tourbes plus décomposées et à pH plus élevé (Metsävainio 1931; Lohi 1974; Dumas 1986). On recommande une aération adéquate des rhizomes, ainsi qu'une disponibilité constante d'eau dans le milieu. Le niveau de la nappe d'eau devrait se situer entre 30 et 50 cm de la surface. Toutefois, on ne précise pas plus les caractéristiques physiques et hydriques du sol qui devraient favoriser le développement de la chicouté. De plus, ces propriétés sont-elles suffisantes pour caractériser et sélectionner un site potentiel pour la culture de la chicouté, surtout en tourbière abandonnée? Il faudrait, avant tout, mieux comprendre les interactions entre la chicouté et le sol, principalement au niveau des propriétés physiques et hydriques, pour définir de façon plus précise ce qu'est un site adéquat pour la culture de la chicouté.

1.4 Propriétés physiques et hydriques en tourbière et croissance des végétaux

1.4.1 Propriétés physiques et hydriques de sols tourbeux et organiques

Les propriétés physiques et hydriques des sols tourbeux sont affectées par différents facteurs, dont la composition végétale (Brandyk *et al.* 2002) et le degré de décomposition de la tourbe (Boelter 1964, 1969). Normalement, la mousse et la tourbe peu décomposée présente à la surface d'une tourbière possèdent une porosité totale très élevée (> 90%) (Boelter 1964). Toutefois, elles retiennent peu l'eau – ex. moins de $0,48 \text{ cm}^3 \text{ cm}^{-3}$ à -100 mb de potentiel de pression pour une tourbe fibrique – ceci étant dû à une abondance de macropores. La perte en eau est souvent très importante à des potentiels de pression, ou tensions, très faibles (ex. -15 mb).

On classe normalement la tourbe en trois classes selon le degré de décomposition, le plus souvent sur l'échelle de von Post : fibrique (H1-H4), mésique (H5-H6) et humique (H7-H10) (Boelter 1969; Parent & Caron 1993). En augmentant en décomposition, la porosité totale diminue, mais reste quand même élevée (85-90% pour une tourbe mésique; Boelter 1969). Toutefois, la taille des pores de la tourbe diminue grandement, menant à une augmentation de la rétention en eau puisque de petits pores sont plus difficiles à drainer. La conductivité hydraulique saturée, en lien direct avec la taille des pores, diminue aussi de façon importante lorsque la tourbe est plus humifiée, pouvant être réduite de plus de 10 à 100 fois entre une tourbe H3 et une tourbe H7 (Rycroft *et al.* 1975).

La masse volumique apparente (MVA), la masse sèche d'un volume de tourbe humide, augmente aussi lorsqu'il y a augmentation du degré de décomposition, cette relation étant plus forte pour une tourbe de sphaigne que de carex (Paavilainen & Päivänen 1995; Price *et al.* 2005). Une augmentation de la MVA mène aussi à une augmentation de la rétention en eau (Boelter 1969). Une augmentation de la MVA cause, tout comme une augmentation de l'humification, une diminution de la taille des pores (Price 1997; Schlotzhauer & Price 1999) sans nécessairement faire varier considérablement la porosité totale (Alakukku 1996a).

La nappe d'eau a aussi un impact sur les caractéristiques physiques et hydriques. En tourbière naturelle, la nappe d'eau se retrouve le plus souvent près de la surface (Paavilainen & Päivänen 1995). Une diminution de la hauteur de la nappe d'eau crée une augmentation du contenu en air de la tourbe en surface (Hayward & Clymo 1982). Néanmoins, la variation de la hauteur de la nappe d'eau se fait différemment selon le degré de décomposition de la tourbe. Une tourbe plus décomposée (ex. mésique ou humique), avec une forte proportion de petits pores, nécessiterait une quantité d'eau plus faible qu'une tourbe fibrique pour une augmentation équivalente du niveau d'eau (Boelter 1964). Ces propriétés sont à considérer lorsqu'il y a perturbation du milieu, comme par drainage d'une tourbière, bien que les perturbations elles-mêmes peuvent modifier les propriétés physiques et hydriques.

1.4.2 Impact de perturbations sur les propriétés physiques et hydriques de milieux tourbeux

Les tourbières peuvent être vouées à différentes utilisations par la société, dont les principales au Canada sont l'agriculture (Parent 2001), la foresterie (Paavilainen & Päivänen 1995) et la récolte de la tourbe à des fins horticoles (Caron 2001). Les différentes perturbations nécessaires à l'utilisation de ces milieux affectent grandement les propriétés physiques et hydriques de la tourbe, parfois de façon irréversible. Le drainage est le plus souvent la première étape à réaliser afin d'utiliser les tourbières. Ceci a pour effet immédiat d'abaisser la nappe d'eau, ainsi que d'accélérer l'écoulement de l'eau par la suite (Paavilainen & Päivänen 1995). Néanmoins, à long terme, une tourbière drainée voit sa MVA augmenter (Minkkinen & Laine 1998; Ilnicki & Zeitz 2002; Laiho *et al.* 2004), ce qui affecte à la baisse la taille des pores. L'effet du drainage dépend cependant du type de tourbe présent, et ce en raison de la variation de la conductivité hydraulique (Boelter 1972). Un drain a donc un effet sur une plus courte distance lorsque la tourbe est plus décomposée. Boelter (1972) a mesuré un effet sur 5 m pour une tourbe mésique, tandis qu'il a observé des effets jusqu'à 50 m du drain dans des profils très fibriques. Suite au drainage, la nappe d'eau devient sujette à des fluctuations plus importantes, ceci étant dû entre autres à une diminution de la taille des pores liée à l'oxydation et à la compression de la tourbe à nue,

entraînant une diminution de la capacité d'entreposage en eau de la tourbe (Price 1996; Price *et al.* 2003). Ce phénomène est particulièrement important après l'abandon d'une tourbière récoltée par aspiration, où l'on observe une diminution de l'eau disponible pour les plantes en surface (Price *et al.* 2003). La conductivité hydraulique est aussi diminuée à cause de l'oxydation et la compaction de la tourbe drainée (Ilnicki & Zeitz 2002).

D'autres activités anthropiques affectent les propriétés physiques de sols organiques. La compaction, causée par une augmentation de la MVA, est décrite par Hillel (1998) comme étant un effet indésirable de la mécanisation des sols causant une réduction de la productivité biologique des sols, pouvant même empêcher la croissance des plantes. Un sol est considéré compact lorsqu'il est si dense (i.e. MVA élevée) et que ses pores sont si petits qu'il nuit à la croissance des racines, à l'infiltration de l'eau et au drainage (Hillel 1998). La compaction par un passage de machinerie augmente la MVA du sol, créant ainsi une compaction localisée (i.e. sous le point de pression exercé par la machinerie) qui peut être étendue à une plus grande surface par passages répétés (Hassan 1978; White 1978; Douglas 1994; Alakukku 1996a). Un sol organique compacté subit une augmentation de la résistance à la pénétration (Alakukku 1996b). De plus, ces effets sont observables plusieurs années après l'arrêt de l'utilisation de machinerie sur le sol. Il existe des mesures pour réduire la pression exercée par la machinerie sur le sol, méthodes abondamment utilisées par l'industrie de la tourbe, comme les tracteurs munis de roues doubles ou triples aux essieux avant et arrière. Toutefois, bien que ces pratiques réduisent la pression exercée sur le sol (i.e. répartissent la pression sur une plus grande surface), on dénote quand même une augmentation de la MVA et une diminution de la taille des pores après un passage de machinerie (Douglas 1994).

1.4.3 Impact des propriétés physiques du sol sur la croissance des plantes

L'altération des propriétés physiques d'un sol mène le plus souvent à une modification de la croissance des plantes. L'effet négatif de la compaction sur les plantes est bien documenté tant en sol organique qu'en sol minéral. Un passage répété de machinerie lors du semis augmente le déclassement de carottes (i.e. racines fourchues, plus petites) en sol organique (White 1978). L'augmentation de la MVA mène à une réduction de la longueur

des racines, ce qui affecte directement la croissance aérienne chez *Lolium perenne* (Houlbrooke *et al.* 1997). De plus, une augmentation de la pression appliquée sur le sol, ainsi que du nombre de passages, diminue le rendement de prairies de graminées ou de légumineuses (Douglas 1994). On constate le même effet en forêt, où l'on a observé une diminution du volume de bois récolté dans les sillons compactés laissés par la machinerie par rapport à des sites non perturbés (Wronski & Murphy 1994). Même si les racines des plantes ont de la difficulté à pénétrer une couche de sol compacte (Houlbrooke *et al.* 1997), celles-ci peuvent emprunter des biopores (par exemple des canaux laissés par des vers de terre) ou des craques dans le sol, ce qui leur permet d'aller chercher l'air et les nutriments qu'il leur faut (Stirzaker *et al.* 1996).

Bien que les activités anthropiques affectent grandement la croissance des plantes par la compaction des sols, d'autres propriétés physiques liées au milieu ont aussi une influence. Le type de tourbe peut avoir un impact sur la croissance des plantes. Des plantules d'Épinette blanche (*Picea glauca*) et d'Épinette noire (*Picea mariana*) ont été affectées par le degré de décomposition de la tourbe lors d'expériences en multicellules (Bernier & Gonzalez 1995). La biomasse racinaire de l'Épinette noire était 10 à 20% plus faible dans une tourbe de type H5 par rapport à une tourbe H2-H3. Ceci s'explique par une modification de la rétention en eau entre les deux tourbes. De plus, l'exclusion des particules fines, ayant une rétention en eau élevée, a causé une diminution de la biomasse racinaire, ainsi que la quantité d'eau facilement utilisable. L'exclusion des particules fines dans des substrats horticoles augmente la tortuosité des pores et diminue la diffusivité des gaz sans pour autant modifier la porosité en air (i.e. le volume d'air à capacité en pot), ce qui nuit à la croissance des plantes (Nkongolo & Caron 1999).

Il est donc nécessaire de comprendre l'impact des propriétés physiques du sol sur la croissance de la chicouté afin de choisir des sites plus adaptés à la croissance de cette plante.

1.5 Restauration des tourbières

Lorsqu'une tourbière est abandonnée après la récolte de la tourbe, la recolonisation par les plantes typiques de tourbière est très faible et ce même après plusieurs années d'abandon (Poulin *et al.* 2005). Des techniques ont été développées afin de réhabiliter ces milieux (Rocheftort *et al.* 2003). En ordre chronologique, ces opérations sont : 1) préparation physique du site abandonné, 2) collecte de matériel végétal (i.e. diaspores de sphaignes), 3) introduction et protection du matériel végétal sur le site abandonné et 4) fertilisation du matériel végétal réintroduit. Il sera question ici uniquement de la préparation physique du site, ainsi que de la protection du matériel végétal.

1.5.1 Impact de la restauration des tourbières sur les propriétés physiques du sol

La préparation physique d'une tourbière abandonnée afin de la restaurer consiste en premier lieu à bloquer les canaux de drainage (Quinty & Rocheftort 2003). Ceci a pour but de régler en partie le problème de la disponibilité en eau à la surface de la tourbe. Des canaux de drainages bloqués vont permettre d'obtenir une nappe d'eau plus élevée, mais principalement au printemps après la fonte des neiges (Price 1997). Toutefois, lors des mois secs de l'été, le niveau d'eau dans les drains est réduit considérablement et peut être presque égal à celui rencontré dans des sites drainés. Donc, le blocage des canaux de drainage seul n'est pas suffisant pour favoriser la survie des fragments de sphaignes réintroduits.

Une autre technique pouvant être utilisée est la formation de bassins peu profonds (20 cm) sur la tourbière (Price *et al.* 2002). Ceci permet de retenir plus d'eau lors de la fonte des neiges au printemps, ainsi que de maintenir une teneur en eau plus élevée tout au long de la saison par rapport à la tourbe à l'extérieur du bassin. Les valeurs de potentiel de pression retrouvées en surface n'ont pas été sous les -25 mb plus de 4 jours consécutifs, ce qui a permis d'éviter des épisodes de drainage capillaire néfastes à la recolonisation de la sphaigne. On obtient donc de meilleurs taux de survie des sphaignes en bloquant les canaux de drainage et en créant des bassins peu profonds (Campeau *et al.* 2004). Toutefois, c'est

en utilisant des techniques de protection physique des plantes que l'on obtient de meilleurs résultats.

1.5.2 Utilisation de paillis pour la protection des plantes

L'utilisation de paillis s'est avérée efficace afin d'améliorer la survie des fragments de sphaignes réintroduits. On utilise le plus souvent du paillis de paille (Quinty & Rochefort 2003). Celui-ci permet d'améliorer les conditions hydrologiques et microclimatiques à la surface de la tourbe, les rendant ainsi favorables à la repousse de la sphaigne réintroduite (Price 1997; Price *et al.* 1998). On observe un potentiel de pression à la surface du sol toujours plus élevé que -100 mb, ce qui n'a été observé que 30% du temps sous la tourbe à nue (Price *et al.* 1998). Sous -100 mb, la disponibilité en eau pour les sphaignes serait grandement affectée (Price *et al.* 2002). La tourbe est donc plus humide sous le paillis, et la nappe d'eau est plus élevée. Ceci est dû entre autres à une diminution de l'écoulement de l'air, de l'évaporation et des radiations nettes sous le paillis (Horton *et al.* 1996; Price *et al.* 1998). Le sol s'assèche et se réchauffe plus lentement sous le paillis. Des températures plus froides au printemps ralentissent l'émergence de la chicouté en milieu naturel (Lohi 1974) et donc sa floraison qui souffre régulièrement de gels printaniers (Kortesharju 1995). De plus, les variations de températures sont atténuées sous le paillis, la température étant généralement plus faible le jour et plus élevée la nuit sous un paillis de paille qu'à l'air libre, ce qui a été observé dans plusieurs milieux (Hicklenton *et al.* 2000; Ji & Unger 2001; Cushman *et al.* 2005).

Bien que la paille ait des effets positifs en tourbière sur la survie des sphaignes, l'effet sur les plantes vasculaires est variable (Rochefort *et al.* 2003). Néanmoins, la paille permet d'augmenter la survie à l'hiver chez d'autres plantes vasculaires pérennes, l'effet étant plus marqué lorsqu'il y a peu de neige (Lamarre *et al.* 1992; Dionne *et al.* 1999). La chicouté, quant à elle, semble favorisée par un paillis de paille qui augmente le nombre de fleurs (tous sexes confondus) en tourbière naturelle, celui-ci pouvant être deux à trois fois plus élevé certaines années (Kortesharju 1986). De plus, dans une tourbière forestière drainée, on a observé une augmentation du rendement de la chicouté sous paillis de paille jusqu'à 6 fois plus élevé qu'en parcelles non traitées (par exemple, de 15 à 90 kg ha⁻¹ à une nappe

d'eau de 30 cm; Huikari 1972). Un paillis de paille permet aussi de réduire le nombre de plantes adventices sans nuire à la croissance de plantes pérennes à rhizome (Cushman *et al.* 2005). La chicouté étant faiblement compétitive pour l'obtention des ressources du sol (Rapp & Steenberg 1977), la diminution de la compétition lui serait bénéfique. Huikari (1972) note que le paillis ne devrait pas être laissé en surface de la tourbière plusieurs années. Toutefois, après trois à quatre années, le paillis est en grande partie dégradé ou disparu, enseveli par la mousse.

L'utilisation de paillis semble affecter positivement la chicouté. Néanmoins, les expériences ayant eu lieu l'ont été seulement sur des talles matures en nature. Il est donc important de vérifier l'impact de l'utilisation du paillis sur une plantation de chicouté, surtout dans le contexte d'une plantation en tourbière abandonnée.

1.6 Croissance d'un clone dans des milieux contrastants

Il a été question au début de cette introduction de la sélection de cultivars de chicouté. Actuellement, deux cultivars femelles et deux cultivars mâles ont été sélectionnés en Norvège. Ces cultivars provenant des fjords (Fjordgull) et du continent (Fjellgull), ont été sélectionnés selon des critères de rendement et de croissance (Rapp 1989, 1991). Toutefois, des clones, sélectionnés ou non, peuvent démontrer des phénotypes différents lorsqu'ils poussent dans des milieux contrastants (Kleijn & van Groenendael 1999; van Kleunen & Fischer 2001). Par exemple, le phénotype de clones de cyprès (*Cupressus sempervirens*) varie entre différents milieux (Santini & Camussi 2000). Les caractéristiques des plants (taille du plant et de la couronne) ont donc été affectées par l'environnement dans lequel ils ont été plantés. On parle alors de plasticité phénotypique, soit la capacité d'un génotype d'exprimer différents phénotypes dans différents environnements (Sultan 2000).

Bien que les cultivars norvégiens aient été testés dans plusieurs milieux (plusieurs endroits en Norvège et en Finlande), ceux-ci n'ont pas été testés au Canada. Ces cultivars ont été par contre testés dans une tourbière abandonnée en Norvège, mais la technique de récolte était une technique différente de la méthode par aspiration, principale méthode utilisée au Québec. Il est donc important de les tester dans nos conditions et de les comparer à des

clones locaux, ainsi que de les implanter en tourbière abandonnée ayant été récoltée par aspiration.

1.7 Objectifs et hypothèses de recherche

L'objectif général de ce projet est de comprendre l'influence des propriétés physiques et hydriques de la tourbe sur la croissance de la chicouté, pour ainsi valider les recommandations norvégiennes pour l'est du Canada. Plus spécifiquement, l'objectif du premier chapitre est de comprendre les interactions entre propriétés physiques et hydriques et la chicouté en tourbière abandonnée par la création de deux niveaux d'eau différents, ainsi que de vérifier la compatibilité des méthodes de restauration des tourbières sur la croissance de cultivars norvégiens et de clones locaux de chicouté. L'objectif du deuxième chapitre est de vérifier l'impact de deux tourbes de degrés de décomposition différents, soit à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur des limites recommandées, sur la croissance de la chicouté à deux niveaux d'eau différents. Cette expérience a eu lieu en serre. Les hypothèses de recherches de ces deux expériences étaient :

1. Une nappe d'eau plus loin de la surface, à la limite supérieure des niveaux recommandés (50 cm de la surface, Rapp 2004), favorisera la croissance de la chicouté par une augmentation de l'aération du milieu. De plus, une tourbe peu décomposée et à l'intérieur des limites recommandées (H2 à H4 sur l'échelle de von Post, Rapp 2004) aura le même effet.
2. Le paillis de paille nécessaire à la restauration des tourbières exploitées par aspiration permettra d'améliorer les conditions hydriques du sol en surface.
3. Les cultivars de chicouté norvégiens, à cause de leurs caractéristiques de croissance plus performantes, auront une survie et une croissance plus importantes que les clones locaux, bien que ces derniers soient adaptés aux conditions locales.

Chapitre 2

**Cloudberry cultivation in abandoned peatlands:
hydrological and soil physical impacts on the growth of a
variety of clones.**

2.1 Résumé

La culture de la chicouté (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) subit présentement un regain d'intérêt, principalement afin de revitaliser l'économie de régions éloignées ainsi que de réaménager des tourbières abandonnées. Par contre, les recommandations concernant les propriétés physiques et hydriques des sols sont imprécises. De plus, la compatibilité avec la restauration de tourbières récoltées à sec n'a pas été testée, tout comme l'implantation des cultivars norvégiens au Canada. Après 2 années de croissance, les niveaux d'eau n'ont pas affecté la croissance, bien que les propriétés physiques étaient différentes entre les deux conditions expérimentales. Le paillis, nécessaire à la restauration des tourbières, a diminué le nombre de feuilles. Le cultivar norvégien Fjordgull a obtenu le taux de survie le plus élevé comparé à Fjellgull et aux clones locaux. Ces résultats suggèrent que les niveaux d'eau n'ont pas d'impact à court terme sur la chicouté et que les rhizomes devraient être planté 2 à 3 ans après la restauration des tourbières, afin d'éviter les effets négatifs initiaux du paillis.

2.2 Abstract

Cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) cultivation has recently received increased attention as a way to revitalize regional economy and to rehabilitate post-harvest peatlands. However, selection criteria for soil physical and hydrological properties are imprecise. Furthermore, the compatibility of peatland restoration for dry harvested peatlands with cloudberry cultivation has not been tested, as well as the implantation of Norwegian cultivars in Canada. After 2 years, water levels did not affect growth, even though soil physical properties were different between the two experimental conditions. Mulching, inherent to restoration, decreased the number of leaves. The Norwegian Fjordgull cultivar had the highest survival rate compared to Fjellgull and local clones. These results suggest that water levels do not have a short-term impact on cloudberry, while rhizomes should be planted 2 or 3 years after peatland restoration to avoid the initial negative effects of the mulch.

2.3 Introduction

Cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) cultivation has received some attention throughout the past 50 years, mainly in Finland (Mäkinen & Oikarinen 1974; Kortesharju & Rantala 1980; Kortesharju & Mäkinen 1986) and in Norway (Østgård 1964; Rapp 1992). Interest has been increased in the past few years as it would be a way to revitalize regional economy (Kärenlampi *et al.* 2001; Korpelainen *et al.* 2006). Cloudberry cultivation would also be an interesting option for the after-use of decommissioned peat extraction areas, providing an added value to the reclamation approach.

In nature, cloudberry has a low and variable productivity, usually ranging between 0 and 30 kg ha⁻¹ (Kortesharju 1988). Through cultivation, cloudberry productivity has been increased in several ways with, among others, fertilization (Rapp & Steenberg 1977), clone selection (Rapp 1991), and general cultivation techniques (Rapp 2004). Success of these techniques has however been variable. This paper will focus on understanding soil physical and hydrological properties on Norwegian and local cloudberry clones in eastern Canadian conditions.

In accordance to the Norwegian cloudberry growers guide (Rapp 2004), cloudberry should be grown in H2 to H4 peat on the von Post scale, with pH between 3.5 and 4.5 (Lohi 1974), as well as with water levels from 30 to 50 cm below surface. The substratum should be well aerated for rhizomes, and water should be easily available for plants. These are common conditions found where cloudberry grows in the wild (Metsävainio 1931). These recommendations apply to natural peatlands that will be improved for cultivation. However, three parameters (i.e. degree of decomposition, pH and water level) might not be sufficient to describe organic soils to be used for cloudberry cultivation, especially with abandoned peatlands. Soil hydrological and physical properties, like bulk density and porosity, are usually not considered, yet they have peculiar importance. For example, increased decomposition decreases pore size and hydraulic conductivity, and increases water retention and bulk density (Boelter 1969; Pepin *et al.* 1992; Brandyk *et al.* 2002). Bulk density can also vary considerably within one von Post level (Price *et al.* 2005), thus affecting air content in the peat. Therefore, air content at tension values usually found in abandoned peatland in summer is lower in denser and more decomposed peat. Furthermore,

a water table below -30 cm is not a good indicator of water availability at the surface in abandoned peatland (Price 1997). Since air content and water availability can vary considerably with substratum characteristics, it is important to understand the relation between cloudberry and soil hydrological and physical properties in order to improve cloudberry cultivation.

Abandoned peatland conditions are harsh for reintroduced plants as hydrological conditions are unsuitable for *Sphagnum* fragments survival (Rocheftort *et al.* 2003). One way to increase survival is by the use of mulch. Straw mulch increases peat surface tension, as well as keeping water content higher than on bare peat throughout the growing season (Price 1997). Water table remains also more often closer to surface, and evaporation is reduced (Price *et al.* 1998). Hydrological properties at the surface are thus modified with straw mulch. This promotes *Sphagnum* recolonization, but its effect on vascular plants is variable (Rocheftort *et al.* 2003). On natural cloudberry stands, straw mulch increased female flower number (Kortesharju 1986) and yield (Huikari 1972), but no study has been done in abandoned peatland. It is thus important to understand the relations between mulch and cloudberry, especially from a hydrological point of view.

Cloudberry cultivars have been selected in Norway in order to increase plant productivity and berry yield (Rapp 1991). Two female clones have been selected: Fjordgull is intended for cultivation in fjord regions, while Fjellgull should be grown in inland areas. Two male cultivars have also been selected, Apolto and Apollen. These clones have not been tried in Canadian climate yet, and it is necessary to compare their growth with that of local eastern Canadian clones.

The purpose of this study was to a) establish cloudberry of different origins under different hydrological conditions, and b) evaluate the compatibility of cloudberry cultivation in combination with the restoration approach for dry harvested peatlands (Rocheftort *et al.* 2003).

2.4 Material and methods

2.4.1 Study area

The experimental site is located in the Pointe-Label peatland, in the Côte-Nord region, QC, Canada (49° 10' N, 68° 12' W). It is a vacuum harvested bog owned by Premier Horticulture Ltd that has been in operation for about 18 years, and that was abandoned 6 years before the experiment started. The average annual temperature is 1.5°C, with monthly averages of 15.6°C in July and -14.4°C in January. Annual precipitation averages 1014.4 mm of which 67% falls as rain (Environnement Canada 2002). The 2 ha site was located between an abandoned section and a still active harvesting part of the bog. Drainage ditches around the site were still active prior to the establishment of the plots.

2.4.2 Experimental design

Three factors, water levels, mulching, and varieties of clones, were analyzed in a complete block split-split-plot experiment replicated 4 times (Figure 2.1). Main plots consisted of two different water levels (8 plots of 26 x 18 m), sub-plots (26 x 8 m) of mulch covered or bare surface, and sub-sub-plots (13 x 8 m) of 4 different cloudberry clone origin. The experiment was set-up in 2004.

Water levels were evaluated in order to test the upper (25 cm) and lower (50 cm) range of the Norwegian recommendations (Rapp 2004) in post harvest peatlands in eastern Canadian climate. In order to recreate these water levels, a tractor driven horizontal auger removed peat down to the frozen layer, about 20 cm below surface. The surplus peat was rolled over and leveled by the tractor, thus creating an upper (added peat) and lower (frozen surface) terrace with a difference of 23±4 cm between the terraces. The former drainage system of the post-extracted peatlands was dammed in order to obtain 25 and 50 cm from the surface of each terrace at the uppermost water level in a season. Water level fluctuated as drainage ditches emptied in summer during the two growing seasons but a 25 cm difference was generally maintained between the 2 terraces (data not shown). The water table level treatments will be hereafter named as upper or lower terrace.

Finnish researchers have found that *Sphagnum* moss is one of the best mulches to prevent weed competition with cloudberry (O. Iivanainen 2004, MTT Agrifood Research Finland,

pers. comm.). As much expertise exists in Canada to restore a *Sphagnum* moss cover of post harvest peatlands (Rocheffort *et al.* 2003) we have decided to assess the establishment of cloudberry on bare peat surface compared to restored peat fields. Thus each terrace was divided in two where one remained bare and the other was restored following exactly the approach to dry harvested peatland restoration (Quinty & Rocheffort 2003). Essentially, plant material collected nearby in a natural part of the Pointe-Lebel peatland dominated by *S. fuscum* was transferred to the sub-plot, spread manually and then covered by straw mulch. After 2 growing seasons, regrowth of the restored vegetation was considered good (L. Rocheffort, pers. obs.).

Four cloudberry clones of different origin were planted in each sub-sub-plot to find out if Norwegian cultivars can grow well in eastern Canadian climatic conditions compared to local clones. In spring 2004, rhizomes of cloudberry from the Pointe-Lebel peatland (QC) were planted, as well as rhizomes from the Lamèque Island in the Acadian peninsula, New Brunswick (NB). Rhizomes were dug up in high female proportion cloudberry patches. Genetic diversity is usually low in cloudberry patches (Korpelainen *et al.* 1999), so we consider these patches to contain only one clone. Norwegian female cultivars, Fjordgull (FD) and Fjellgull (FL), were bought from Eggen Gartneri (Fauske, Norway). In 2004, rhizome were delayed at the customs and stayed about 2 days at room temperature instead of being kept at 4°C. Because of low survival rates in the first implantation trial in 2004, a second planting was done in 2005 for all clone origins and cultivars. Norwegian rhizomes were not delayed and were kept refrigerated during the whole shipping period. NB rhizomes planted in 2005 were collected from Pokesudie Island in the Acadian peninsula, being thus a different clone from the one planted in 2004. QC rhizomes came from the same patch as in 2004. In spring 2005, rhizomes planted in 2004 that survived were dug out of the original 4 rows and replanted in order to plant new rhizomes in the same sub-sub-plot. The new planting consisted of 24 rhizomes (2 rows). Norwegian male cultivars, Apolto and Apollen, were also planted in the middle of each sub-sub-plot in order to have a 1:9 male:female ratio for pollination, as recommended by Rapp (2004). Rhizomes were planted 10 cm under the surface. In-row spacing was 30 cm, with 12 female rhizomes per row, while between row spacing was 60 cm.

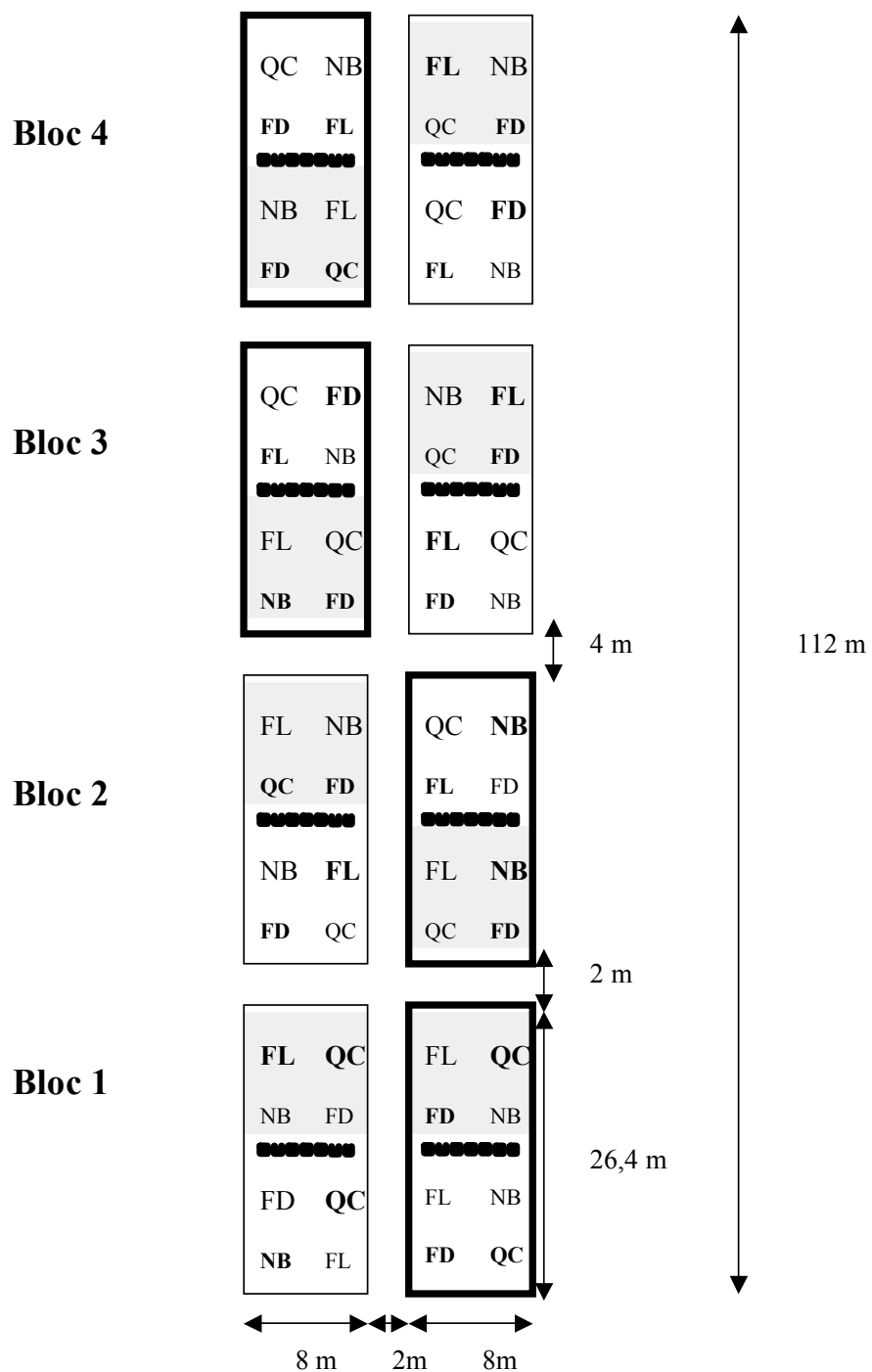


Figure 2.1 Experimental design. Bold lines surrounding main plots: Upper terrace; Thin line surrounding main plot: Lower terrace; Streaked (shaded) area: mulched plots; Empty areas: Bare peat; QC: Pointe-Lebel clone; NB: New Brunswick clone; FD: Fjordgull cultivar; FL: Fjellgull cultivar.

2.4.2.1 Fertilization

For cloudberry, it is recommended to apply fertilizer in holes 15-20 cm deep at a density of one hole m^{-2} (450 kg ha^{-1}), once every 10 years (Rapp 2004). NPK fertilizer (11-5-17.6) was applied in mid June 2005. Holes were at least 30 cm from a planted rhizome. The complete formulation was 11% N (6,5% as NH_4 and 4,5% as NO_3), 5% P, 17,6% K, 2,3% Mg, 2,3% Ca (as CaCl_2), 9,5% S, 0,03% B, 0,3% Mn, 0,03% Zn and 0,002% Mo. It was adapted from the practice in Norway (I. Martinussen 2004, Bioforsk Holt, Norway, pers. comm.).

2.4.3 Growth measurements

Growth was measured in 2005, after one or two growing seasons according to the year of plantation. Measurements were carried out at the end of July, when all ramets have sprouted and leaves have reached their full size. The number of plants that survived and the number of leaves were counted. Total leaf area in each sub-sub-plot was measured. Leaf area was estimated by measuring leaf diagonal from the inferior lobe to the opposite superior lobe of the leaf and converting it into an area with equation [1].

$$\text{Leaf area (cm}^2\text{)} = 0,5242 e^{(0,7158 \text{ diagonal (cm)})} \quad (n = 81, R^2 = 0.93) \quad [1]$$

For this calibration, 27 leaves of less than 4 cm were harvested in two different sites at Pointe-Lebel peatland. Leaves were kept refrigerated less than 48 h before being brought back to the lab to measure the leaf surface using an area meter (LI-COR 3100 area meter, LI-COR Biosciences, Lincoln, NE, USA). For each leaf, 3 leaf area measurements were taken to build a regression with the leaf diagonal measure. The chosen exponential equation only applies to leaves of less than 4 cm in diagonal. Parameters from this equation were obtained with the non-linear procedure NLIN from the SAS software (SAS Statistical System Software version 9.1, SAS Institute, Cary, NC, USA).

2.4.4 Soil hydrological properties

Water tension was measured with horizontal (1 cm diameter ceramic porous cup) or vertical (2 cm diameter ceramic porous cup) tensiometers inserted at -5 or -10 cm. Tension was measured with a digital reader (Tensimeter, Soil Measurement Systems, Tucson, AZ, USA). Soil moisture content was determined by frequency domain reflectometry with a WET-2 probe and a digital reader (WET-2 type WET Sensor and HH2 reader, Delta-T Devices, Cambridge, UK). The probe was inserted horizontally at -5 and -10 cm into a pit wall dug at each reading. Measures were carried out between the 12th of June and the 31th of July 2005. A last tension measurement was done on the 15th of September.

2.4.4.1 Calibration of the WET-2 probe

The WET-2 probe was calibrated to increase moisture content precision in peat soils. 12 soil cores of 785 cm³ were randomly taken from the study site. In the lab, samples were saturated from the bottom in demineralized water for 48 h. After removing the samples from water, moisture content was measured gravimetrically and 3 measures of dielectric constant (ϵ_v) were read with the WET-2 probe. Samples were left to dry at room temperature for 2 d and measures were taken frequently in order to have a higher resolution at water content near container capacity. Samples were then dried at 60°C with frequent measurements, up to dry soil. Calibration equation is:

$$\text{Volumetric water content (cm}^3 \text{ cm}^{-3}\text{)} = 0.14 \sqrt{\epsilon_v} - 0.21 \quad [2]$$

2.4.5 Soil physical properties

Two soil cores of 10 cm diameter and 10 cm length (785 cm³) were sampled at the surface of each bare peat sub-plot, for a total of 16 cores. Four cores were also taken from the cloudberry rhizome donor site to compare with the terraces. The lower end of the core was covered with nylon mesh (screen). Cores were packed in order to prevent any disturbance and brought back to the lab. Cores were stored at 4°C until analysis.

To determine water retention characteristics of the two terraces, soil-water desorption curves of the samples were performed. Cores were rewetted from the bottom in demineralized water for 24 h, drained and then rewetted for another 24 h. Water content at

saturation was measured with the WET-2 probe. Cores were then drained for about 5 min before being laid on a tension table filled with glass beads of 20 μm median diameter, according to the design of Topp and Zebchuk (1979). A water column controlled the pressure head: the air entry point (i.e. open end from the water column) was lowered to apply a higher pressure head. Initial applied pressure head was at the base of the cores, i.e. -10 mb from the surface of the cores, which is equivalent to container capacity (Cassel & Bieilsen 1986). Pressure was dropped progressively up to -90 mb. Applied pressure head and the delay before each measurement are taken from Topp and Zebchuk (1979) and shown on Table 2.1. Cores were removed from the tension table and moisture content was determined gravimetrically. Tension tables were wetted before putting back the cores in order to reestablish good hydrological contact.

Table 2.1 Applied pressure head from the surface of the cores and delay before measurements for the cores' soil-water desorption curve, from Topp and Zebchuk (1979).

Pressure head (mb)	Delay before measurement (h)
-10	16
-20	24
-40	48
-60	72
-80	72
-100	96

From the values measured, we can calculate air-filled porosity (θ_a) with equation [3]:

$$\theta_a (\text{cm}^3 \text{ cm}^{-3}) = \theta_{\text{sat}} - \theta_{\text{cc}} \quad [3]$$

where θ_{sat} is the volumetric water content at saturation ($\text{cm}^3 \text{ cm}^{-3}$) and θ_{cc} is the volumetric water content at container capacity ($\text{cm}^3 \text{ cm}^{-3}$), which is the volumetric water content value at a pressure head of -10 mb.

After determining soil water desorption, peat decomposition level was evaluated in each cores using the von Post scale (Parent & Caron 1993). Soil samples from the cores were

taken and slightly rewetted. A clod of peat is taken in one hand and pressed. Water expelled from the peat is analyzed visually, as well as the clod. Half levels (e.g. 3.5) were considered when distinction between levels was not clear. An average of 3 measurements was done for each core.

Cores were oven-dried at 105°C for 48 h and weighed to obtain the bulk density (BD; g cm⁻³) (Parent & Caron 1993). Particle density (PD; g cm⁻³), the total volume of solids, was measured by a method adapted from Blake and Hartge (1986). 10 g of crushed and dried peat were transferred in a 100 ml graduated cylinder. Two sub-samples were taken from each core. Kerosene was added to saturate the sample and the cylinder closed to prevent evaporation. Kerosene, a non polar solvent, helps to accelerate the rewetting of soils with high organic content. After 30 min, the sample was shaken and the edges of the cylinder washed with kerosene. After 1 h of rewetting, kerosene was added to round up the final volume. PD was calculated from equation [4]:

$$PD \text{ (g cm}^{-3}\text{)} = M_{\text{soil}} \text{ (g)} / [V_{\text{total}} - V_{\text{kerosene}}] \text{ (cm}^3\text{)} \quad [4]$$

where M_{soil} is the weight of the dried and crushed peat (g), V_{total} is the total volume of the solution (cm³) and V_{kerosene} is the volume of kerosene added, calculated from equation [5]:

$$V_{\text{kerosene}} = \frac{(\text{Cylinder} + \text{soil} + \text{kerosene weight}) - (\text{Cylinder} + \text{soil weight})}{\rho_{\text{kerosene}}} \quad [5]$$

where ρ_{kerosene} is 0.7754 g cm⁻³, calculated from 100 ml of the kerosene used at room temperature.

With BD and PD, total porosity (TP), the total amount of pores in the soil core, was calculated with equation [6] (Danielson & Sutherland 1986):

$$TP \text{ (cm}^3 \text{ cm}^{-3}\text{)} = 1 - (BD / PD) \quad [6]$$

2.4.6 Statistical analysis

Growth measures of the cloudberry planting experiment were analyzed with the MIXED procedure of the SAS software, using a split-split-plot design. Main effects and interactions

between the water levels, type of surface cover and clone origin were tested for each of the plantation (2004 and 2005) separately. Normality was accepted when the Shapiro-Wilk value was over 0.01, while homogeneity of variance was analyzed visually. If data transformation was needed, a square root transformation was applied. When a variable was significant at $p \leq 0.05$, least square means were compared. Slice effects were analyzed when an interaction was significant. If data were transformed, they were detransformed in SAS with a corrective factor.

Soil water tension and moisture content at Pointe-Lebel were analyzed with the MIXED procedure of SAS. A split-split-split-plot design was used to analyze the data, with the following factors: Water level, Mulching, Sampling depth, and Sampling date. Normality and heterogeneity were tested as above. For water tension, homogeneity problems were avoided by pooling data to form two data groups: spring (3 days, June 12 to 14) and summer (4 days, July 11 to September 15). Significant variables were tested as above.

The GLM procedure of SAS was used to compare the soil physical properties from the soil cores of the two terraces. Since sampling was done only in the bare peat sub-plot, experimental design for analysis was reduced to a randomized complete block, with 4 blocks and the water level, or terraces, as the treatment. For the soil water retention curves, the MIXED procedure of SAS was used. The analysis was done using repeated measures for the various imposed tensions during the desorption process. Soil cores from the cloudberry donor site were not used in the statistical analysis. Normality, homogeneity, and significant variable were tested and analyzed as above.

2.5 Results

2.5.1 Survival and growth

Average survival was under 25 % for the first implantation trial (Figure 2.2). Even though the interaction between water levels and cultivars was significant, there were no differences between the two terraces within each cultivar (Table 2.2). However, clones differed in their survival rate. FD had the highest survival rate, while the two clones of Eastern Canada and FL exhibited similar survival rates. Results were similar for the number of leaves. Leaf

diagonal was also different between clones, QC and NB clones having bigger leaves than FD and FL cultivars [QC: 1.85 ± 0.13 cm; NB: 1.93 ± 0.12 cm ; FD: 1.16 ± 0.09 cm; FL: 1.32 ± 0.12 cm (LSMEANS \pm Standard error); df=28].

The results are similar for the second implantation trial, FD still having a better survival and a higher number of leaves than the other clones (Figure 2.3 and Table 2.2). No interactions were significant. NB clone had a better survival than the QC or FL origin this time while NB and FL produced more leaves than QC. Leaf diagonal was similar between the clones or cultivars.

Mulching had a negative effect on the number of leaves and a positive impact of leaf area in the second implantation trial (Figure 2.4 and Table 2.2). There were more leaves on the bare peat treatment, but leaves were larger under the mulch. Results were similar for the first implantation trial.

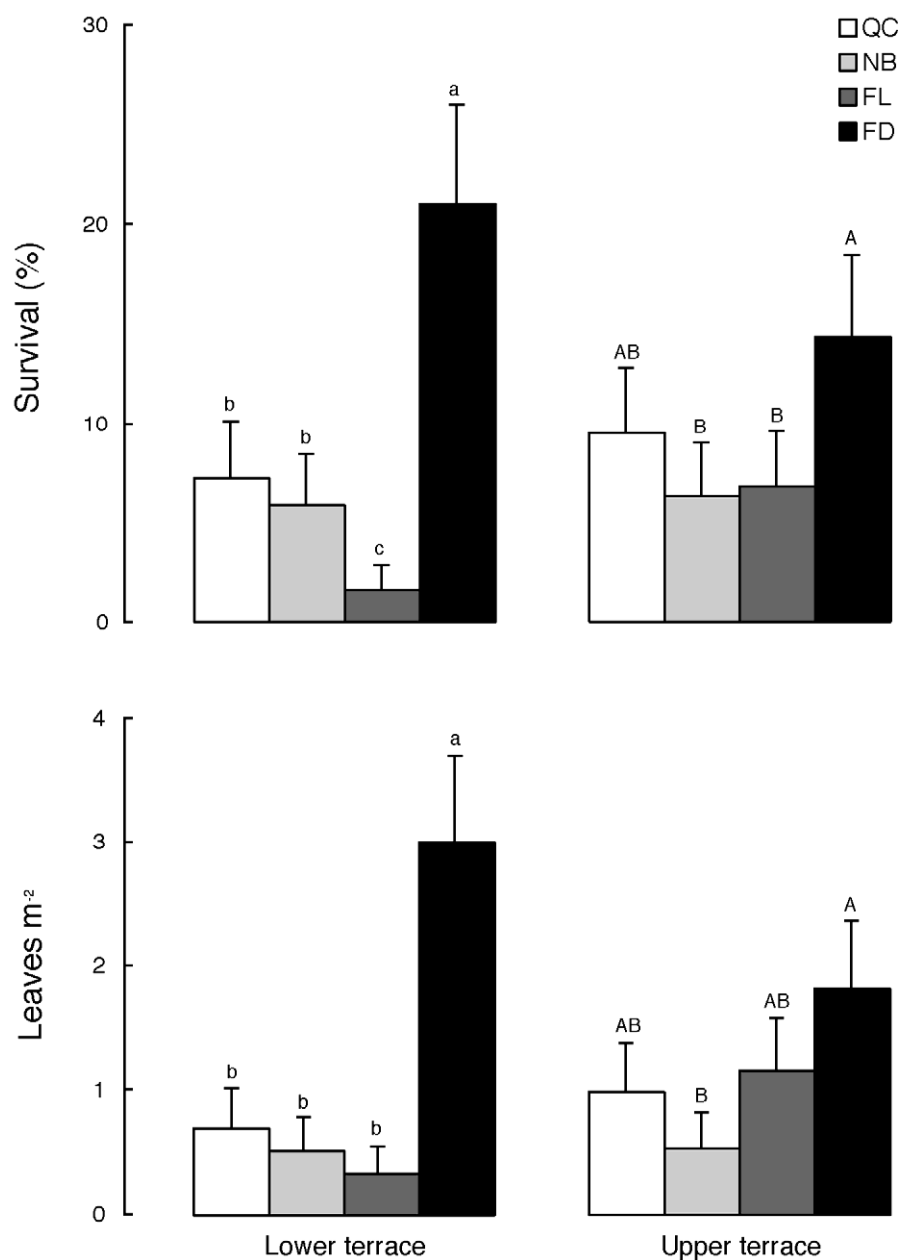


Figure 2.2 Average survival and number leaves m⁻² in the first implantation trial (2 years old plants) in relation to the water table level. There was no significant difference between the two water table levels within each cultivar; letters over bars represent difference at $p \leq 0.05$ within each terrace. Lines over bars indicate standard error. QC: Pointe-Lebel clone; NB: New-Brunswick clone; FL: Fjellgull cultivar; FD: Fjordgull cultivar.

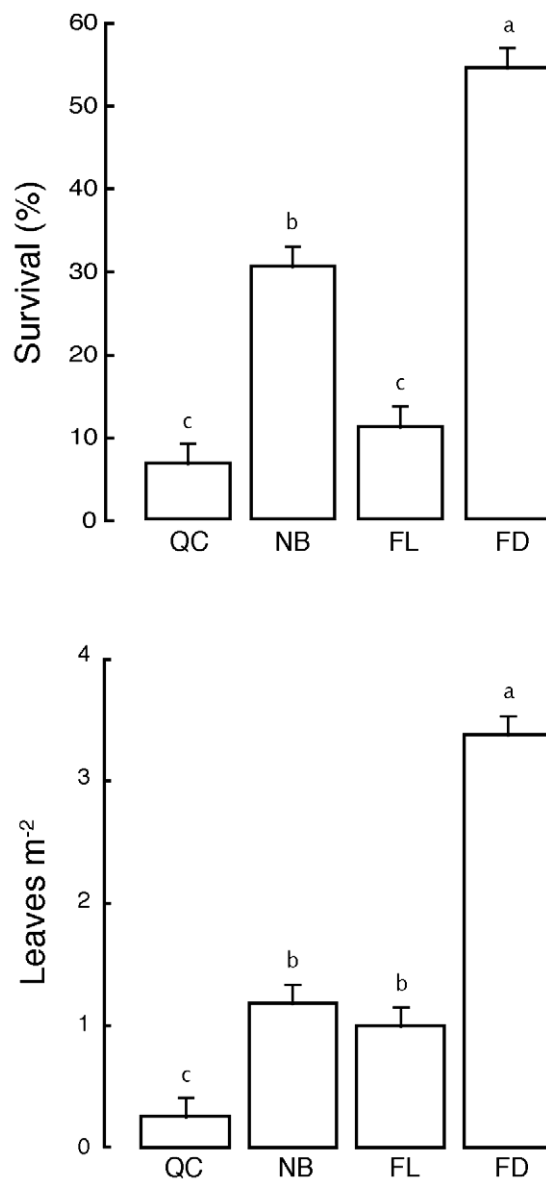


Figure 2.3 Average survival (a) and number of leaves m⁻² (b) in the second implantation trial (one year old plants). Letters over bars represent difference at $p \leq 0.05$ between clones or cultivars. Lines over bars indicate standard error. QC: Pointe-Lebel clone; NB: New-Brunswick clone; FL: Fjellgull cultivar; FD: Fjordgull cultivar.

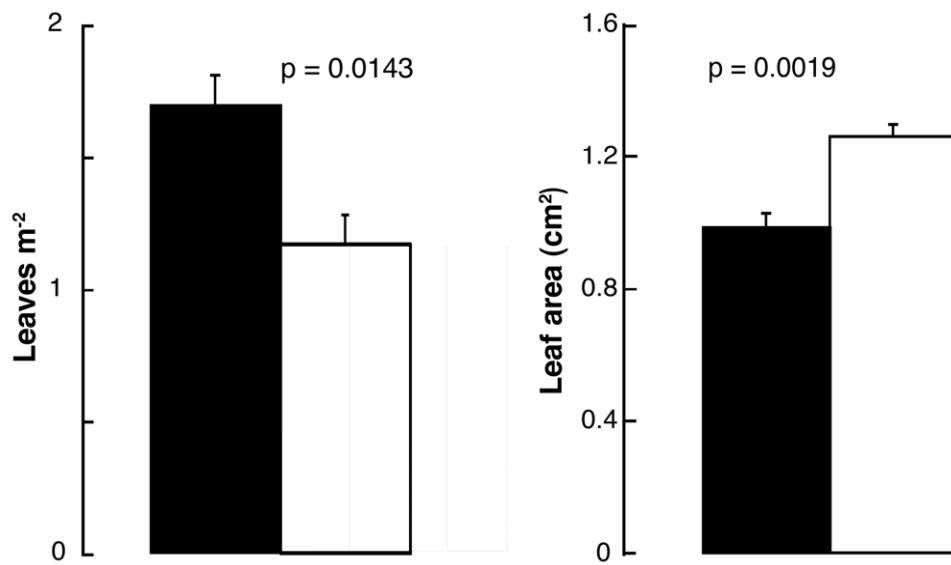


Figure 2.4 Average number of leaves m⁻² and individual leaf area (cm²) for plants in the bare peat (black) or mulch (white) treatment from the second implantation trial (one year old plants). Lines over bars indicate standard error.

Table 2.2. Type III fixed effects of field water levels, mulching and type of clone on cloudberry survival, number of leaves and leaf diagonal, one (second implantation trial) or two years (first trial) after planting. Analyses were carried out with the MIXED procedure. QC: Pointe-Lebel clone; NB: New-Bruswick clone; FL: Fjellgull cv.; FD: Fjordgull cv.

Effect	NDF	DDF	Second implantation trial				First implantation trial							
			Nb of individuals that survived ^a		Leaf diagonal (cm)		Nb of individuals that survived ^a		Nb. of leaves ^a		Leaf diagonal ^a (cm)			
			F	P > F	F	P > F	F	P > F	F	P > F	F	P > F		
Water levels	1	3	0.02	0.885	1.34	0.330	0.36	0.593	0.19	0.690	0.12	0.751	0.01	0.947
Mulching	1	6	0.62	0.460	11.6	0.0143	29.7	0.0016	4.27	0.0842	5.99	0.0499	6.05	0.0491
Water × Mulch	1	6	0.02	0.880	1.13	0.329	2.72	0.150	0.05	0.825	0.06	0.816	0.10	0.7603
Clone	3	36	77.3	<0.0001	72.8	<0.0001	0.86	0.472	19.7	<0.0001	16.9	<0.0001	11.8	<0.0001
Water × Clone	3	36	2.55	0.0711	2.25	0.0996	0.78	0.512	4.34	0.0104	4.25	0.0114	0.53	0.6678
<i>Slice effect for clones</i>														
QC	1	36							0.28	0.597	0.35	0.560		
NB	1	36							0.02	0.901	0.00	0.955		
FL	1	36							3.63	0.0646	3.54	0.0680		
FD	1	36							1.10	0.300	1.90	0.177		
<i>Slice effect for water levels</i>														
Lower terrace	3	36							20.5	<0.0001	17.1	<0.0001		
Upper Terrace	3	36							3.56	0.0236	4.08	0.0136		
Mulch × Clone	3	36	1.34	0.276	1.63	0.200	2.21	0.105	0.83	0.487	0.57	0.641	0.07	0.974
Water × Mulch × Clone	3	36	0.70	0.559	0.93	0.436	0.92	0.444	0.78	0.514	0.40	0.754	0.69	0.565
p ≤ 0.05														

NDF: Numerator df

DDF: Denominator df

^a: Square root transformed

2.5.2 Soil hydrological properties

Soil water content of the two terraces was not different over time, except for the sampling on day 209 (Table 2.3 and Figure 2.5), even though the water table levels differed between each other (data not shown). Nevertheless, terraces had an influence on water tension, the upper terrace having a lower tension at the beginning of the growing season (julian days 162 to 164; Table 2.4 and Figure 2.6). Mulching reduced the summer decrease in tension, as compared to bare peat (Figure 2.6). Water content was lower under bare peat than under mulch throughout the growing period (0.68 vs 0.79 $\text{cm}^3 \text{cm}^{-3}$; Table 2.3), mostly during the dryer period of the summer months. In early autumn, after frequent rain, neither water level nor mulching affected soil water tension near the surface.

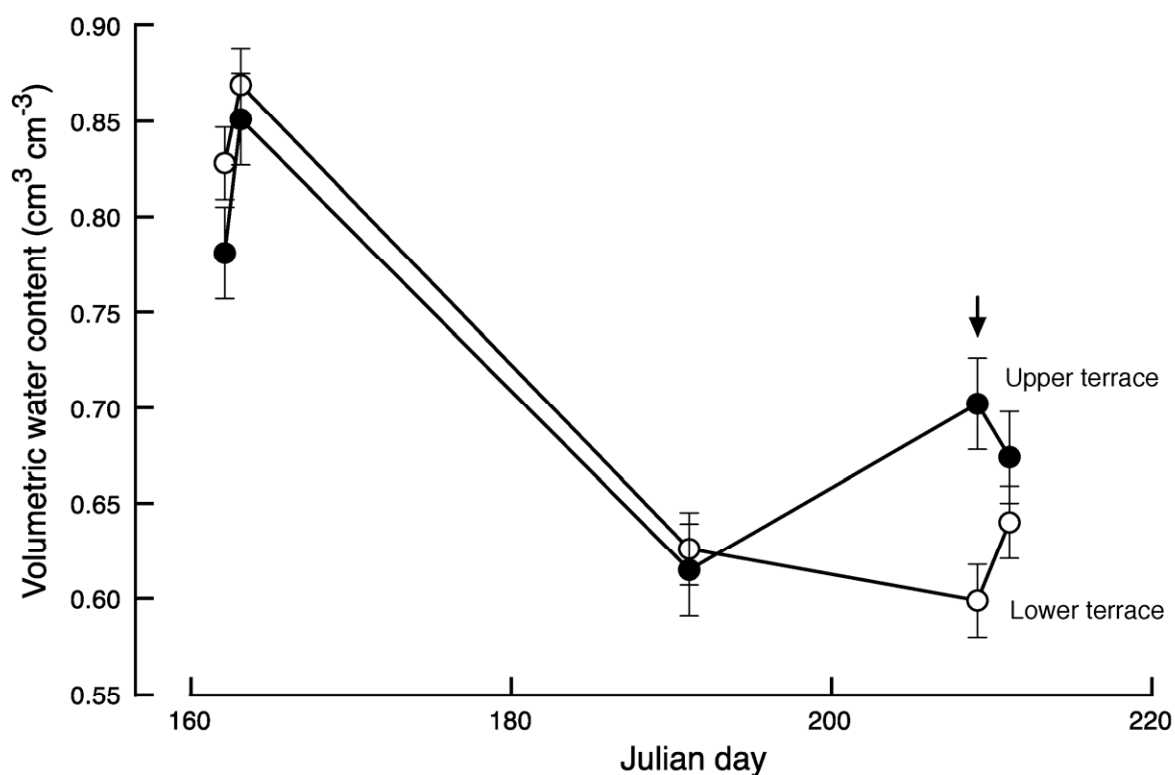


Figure 2.5 Soil water content of the two terraces during the 2005 growing season for combined depth sampling measurements (5 and 10 cm). Only one day (209) showed a significant difference between the two terraces at $p < 0.01$ (full arrow). Bars indicate standard error.

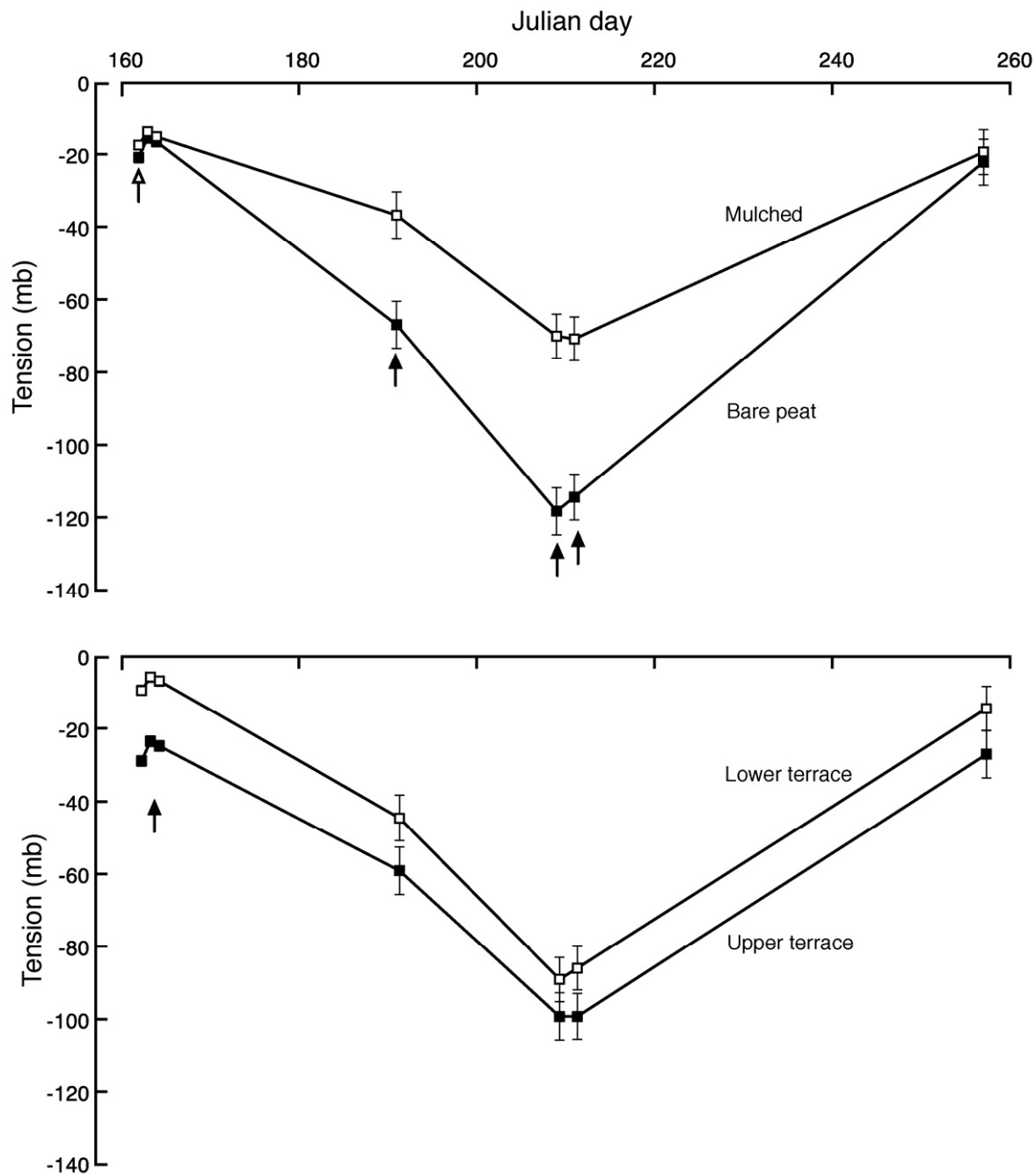


Figure 2.6 Soil water tension throughout the growing season for the bare peat and the mulched plots, and for the two water level treatments (terraces). Significant difference for the mulching experiment: $p < 0.05$ (open arrow); $p < 0.01$ (closed arrow). Bars indicate standard error.

Table 2.3. Type III fixed effects of water levels, mulching, sampling depth, and sampling date on field water content in the 2005 growing season. Analyses were carried out with the MIXED procedure.

Effect	NDF	DDF	Water content	
			F	P > F
Water levels	1	3	0.33	0.606
Mulching	1	5	33.4	0.002
Water × Mulch	1	5	2.51	0.174
Sampling depth	1	11	18.25	0.001
Water × Depth	1	11	0.00	0.995
Mulch × Depth	1	11	0.10	0.758
Water × Mulch × Depth	1	11	0.38	0.548
Sampling date	4	88	79.5	<0.0001
Water × Date	4	88	5.36	0.001
<i>Slice effect for sampling date (julian day)</i>				
162	1	88	3.47	0.066
163	1	88	0.55	0.462
191	1	88	0.13	0.719
209	1	88	12.2	0.001
211	1	88	1.41	0.238
<i>Slice effect for water levels</i>				
Lower terrace	4	88	59.6	<0.0001
Upper terrace	4	88	27.7	<0.0001
Mulch × Date	4	88	1.83	0.131
Water × Mulch × Date	4	88	0.49	0.742
Depth × Date	4	88	0.77	0.550
Water × Depth × Date	4	88	0.68	0.611
Mulch × Depth × Date	4	88	2.09	0.088
Water × Mulch × Depth × Date	4	88	0.35	0.840

$p \leq 0.05$

NDF: Numerator df

DDF: Denominator df

Table 2.4. Type III fixed effects of water levels, mulching, sampling depth, and sampling date on field soil water tension in the 2005 growing season. To maintain adequate data homogeneity, data were pooled to form two groups: spring (3 days: June 12 to 14) and summer (4 days: July 11 to September 15). Analyses were carried out with the MIXED procedure.

Effect	Spring (3 days)				Summer (4 days)			
	NDF	DDF	F	P > F	NDF	DDF	F	P > F
Water levels	1	3	195	0.001	1	3	6.09	0.090
Mulching	1	5	2.67	0.163	1	5	37.05	0.002
Water × Mulch	1	5	4.78	0.081	1	5	0	0.970
Sampling depth	1	11	5.60	0.037	1	11	0.04	0.837
Water × Depth	1	11	0.39	0.544	1	11	0	0.993
Mulch × Depth	1	11	0.04	0.841	1	11	0.05	0.834
Water × Mulch × Depth	1	11	0.23	0.638	1	11	0.01	0.944
Sampling date	2	44	65.2	<0.0001	3	54	222	<0.0001
Water × Date	2	44	2.74	0.076	3	54	0.14	0.935
Mulch × Date	2	44	3.53	0.0378	3	54	18.6	<0.0001
<i>Slice effect for sampling date (julian day)</i>								
162	1	44	5.88	0.020				
163	1	44	1.51	0.226				
164	1	44	0.92	0.342				
191					1	54	18.9	<0.0001
209					1	54	53.8	<0.0001
211					1	54	47.7	<0.0001
257					1	54	0.18	0.676
<i>Slice effect for mulching</i>								
Bare peat	2	44	44.8	<0.0001	3	54	177	<0.0001
Mulched surface	2	44	22.3	<0.0001	3	54	59.5	<0.0001
Water × Mulch × Date	2	44	0.15	0.861	3	54	0.43	0.731
Depth × Date	2	44	0.14	0.872	3	54	0.35	0.792
Water × Depth × Date	2	44	0.18	0.839	3	54	0.45	0.719
Mulch × Depth × Date	2	44	0.19	0.831	3	54	0.14	0.933
Water × Mulch × Depth × Date	2	44	0.66	0.521	3	54	0.42	0.741
Depth × Date								

$p \leq 0.05$

NDF: Numerator df

DDF: Denominator df

2.5.3 Soil physical properties

Peat tended to be more decomposed on the upper terrace (Table 2.5). Soil bulk density was higher for the upper terrace whereas total porosity was lower. However, particle density did not differ between the two terraces. Water retention curves indicated also higher water retention for the upper terrace at potentials lower than -20 mb (Figure 2.7), which is in the range of values measured in the field throughout the growing season in 2005.

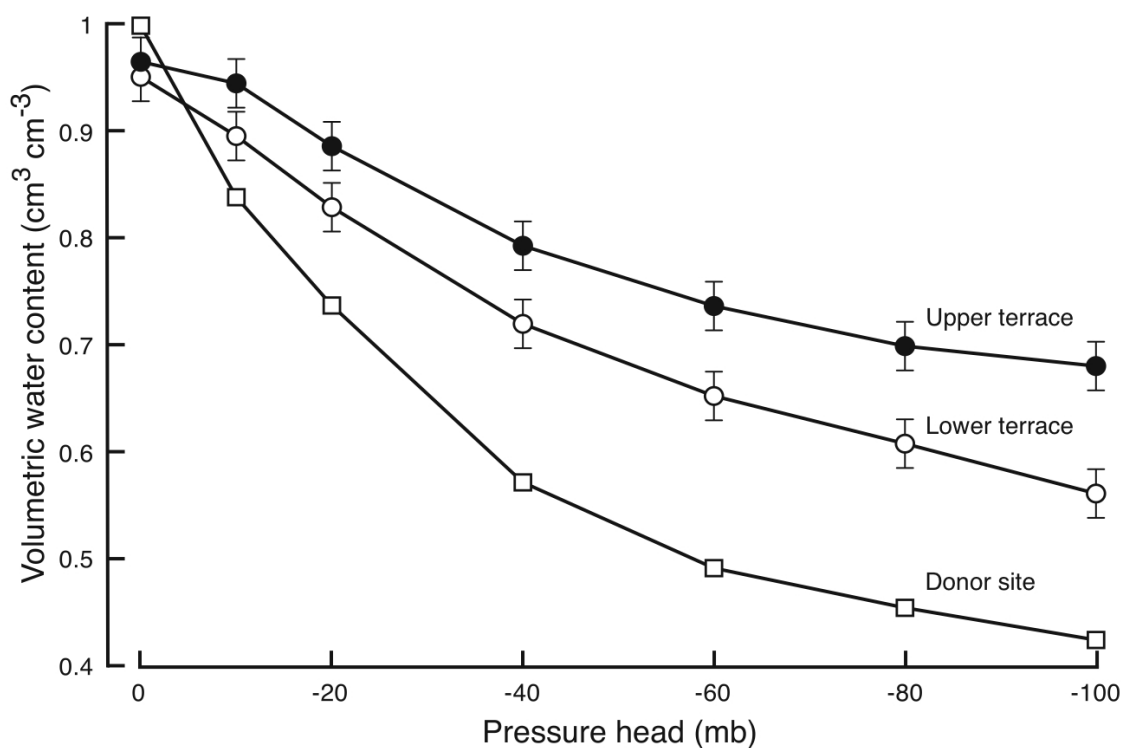


Figure 2.7 Water retention curves for the soil on each terrace and for the cloudberry rhizome donor site. Donor site data are included for comparison purposes and were not used in the statistical analysis. Data analyzed at each potential applied showed significant differences ($p \leq 0.05$) between the terraces, except at saturation (0 mb). Bars indicate standard error.

Table 2.5 Some soil physical properties of the two terraces and of the cloudberry rhizome donor site. Donor site data are included for comparison and were not used for statistical analysis. Least square means with standard error in parenthesis. BD: Bulk Density; PD: Particle Density; θ_a : Total porosity.

Terrace	von Post	BD (g cm ⁻³)	PD (g cm ⁻³)	θ_a (cm ³ cm ⁻³)
Rhizome donor site	3.5	0.106	1.386	0.922
Lower (25 cm)	3.25 (0.14)	0.098 (0.005)	1.287 (0.040)	0.923 (0.005)
Upper (50 cm)	3.78 (0.14)	0.138 (0.005)	1.353 (0.040)	0.898 (0.005)
P	0.053	0.001	0.574	0.037

2.6 Discussion

2.6.1 Effect of water table levels on cloudberry establishment

Water table levels, as created in the field, did not influence plant growth as measured by survival, the number of leaves and the plant leaf area in either the Norwegian cultivars or the local clones. We can conclude that the range of water levels recommended by Rapp (2004) do not lead to differences in survival and growth. However, this indicates that, at establishment, cloudberry does not seem to be affected by the different soil physical or hydrological conditions present in this study.

If we look at the terraces themselves, we see differences in physical and hydrological properties. In the 2005 growing season, soil water tension in the spring was higher in the lower terrace. A few water patches could be seen on the lower terrace, indicating water filled macropores at the surface. However, this was only the case in spring, as water receded by at least 1 m in the blocked ditches during summer, and soil water tension near the surface was similar between the terraces. Among soil physical properties, bulk density was about 40% higher on the upper terrace than on the lower one. Total porosity was also lower for the upper terrace. Higher bulk density is usually coupled with a decrease in pore size and an increase in water holding capacity (Price 1997; Schlotzhauer & Price 1999), which was also the case for the upper terrace. Mechanical operations can increase the bulk density in organic soils, such as during forest logging (Hassan 1978). Even though vacuum harvesters have been used for years on the research site, the higher bulk density in the upper terrace comes from the site preparation. The upper terrace was created by loose peat removed from what would become the lower terrace. This exposed peat at the surface was slightly more decomposed than under the surface (i.e. what would become the lower terrace) since harvesting operation (e.g. harrowing) have increased oxidation over time (Ilnicki & Zeitz 2002). The removed loose peat was compacted by the repeated tractor operations in the experimental site set-up. The lower terrace was only slightly disturbed as it was still frozen, thus not being compacted during the set up. It is known that less compact soils gave higher tree or crop yields, both in mineral and organic soils (White 1978; Douglas 1994; Wronski & Murphy 1994; Houlbrooke *et al.* 1997). However, in the 2006 sampling year (data not shown), after 2 and 3 growing seasons respectively, we observed a trend

($p = 0.0834$) towards a higher number of leaves in the lower terrace for the 2 years old plants. We are also observing, for the 3 years old plants, a greater increase in leaf number from 2005 to 2006 for the lower terrace, and stagnation for the higher terrace.

Therefore, cloudberry might not exhibit difference in growth during the two first growing seasons. After several years, a soil with a higher bulk density might slow cloudberry growth and rhizome spreading, unless a clone is adapted to such conditions. Results from 6 cloudberry cultivation farms in Finland support this hypothesis (G. Th  roux Rancourt 2006, MTT Agrifood Research Finland, unpublished results). Water table level should not be used as the main criteria, as it is not a good indicator of water availability at the surface (Price 1997). It should not be considered as important as soil physical properties when investigating sites for cloudberry cultivation. Further research and site survey are needed to assess this trend.

2.6.2 Compatibility with the dry harvested peatland restoration approach

Straw mulch is inherent to peatland restoration as it increases *Sphagnum* plant fragment survival (Rocheffort *et al.* 2003). Mulches also prevent aerial adventitious plants from invading bare peat. Cloudberry cultivated areas sometime exhibit a high number of birch and pine seedlings in Finland (pers. obs.). It would thus be necessary to prevent the potential competition from those plants since cloudberry plots are usually fertilized once every ten years (Rapp 2004) and that cloudberry lacks efficiency in nutrient uptake (Rapp & Steenberg 1977) compared to adventitious plants. *Sphagnum* mosses are less competitive for resources than adventitious plants. Thus, a restored *Sphagnum* cover would not impede cloudberry establishment. However, straw mulch decreased the number of cloudberry leaves during establishment. This could be explained in part by temperature extremes and temperature variations, which decrease under organic mulches (Hicklenton *et al.* 2000; Cushman *et al.* 2005). This is particularly important in spring where bare peat, with its dark color, absorbs more radiation than straw mulch. Price *et al.* (1998) estimated this increase in net radiation to be around 15%. When spring temperatures are low, shoot growth is slowed down in natural cloudberry stands (Lohi 1974). This is also the case in other

rhizome or tuber plants, where sprouting increases with temperature (McIntyre 1970; Leakey & Chancellor 1972; Li *et al.* 2000). Reserve mobilization could also have been impaired, since biomass accumulation can be impaired during early establishment, as in rhizome bearing *Cynodon dactylon* (Satorre *et al.* 1996). This was not measured in our experiment, but reserve mobilization increases with temperature, as in *Cyperus esculentus* (Li *et al.* 2000) or *Elymus repens* (Leakey & Chancellor 1972). Hypoxic condition might also have been present some time after planting, reducing even more plant growth (Larcher 2003; soil air content not measured). Even though cloudberry roots can possess aerenchymas (Metsävainio 1931), planted cloudberry rhizomes were often lacking roots. Furthermore, root formation occurs late in the growing season (between 40 and 80 days after planting; R. Gauci 2004, Université Laval, pers. comm.) and rhizome tolerance to low oxygen concentration is not known.

Rhizomes were also planted too deep with regards to rhizome sprouting, as observed by Bellemare (2007) for cloudberry in a neighboring experiment. Rhizomes planted at 5 cm under the soil surface had a higher survival rate and leaf number than rhizomes planted at 10 cm, which was the planting depth in this study. Considering the lower temperatures under mulches in early spring, this might have even more attenuated bud sprouting.

The increase in leaf area most probably came from the shading effect of the mulch, as leaves from sheltered sites are usually larger (Lohi 1974). Straw covered about 75% of the surface in 2005 (personal evaluation), which should be sufficient to shade the small cloudberry plants. Even though mulching increased leaf area, it clearly reduced leaf number. Soil surface tension remains high under mulches in abandoned peatlands throughout the season (Price *et al.* 1998). This was also the case in this experiment, but differences were present only during the drier summer months. Thus, soil tension near surface alone cannot explain the decrease in leaf number since early in the season, both mulched and bare peat plots had very high water tension. Low temperature at sprouting, slow increase in temperature during spring, too deep planting, potential hypoxia, and low reserve mobilization might have impaired sprouting, as well as survival of the sprouts that might have reached the surface. This will probably lead to lower resource accumulation, thus reducing rhizome formation and slowing clonal spreading. If the restoration of the

abandoned peatland with *Sphagnum* as well as cloudberry is the goal of the project, cloudberry should be planted 2 or 3 years after peatland restoration, i.e. once a *Sphagnum* carpet has begun to establish and when straw mulch density has considerably decreased. Cloudberry would then benefit from the improved hydrological conditions under the new moss carpet, while avoiding the initial negative impact of the straw mulch.

2.6.3 Plant population origin

Climatic conditions vary considerably between northern Norway and eastern Canada. Local clones would have an advantage over foreign clones as they are adapted to the climatic conditions. However, clones that have undergone a selection process would also have an advantage as they have superior growth characteristics. In our experiment, one of the Norwegian cultivars exhibited the best survival rates and growth parameters. Fjordgull had a higher survival rate, while Fjellgull performed like the local populations from Pointe-Label, QC and New Brunswick. The low growth rate of Fjellgull was already addressed by Rapp and Martinussen (2002) for Norway. Even though the local clones performed well in their local environment – i.e. exhibited high ramet density – both had a low survival rate under cultivation. This might have come from too great a change in environmental parameters, such as soil bulk density, soil air content and other environmental characteristics. Changes in phenotype can be seen when growing clones in different environmental conditions (Kleijn & van Groenendael 1999; Santini & Camussi 2000; van Kleunen & Fischer 2001). In the case of common cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*) clones grown in various Mediterranean localities, environmental factors altered the phenotype more than the genotype itself (Santini & Camussi 2000). The main cloudberry donor site had a lower water holding capacity than the two experimental terraces even if measured soil physical properties were similar to the lower terrace (Figure 2.7 and Table 2.4). Also, water recession was faster at the cloudberry donor site, so did probably the water potential decrease (unmeasured, pers. obs.). Thus, air content at the donor site would have been higher than in the experimental terraces at similar tension values. The clone at the donor site might have been more used to an air rich soil environment and less able to cope with abrupt changes in air availability. The Fjordgull cv. might be better adapted to the

experimental set-up environment, as well as having higher self-sufficient capacities for survival (ex. bigger rhizomes). Norwegian rhizomes were probably younger (3 years old and less) than local rhizomes, which would normally range from 1 to 10 years old (Metsävainio 1931), although care was taken in selecting rhizomes that seemed viable. Older rhizomes have had axillary buds inhibited for a longer time, which make them more difficult to stimulate (Mitchell 1953). This could be the case even though initial biomass was similar between the local and the Norwegian rhizomes. Nevertheless, Fjordgull cv. showed a better potential for abandoned peatland cultivation when planted from rhizomes. However, selecting clones from the local climate as well as clones adapted to abandoned peatland cultivation should maximize survival and growth and reduce economical losses from rhizome death.

2.7 Conclusion

Cloudberry cultivation is still at its beginning worldwide. This study provides knowledge on hydrology and substratum effects on cloudberry survival and growth. Water table levels, created through landscaping terraces in this experiment, did not affect cloudberry growth. Terraces had different physical properties, and third year results (data not shown) suggest an increased growth for the terrace with the lower bulk density and higher total porosity. Care should be taken during site selection and preparation, in order to choose peatland sectors that have not been too compacted with time and by using little or no machinery work for site preparation. Bulk density should be measured before selecting a site, in combination with other environmental parameters such as decomposition level, air filled porosity and water holding capacity. Further research needs to be done to better define the range of substratum parameters suitable for cloudberry cultivation.

Cloudberry should be planted 2-3 years after peatland restoration in order to minimize the negative impact of the mulch on cloudberry rhizome establishment. However, survival rates of planted rhizomes are still too low to start large scale cultivation. Breeding is presently being carried out in order to develop regional clones in eastern Canada (K. Naess 2006, Centre de recherche Les Buissons, Canada, pers. comm.). Other planting techniques for

rhizomes are also being studied, such as autumn and shallower planting (Bellemare 2007). Plug plants are also being considered, as they have had a higher survival rate (> 90%, pers. obs.) at establishment in cloudberry cultivations projects in Finland. Once good survival at establishment would be obtained, cloudberry production could become another option in abandoned peatland after-use.

Chapitre 3

Peat decomposition impact on cloudberry growth at different water table depths

3.1 Résumé

La culture de la chicouté (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) est présentement considérée dans le réaménagement de tourbières abandonnées. Toutefois, les recommandations concernant les propriétés physiques et hydriques de sols sont imprécises, propriétés variables selon la décomposition de la tourbe. Un essai en serres a eu pour but d'évaluer l'impact à court terme d'une tourbe fibrique (H3) et d'une tourbe mésique (H5) sur la croissance de rhizomes de chicouté à deux niveaux d'eau. Les niveaux d'eau n'ont pas affecté la croissance. La masse fraîche des tiges et pétioles était plus élevée en tourbe H5. Le nombre de rhizomes produits était plus élevé en tourbe H3, et une tendance a été observée pour une masse fraîche plus élevée des rhizomes. La tourbe H3 avait une masse volumique apparente et une rétention en eau plus faible, indiquant un contenu en air plus élevé dans la tourbe. Donc, les types de tourbes recommandées (H2-H4) favorisent l'établissement de la chicouté, bien qu'elle puisse pousser en tourbe plus décomposée. Toutefois, la durabilité des plantations en tourbe plus décomposée doit être évaluée.

3.2 Abstract

Cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) cultivation is being considered in abandoned peatland reclamation. However, criteria for site selection are imprecise when it comes to physical and hydrological conditions, which vary with peat decomposition. A greenhouse study was carried out to evaluate the short-term impact of a fibric (H3) and a mesic (H5) peat on cloudberry growth at two different water tables. Water levels did not affect cloudberry growth. Fresh mass of stems and petioles was higher in the H5 peat. However, H3 peat increased the number of new rhizomes, while it tended to increase rhizome fresh mass. H3 peat had a lower bulk density and water retention, which lead to a decrease in air content in the peat. Thus, the Norwegian recommended range of fibric peat type (H2-H4) is suited for cloudberry establishment, but cloudberry can grow on more decomposed peat. However, the sustainability of the plantations in more decomposed peat needs to be evaluated.

3.3 Introduction

Conditions of substratum after cessation of peat harvesting activities vary widely, among which are differences in peat decomposition and porosity. Cloudberry (*Rubus chamaemorus* L.) cultivation, one reclamation option considered in Canada, Finland, and Norway, has specific needs with regards to soil conditions. Recommendations have been given for water table levels, as well as for peat decomposition based on several years of studies in Norway (Rapp 2004). It has been recommended to grow the plants in a narrow range of well aerated fibric peat, from H2 to H4 on the von Post scale, which is the usual range found in nature (Metsävainio 1931; Dumas 1986). However, mesic peat is quite frequently encountered in reclamation projects, thus outside the recommended range for cloudberry. Hydrological and physical properties vary with increased decomposition (Boelter 1969; Brandyk *et al.* 2002). Porosity, pore size and hydraulic conductivity decrease, while bulk density and water retention increase with increased decomposition, (Boelter 1969; Brandyk *et al.* 2002). Since cloudberry grows preferably in well aerated substratum in nature (Rapp 2004), changes in soil properties, especially soil aeration, might impair survival and growth of newly planted rhizomes. Thus, assessing the impact of peat decomposition on cloudberry growth is important in order to broaden the range of possible areas to be reclaimed for cloudberry cultivation.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate cloudberry growth 3 months after planting in a greenhouse in two types of peat, one inside and one outside the recommended decomposition range, under two different hydrological conditions.

3.4 Material and methods

3.4.1 Experimental design

The experiment was carried out in a greenhouse as a complete randomized split-plot design. Main factor consisted of two different water levels and sub-plots of peat of two different decomposition levels. Main factor was repeated 7 times. Subplots were repeated 3 times within each main plot.

Water levels were adapted from the upper and lower recommended water table level for cloudberry cultivation (Rapp 2004) in order to evaluate them in different peat types. Water tables were achieved by using 83 L plastic boxes (64 x 43 x 45 cm) with holes on the edges to control the water level at 25 or 45 cm from the pots surface. Boxes were placed in order to be at an equal distance to the light above. 7 boxes were used for each water level.

Because of the narrow range of recommended peat type for cloudberry cultivation, i.e. H2 to H4 on the von Post scale (Rapp 2004), we decided to assess the impact on growth of a peat inside the recommended range (H3) compared to a peat outside that range (H5). The first peat, PRO-MOSS TBK from Premier Horticulture Ltd (Rivière-du-Loup, QC), is a commercial peat of the H3 type on the von Post scale (Parent & Caron 1993). The second is a H5 peat collected at the St-Henri peatland (Premier Horticulture Ltd). This peat was not sieved contrarily to the commercial H3 peat, and some wood fragments were present. Average pH of the two peat were similar [3.36 (H3) vs. 3.33 (H5), T-test, equal variance, $df=10$, $t=0.58$, $p=0.57$]. Cloudberry rhizomes were planted in PVC plastic tubes of 50 cm height and 10 cm internal diameter. Nylon mesh was put on the bottom to hold peat in the tube. Pots were filled with damp peat up the border. Pots were dropped 3 times from 20 cm on to a surface. Pots were filled again and dropped twice from the same height. Peat was then added up to 5 cm from the surface. A 30 cm cloudberry rhizome was then coiled, placed on the peat surface and covered with peat. Surface peat was finally lightly compacted. A total of 84 pots were used in this experiment (2 water table level \times 7 repetitions per water level treatment \times 2 types of peat \times 3 repetitions of the peat treatment per main plot).

3.4.2 Growing conditions

Experiment was carried out in winter in a Hortisud glass greenhouse at Laval University (46° 47' N, 71° 23' W). Two growing tables of 10 m² were used, with a 400 W HPS lamps placed at 1.5 m above the center of each table. They were located close to the forced ventilation fan and on the opposite side of the exterior wall. Light and ventilation were considered homogenous. Growth period lasted 76 d (11 w), which is the recommended

cloudberry growing period in greenhouse (Rapp *et al.* 2003). Temperature regime was $20\pm 3^{\circ}\text{C}$ day, $15\pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$ night until day 42 of the growing period, and $23\pm 3^{\circ}\text{C}$ day, $20\pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$ night for the rest of the experiment.

Rhizomes used in this experiment were harvested the previous autumn at the Pointe-Lebel peatland, QC ($49^{\circ} 7' \text{ N}$, $68^{\circ} 12' \text{ W}$) and stored at $2\pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$ until planting. Because of the low genetic variation in cloudberry patches (Korpelainen *et al.* 1999), rhizomes used are considered to be one clone only. Rhizomes were cut into 30 cm pieces just before planting and weighed individually. The dry mass / fresh mass ratio of rhizomes at the time of planting was 0.297 g g^{-1} and was estimated from 30 rhizomes dried at 65°C for 48 h. Flower buds were removed during growth to promote vegetative growth.

All pots were watered abundantly for 5 days; then the water table was set at 15 cm from surface to simulate the high water table found in peatlands after snow meltdown in spring. At day 11, water table was dropped at 25 cm, i.e the rubber stopper was removed from the hole at 25 cm from the surface of the pots. At day 18, water table was dropped at 45 cm for half of the boxes. Water level was maintained by regularly adding water up to the water control holes on the edges of the boxes. At day 39, 300 ml of a 15-15-18 (N-P₂O₅-K₂O) soluble fertilizer dosed at 100 ppm N was added to each pot.

A tensiometer (1 cm o.d. ceramic porous cup) was inserted vertically at rhizome depth, 5 cm under soil surface, in order to determine the watering schedule. One tensiometer was placed in each box, and each treatment was represented almost equally, as well as the relative distance to the lamp. Water tension was measured regularly with a digital reader (Tensimeter, Soil Measurement Systems, Tucson, AZ, Etats-Unis). When tension reached -60 mb in one pot, all of the pots were watered equally.

3.4.3 Growth measurements

Growth was stopped at the beginning of the “autumn” growing period, when cloudberreries are supposed to be grown in reduced temperature and light (Rapp *et al.* 2003). Living plants were sorted into the following parts: 1) leaves, 2) petioles and stems, 3) rhizomes and old

roots, and 4) new roots. The two first plant components were grouped as “above-ground” parts, while the two last as “below-ground” parts. The number of new rhizomes was counted. Fresh weight was measured just after separating the plant parts, while dry weight was measured after 48 h of drying at 65°C.

3.4.4 Soil physical properties

In order to estimate the water holding capacity of the two types of peat used, three soil cores of 25 cm height and 10 cm inside diameter were prepared and filled as above for each type of peat. Cores were rewetted from the bottom in demineralized water for 24 h, drained and then rewetted for another 24 h. Cores were then drained for about 5 min before being laid on a tension table filled with glass beads of 20 μm median diameter, according to the design of Topp and Zebchuk (1979). A water column controlled the pressure head: the air entry point (i.e. open end from the water column) was lowered to apply a higher pressure head. Initial applied pressure head was at the base of the cores, i.e. -25 mb from the surface of the cores, which was equivalent to the upper most water table in the experiment, -25 cm. Pressure was dropped progressively up to -65 mb. Applied pressure head and the delay before each measurement are taken from Topp and Zebchuk (1979) and shown on Table 3.1. Cores were removed from the tension table and moisture content was measured gravimetrically. Tension tables were wetted before putting back the cores in order to reestablish good hydrological contact. Cores were oven-dried at 105°C for 48 h and weighed to obtain the bulk density (Parent & Caron 1993).

Table 3.1 Applied pressure head from the surface of the cores and delay before measurements for the cores’ soil-water desorption curve, based upon Topp and Zebchuk (1979).

Pressure head (mb)	Delay before measurement (h)
-25	24
-45	48
-55	72
-65	72

3.4.5 Statistical analysis

Plant growth data were analyzed with the MIXED procedure from SAS software (SAS Statistical System Software version 9.1, SAS Institute, Cary, NC, USA). Initial fresh mass of the rhizomes was used as a covariate. Normality was accepted when the Shapiro-Wilk value was over 0.01, while homogeneity of variance was analyzed visually. Linear relation between the responses variables and the covariate was also analyzed visually. Analysis steps to assess the homogeneity of the slopes for the covariate were carried out as in Milliken and Johnson (2002). The highest-order interaction with the covariate was removed if non significant. The model was run again and the previous step carried out until all terms involving the covariate were significant. Each term involving the covariate takes one denominator degree of freedom out in the final analysis. If data transformation was needed, a square root transformation was applied. When a variable was significant at $p \leq 0.05$, least square means were compared. If data were transformed, they were detransformed in SAS with a corrective factor.

Soil water desorption characteristics were analyzed with the MIXED procedure. The analysis was done as a two-way factorial design, with peat type as the main factor and with repeated measures for the various imposed tensions during the desorption process. Normality and homogeneity were tested as above. When a variable was significant at $p \leq 0.05$, least square means were compared.

The other soil physical properties were analyzed with T-test ($p \leq 0.05$) with the SAS software to compare the 2 different types of peat.

3.5 Results

3.5.1 Plant survival

Plant mortality was high, 37%; but it was also high for other cloudberry experiments carried out at Laval University at the same time (Bellemare 2007). Dead plants wilted some days after emergence. When digging out wilting plants, rhizomes exhibited also signs of wilting, sometimes being dead (brown vs. white interior for living ones) up to the new

shoot. Mortality was almost equal among treatments. Only the living plants were used for the statistical analyses.

3.5.2 Water levels and type of peat impacts of cloudberry growth

Water levels had no influence on any of the measured variables, but the types of peat had more effect on cloudberry growth (Table 3.2). When grown on more decomposed peat, the fresh mass of stems and petioles were significantly higher [82.85 ± 7.22 mg (H5) vs. 76.94 ± 7.52 mg (H3)]. On the other hand, the number of new rhizomes produced was higher in the H3 peat than in the H5 peat [8.5 ± 1.3 (H3) vs. 4.6 ± 1.2 (H5)].

Table 3.2 Type III fixed effects of water level and peat type on fresh and dry mass of different plant organs and on the number of new rhizomes in the greenhouse experiment. Analyses were carried out with the MIXED procedure. FM: Fresh mass; DM: Dry mass.

Organ	Main plot error	Subplot error	Effects					
			Water level		Peat		Water level × Peat	
			F	P > F	F	P > F	F	P > F
Stem and petiole FM ^a	12	29	0.37	0.550	5.83	0.022	0.02	0.893
Stem and petiole DM ^{b,d}	12	29	4.37	0.059	0.25	0.624	2.37	0.134
Leaves FM	12	30	1.02	0.332	0.11	0.746	0.09	0.761
Leaves DM ^c	12	31	0.54	0.478	0.42	0.521	0.65	0.427
Rhizomes FM	12	30	2.98	0.110	3.24	0.082	0.24	0.630
Rhizomes DM	12	30	0.01	0.942	0.00	0.998	0.00	0.976
New roots FM ^d	12	30	0.90	0.362	2.80	0.105	0.22	0.640
New roots DM ^d	12	30	0.57	0.464	2.87	0.101	0.36	0.554
Number of new rhizomes ^c	12	31	0.75	0.404	5.73	0.023	0.53	0.473

$p \leq 0.05$

Numerator df for all treatments and interactions: 1

Covariate included in the models except for:

^a: *Covariate × Peat* included in the model.

^b: *Covariate × Water level* included in the model.

^c: *Covariate* was not related linearly and was not included in the final model.

^d: Square-root transformation applied.

3.5.3 Soil physical properties

The two types of peat used in this study had different average bulk density [$0,086\pm 0,002\text{ g cm}^{-3}$ (H3) vs. $0,142\pm 0,010\text{ g cm}^{-3}$ (H5); T-test, equal variances, $df=4$, $t=-5.38$, $p=0.006$]. Water retention was not different at -25 mb , but was significantly different for applied tensions under -45 mb (Table 3.3 and Figure 3.1). Thus, the H5 peat retained more water than the H3 peat.

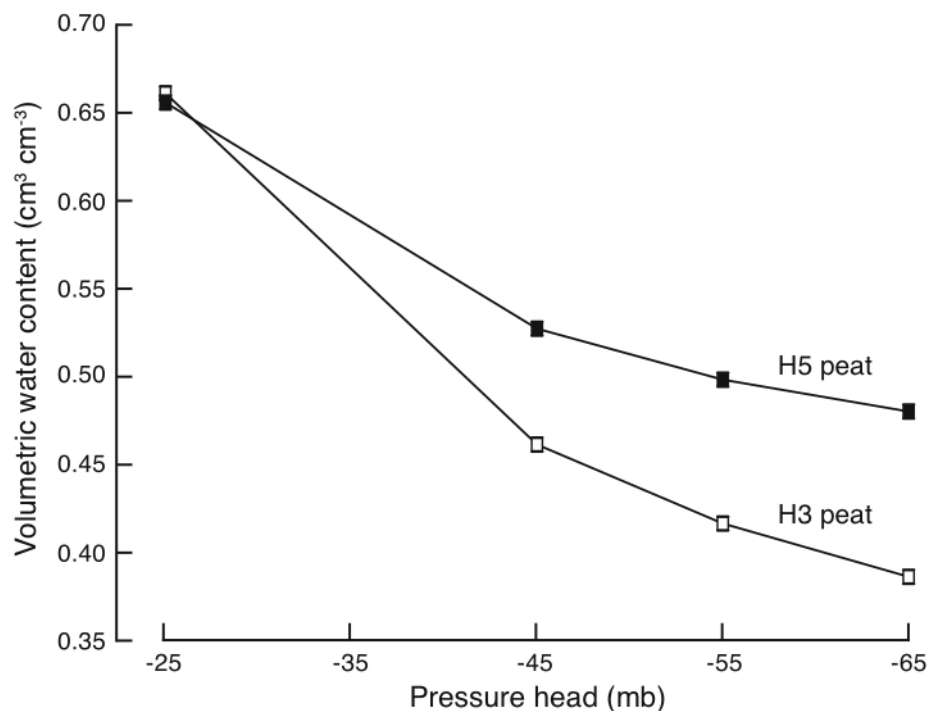


Figure 3.1 Partial water release curve for the two types of peat used in the greenhouse experiment. The two types of peat used have significantly different water content at each pressure head. Pressure head was calculated from the surface of the pots. Bars indicate standard error.

Table 3.3 Type III fixed effects of peat type and pressure head on the water content during the soil core water desorption analysis. Analyses were carried out with the MIXED procedure.

Effect	NDF	DDF	F value	P > F
Peat type	1	10	192	<0.0001
Pressure head	3	10	4688	<0.0001
Peat type × Pressure	3	10	224	<0.0001
<i>Slice effect for peat type</i>				
H3 peat	3	10	2902	<0.0001
H5 peat	3	10	1789	<0.0001
<i>Slice effect for pressure head</i>				
25 mb	1	10	1.15	0.309
45 mb	1	10	175	<0.0001
55 mb	1	10	269	<0.0001
65 mb	1	10	356	<0.0001

p ≤ 0.05

NDF : Numerator df

DDF : Denominator df

3.5.4 Soil water tension throughout the growing period

Soil water tension was different throughout the growing period. Between the 7th and 36th growing day, a stable period with regards to water tension, the interaction between the water level and the peat type was significant (Figure 3.2, F=4.04, p=0.0456). At a water table of -45cm, H5 peat was always drier than H3 peat (F=18.9, p<0.0001), but marginally drier at a water table of -25 cm (F=2.91, p=0.090). However, from day 36 and beyond, an algae crust developed on the pots' surface. Water tension became less stable and those readings were not used for analysis. Note that tensions reproduced in greenhouse were higher than those observed in abandoned peatland (chap. 2).

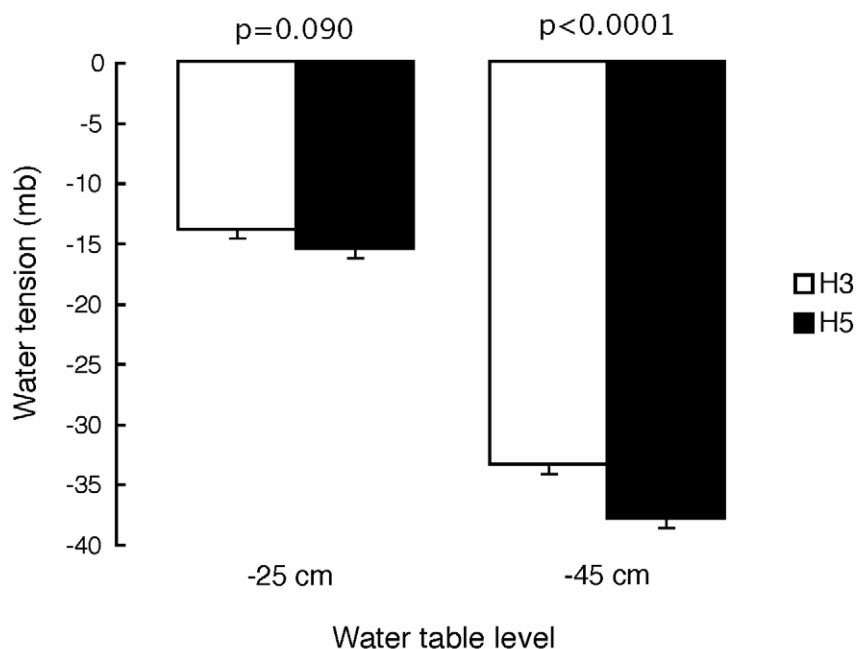


Figure 3.2 Water tension in the peat type and water table depth treatments between the 7th and 36th growing days (17 sampling days). At an applied water level of -45 cm, a significant difference was observed between the two types of peat, but not at -25 cm. Lines under bars indicate standard error. White bar: H3 peat; Black bar; H5 peat.

3.6 Discussion

Cloudberry growth was not affected by water levels, which indicates again that the recommended water table range alone does not alter cloudberry growth at establishment (chap. 2) and is not a good indicator of optimal growing conditions. Peat decomposition plays a more important role in cloudberry growth. Thus, changes in soil physical and hydrological properties are key factors in cloudberry growth modulation. However, tensions in the greenhouse experiment were higher than those observed in abandoned peatland (chap. 2). Thus, conditions in greenhouse might have been less contrasting than in abandoned peatland.

Peat decomposition had a significant influence on stems and petioles fresh mass. Nevertheless, stems and petioles are only a small proportion of the above ground biomass, and even smaller when compared to total biomass. A better indicator of cloudberry growth is below ground biomass, since it represents about 95% of the total biomass (Dumas 1986).

In the present study, below ground biomass represented a high proportion of the total biomass (around 83%). However, below ground dry mass was not significant. This was also the case in a northern Quebec study, where changes in humification (i.e. bog (H2), fen (H4), Spruce mire (H1)) did not affect below ground dry biomass (Dumas 1986).

Previous experiments have shown that female cloudberry rhizomes grown in H6-H8 peat produced less rhizomes than in H2-H4 peat (Rapp *et al.* 2003). We have observed similar results, as more rhizomes were produced in the more fibric peat (H3). However, since new rhizome usually have a lower density (g cm^{-3}), an increase in new rhizome doesn't necessarily transpose into an increase in biomass, which was not the case in the present study. A higher number of rhizomes could lead to a higher clonal spreading efficiency in fibric peat and thus would more rapidly reach a dense cloudberry cover, which would attenuate potential competition from aerial adventitious plants.

The two types of peat had different hydrological and soil physical properties. In the H5 peat, even though tension was lower throughout the greenhouse experiment, it does not indicate a lower water content, as water retention was higher for the H5 peat (Figure 3.1). Thus water content at rhizome depth was higher in the H5 peat at the -45 cm water table, mainly when the peat got dry (e.g. at -60 mb).

Because of the larger pore size of less decomposed peat (Boelter 1969), the air content might also be higher in the H3 peat than in the H5 peat at a higher water table since macropores would not have been filled completely. Aeration would also have been affected by the sieving of the H3 peat, which is not the case for abandoned peatlands of similar decomposition level, which have different cracks and pores created by wood and root fragments. Thus, results in the field might differ from those observed here. On the other hand, H5 peat filled pots had large crack on the inner edge because of peat shrinkage, thus potentially bringing more air into the substrate near the surface. This would have been a preferential growing zone for roots as they are often invading cracks in dense soils (Stirzaker *et al.* 1996).

Bulk density was also higher for the H5 peat. A study on 6 farms in Finland revealed that Norwegian cloudberry cultivars grown on high bulk density did not spread as fast, i.e. plant

cover difference over 3 growing seasons, as when planted on lower bulk density peat (G. Thérout Rancourt 2006, MTT Agrifood Research Finland, pers. obs.). A similar trend was also observed in abandoned peatland in Canada (chap. 2). However, these differences were not observed in our experiment, even though bulk density difference was important. Underground biomass usually decreases in organic soils with high bulk density (White 1978; Bernier & Gonzalez 1995). Differences, as subtle as they are, could have been more evident after three growing seasons. Since two growing periods can be carried out in one year (Rapp *et al.* 2003), results could be available in a relatively short time. However, as mentioned earlier, the number of new rhizomes would be an important variable to measure after the first growing season in order to establish a dense cloudberry crop.

As soil properties appear to affect growth more than water table per se, more attention should be given in the future to assess soil properties in relation to cloudberry productivity. Some important properties were not measured in the present experiment. In a study on peat cores at the Pointe-Lebel peatland, QC, it was found that bulk density, von Post level and total porosity were of more importance than water retention, water content, water tension and easily available water for cloudberry growth. Total porosity was not measured in this experiment, nor air-filled porosity, two important storage related physical properties. Furthermore, changes in gas exchange characteristics, like gas relative diffusivity, can cause an important decrease in plant yield (Nkongolo & Caron 1999). The study of different storage, flow, and gas exchange soil physical properties in relation to cloudberry growth should be carried out in order to determine cloudberry tolerance towards peat of different decomposition levels.

3.7 Conclusion

Water table levels in the recommended range are not good predictors of cloudberry growth performance. However, peat humification levels have a more significant effect on cloudberry, as they are closely linked with changes in hydrological and soil physical properties. Thus, in order to cultivate cloudberry in abandoned peatlands, care should be taken in selecting areas with suitable soil conditions. Since peatland reclamation projects

can be carried out on different types of peat, it is important to understand how cloudberry behaves in peat outside the recommended range of decomposition. At the moment, fibric H3 peat would be a better cultivation substratum than mesic H5 peat as the number of new rhizomes produces is increased. Growth increase, i.e. shoot density and rhizome spreading from the mother plant, might be impaired in more decomposed substratum. Further differences might be detected after three growing seasons, as observed in some Finnish cultivation experiments. Further research is needed to assess this question.

Conclusion générale

4.1 Quel est le rôle des propriétés hydriques et physiques du sol sur la croissance de la chicouté?

Cette étude a permis d'investiguer les relations entre certaines propriétés hydriques et physiques du sol en relation avec l'implantation de rhizomes de chicouté. Les niveaux d'eau aux limites supérieures et inférieures des recommandations norvégiennes (Rapp 2004) n'ont pas affecté l'implantation des rhizomes, tant en tourbière abandonnée qu'en serre. Toutefois, en tourbière abandonnée, après 2 années de croissance pour la deuxième plantation expérimentale, on observe une tendance vers un accroissement du nombre de feuilles sur la terrasse inférieure, tandis qu'on observe une stagnation sur la terrasse supérieure. La terrasse inférieure possède une masse volumique apparente (MVA) et une rétention en eau plus faible, ainsi qu'une porosité totale plus élevée que la terrasse supérieure.

En serre, après 11 semaines de croissance, on observe un plus grand nombre de nouveaux rhizomes en tourbe fibrique (H3) par rapport à une tourbe mésique (H5). Ces deux tourbes ont été choisies à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur du seuil d'humification recommandé, soit entre H2 et H4 sur l'échelle de von Post (Rapp 2004). La tourbe H3 possédait une MVA et une rétention en eau plus faible.

Une augmentation de la MVA, qui entraîne une diminution de la taille des pores et une augmentation de la rétention en eau (Boelter 1969; Brandyk *et al.* 2002), affecte la croissance de la chicouté. De nombreuses plantes sont affectées par une augmentation de la MVA (White 1978; Douglas 1994; Wronski & Murphy 1994; Houlbrooke *et al.* 1997). Dans cette étude, l'augmentation de la MVA a été causée par un passage répété de machinerie lors de la préparation du site. Pour la chicouté, les effets d'une MVA plus faible commencent à être observés à partir de la deuxième saison de croissance. Ceci peut être dû à l'augmentation du nombre de nouveaux rhizomes produits dans une tourbe plus aérée, ce qui fait en sorte qu'il n'y ait pas de stagnation de la croissance. Un suivi à plus long terme est nécessaire afin de vérifier l'évolution des populations implantées. De plus, d'autres expériences devraient être réalisées pour évaluer l'implantation de chicouté dans différents substrats afin de déceler des conditions plus optimales à la survie et à la croissance de la chicouté.

4.2 L'implantation de rhizomes de chicouté est-elle compatible avec la restauration des tourbières?

L'utilisation de paillis de paille est une étape clé dans le succès de la restauration d'une tourbière abandonnée, permettant d'augmenter la survie des fragments de *Sphagnum* (Rocheffort *et al.* 2003). Par contre, l'effet de ce paillis sur les plantes vasculaires est variable. Dans le cas de la chicouté, le paillis a causé une diminution du nombre de feuilles. Toutefois, les feuilles sous le paillis étaient plus grandes, ce qui a déjà été observé dans des milieux semi-fermés (Lohi 1974).

Sous un paillis de paille, la température et l'interception des radiations est plus faible par rapport à une tourbière abandonnée à nue (Price *et al.* 1998). La diminution de la température aurait donc ralenti la croissance de la chicouté, celle-ci étant normalement ralentie au printemps par des températures froides (Lohi 1974). Ce ralentissement de croissance par température froide est aussi observé chez d'autres plantes à rhizomes et à tubercules, où l'on a observé aussi une diminution de la mobilisation des réserves (McIntyre 1970; Leakey & Chancellor 1972; Li *et al.* 2000).

Une diminution du nombre de feuilles pourrait ralentir l'établissement d'un couvert végétal dense. Il faut toutefois considérer que le paillis a permis d'améliorer les conditions hydriques à la surface de la tourbière. Ceci a permis la croissance des sphaignes réintroduites. À long terme, par une amélioration des conditions hydriques à la surface de la tourbière restaurée recouverte de sphaigne, la chicouté pourra peut-être mieux croître dans la nouvelle sphaigne que dans la tourbe à nue, sujette à des conditions hydriques plus défavorables. De plus, la présence d'un couvert de mousses néoformé permet une augmentation des températures minimales au printemps (Petronne *et al.* 2004), ce qui pourrait permettre de favoriser l'établissement de la chicouté. Il est donc nécessaire de vérifier à long terme l'effet de la présence initiale de paillis et éventuellement d'un couvert de sphaigne. À court terme, par contre, si de nouvelles plantations devaient être instaurées en combinaison avec la restauration de tourbières, il serait préférable de planter la chicouté deux à trois ans après la restauration afin d'éviter l'effet négatif initial du paillis sur la chicouté et de profiter de l'effet bénéfique du couvert néoformé de mousses.

4.3 Quel clone de chicouté faut-il planter en tourbière abandonnée?

Bien que les cultivars norvégiens de chicouté aient été sélectionnés parce qu'ils possédaient des caractéristiques de croissance supérieures (Rapp 1991), ils ne sont pas nécessairement adaptés aux conditions climatiques de l'Est canadien. Dans cette étude, le cultivar norvégien Fjordgull a obtenu la meilleure survie, et ce pour les deux années d'implantation en tourbière abandonnée. Le cultivar Fjellgull a obtenu des résultats similaires aux clones du Québec et du Nouveau-Brunswick. Cette faiblesse du cultivar Fjellgull avait déjà été rapportée en Norvège (Rapp & Martinussen 2002). De plus, la différence entre les propriétés physiques et hydriques du milieu d'origine des clones locaux par rapport à celles de la tourbière abandonnée était importante. Ceci a pu causer des changements de phénotype non négligeable chez les clones locaux, qui formaient pourtant des colonies denses dans leur milieu d'origine. Ces changements de phénotype sont observables chez d'autres plantes clonales (Kleijn & van Groenendael 1999; Santini & Camussi 2000; van Kleunen & Fischer 2001). Le cultivar Fjordgull serait donc mieux adapté aux conditions retrouvées dans le site d'étude. De plus, il posséderait une meilleure capacité d'adaptation aux changements de milieux de croissance.

Pour l'instant, seul le cultivar Fjordgull semble adapté à l'implantation sous forme de boutures de rhizomes en tourbière abandonnée. La sélection de clones locaux permettrait d'obtenir des clones mieux adaptés à diverses conditions de l'Est canadien. Ce processus est présentement en court (K. Naess, Centre Les Buissons, comm. pers.). Néanmoins, d'autres méthodes de plantation devraient être considérées, comme l'utilisation de plants en motte, plants qui possèdent un système racinaire vivant et intact et plus de réserves, ce qui favoriserait la survie à l'implantation.

4.4 Résumé des recommandations

La survie de rhizomes de chicouté plantés en tourbière abandonnée dépend de plusieurs facteurs. Cette étude permet d'émettre les recommandations suivantes :

- Limiter l'utilisation de machinerie lors de la préparation du site ou sélectionner un site n'ayant pas subi de passages répétés de machinerie pendant de nombreuses années. Ceci permet d'éviter qu'il y ait une trop grande détérioration de la porosité, ainsi qu'une MVA trop élevée.
- Une tourbe fibrique (H4 et moins) devrait être privilégiée, celle-ci ayant des propriétés qui semblent plus favorables à l'établissement de la chicouté.
- Les rhizomes de chicouté devraient être plantés dans une tourbière ayant été restaurée 2 à 3 ans auparavant afin de profiter des effets bénéfiques du couvert de mousses néoformé sur les conditions hydriques de la tourbe et en ayant peu d'effets négatifs de la paille, celle-ci étant presque complètement disparue à cette date.
- Pour l'instant, seul le cultivar Fjordgull permet d'obtenir des taux de survie plus élevés que les clones locaux en tourbière abandonnée.

Toutefois, ces seules recommandations ne permettent pas d'obtenir un taux de survie assez élevé pour justifier une implantation de chicouté à grande échelle. La combinaison de ces recommandations avec celles de Bellemare (2007), soit une plantation plus en surface des rhizomes à l'automne, permettrait d'obtenir un taux de survie plus élevé. D'autres expériences sont nécessaires afin de bien comprendre l'implantation de la chicouté en tourbière abandonnée. Il serait important de mieux comprendre la relation entre différents milieux tourbeux et l'établissement de rhizomes de chicouté. Ceci permettrait de mieux cibler les propriétés du sol importantes pour la sélection d'un site potentiel, ce qui faciliterait la prise de décision lors de l'instauration d'une plantation. De plus, il serait important de mieux comprendre l'influence des facteurs climatiques sur l'implantation des rhizomes de chicouté pour mieux comprendre ce qui influence la survie à la plantation. Ceci permettrait de sélectionner plus judicieusement des sites potentiels pour la culture de la chicouté en tourbière abandonnée et, espérons le, de retrouver bientôt plus de produits à base de ce fruit sur les tablettes.

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