

Performance Evaluation of Interspecific Hybrids of *Coffea Racemosa* X SLN.3 R (*Coffea Congensis* X *Coffea Canephora*) under Indian Conditions

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SUMMARY

In India, both arabica (*Coffea arabica*) and robusta (*C. canephora*) are commercially cultivated taking into account their suitability to high and low altitudes respectively. The diploid species of *Coffea* are characterized by considerable genetic variability compared to the only tetraploid species *C. arabica*. The objectives of robusta breeding in India have been directed mainly towards evolving high yielding, widely adaptable varieties with improved bean and quality traits. In this direction, inter-specific hybrids of *C. racemosa* x SLN.3R (*C. congensis* x *C. canephora*) were evolved in view of developing varieties with low caffeine content and early ripening behaviour. These hybrids were evaluated for growth parameters. Hybrid plants exhibited intermediate nature with regard to characters like leaf size and internode length. The hybrids recorded less fruit size and fruit weight compared to both the parents. Percentage of floats also was found to be high. With regard to maturity of fruits, the hybrids resembled the female parent viz. *C. racemosa*. The potential of these hybrids as reflected by the initial growth behaviour are detailed and discussed.