1	Multiple resistance across glufosinate, glyphosate, paraquat and ACCase-inhibiting
2	herbicides in an <i>Eleusine indica</i> population
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20 Summary

An *Eleusine indica* population was previously reported as the first global case of field-21 evolved glufosinate resistance. This study re-examines glufosinate resistance and investigates 22 multiple resistance to other herbicides in the population. Dose-response experiments with 23 24 glufosinate showed that the resistant population is 5-fold and 14-fold resistant relative to the susceptible population, based on GR₅₀ and LD₅₀ R/S ratio, respectively. The selected 25 glufosinate-resistant sub-population also displayed a high level resistance to glyphosate, with 26 27 the respective GR₅₀ and LD₅₀ R/S ratios being 12- and 144-fold. In addition, the subpopulation also displayed a level of resistance to paraquat and ACCase-inhibiting herbicides 28 29 fluazifop-P-butyl, haloxyfop-P-methyl and butroxydim. ACCase gene sequencing revealed that the Trp-2027-Cys mutation is likely responsible for resistance to the ACCase inhibitors 30 examined. Here we confirm glufosinate resistance and importantly, we find very high level 31 32 glyphosate resistance, as well as resistance to paraquat and ACCase inhibiting herbicides. 33 This is the first confirmed report of a weed species that evolved multiple resistance across all the three non-selective global herbicides, glufosinate, glyphosate and paraquat. 34

Keywords: Herbicide resistance, Indian goosegrass, non-selective herbicides, fluazifop-Pbutyl

37 Introduction

Eleusine indica (L.) Gaertn. (Indian goosegrass), one of the world's worst weeds (Holm *et al.*, 1977), is a very competitive and cosmopolitan species. *Eleusine indica* is fecund, found across a range of soils and temperatures (Nishimoto & McCarty, 1997) and infests a wide range of crops including cotton, maize, upland rice, sweet potatoes, sugarcane and many fruit and vegetable orchards (Holm *et al.*, 1977), causing major crop yield loss (Lourens *et al.*, 1989).

In tropical countries such as Malaysia, E. indica infestation occurs mostly in field 44 crops areas, fruit and vegetable orchards, nurseries and young palm oil plantations. *Eleusine* 45 indica has been shown to affect crop growth, cause yield loss and increase the incidence of 46 47 plant disease such as Phytophtora spp. (Chee et al., 1990; Teng & Teo, 1999). Control of E. indica is mainly with herbicides, but over reliance on herbicides has resulted in resistance 48 evolution in this species in at least eight countries (Heap, 2013). This includes resistance to 49 50 dinitroaniline herbicides (Mudge et al., 1984), acetyl coA carboxylase (ACCase)-inhibiting herbicides (Leach et al., 1993; Osuna et al., 2012), the acetolactate synthase (ALS)-inhibiting 51 herbicide imazapyr (Valverde et al., 1993), the glycine herbicide glyphosate (Lee & Ngim, 52 2000), the bipyridilium herbicide paraquat (Buker et al., 2002), photosystem II inhibitors 53 (Brosnan et al., 2008) and, most recently, the glutamine synthetase-inhibiting herbicide 54 glufosinate (Jalaludin et al., 2010; Chuah et al., 2010). 55

Glyphosate, and its alternative, glufosinate, are two of the most important herbicides globally. Glyphosate was initially used in Malaysia to control *E. indica* and other weeds in fallows, nurseries and to remove ground cover vegetation in plantations. Over-reliance on glyphosate was a strong selection pressure and glyphosate resistance in *E. indica* quickly evolved (Lee & Ngim, 2000). Now, many *E. indica* populations have been identified as glyphosate resistant (Ng *et al.*, 2003; Ng *et al.*, 2004; Kaundun *et al.*, 2008). In response to
glyphosate-resistant evolution in *E. indica*, high glufosinate usage has occurred. In 2010, the
first case of glufosinate resistance was reported in a Malaysia *E. indica* population (Jalaludin *et al.*, 2010). Prior to glufosinate usage, this resistant population had a field history of
paraquat, fluazifop-P-butyl and glyphosate treatment.

At the same time, another Malaysian *E. indica* population was reported to be resistant to glufosinate and paraquat (Chuah *et al.*, 2010). Subsequently, glufosinate resistance and multiple-resistance to glufosinate and glyphosate have been reported in *Lolium perenne* L. populations in Oregon, USA (Avila-Garcia & Mallory-Smith, 2011; Avila-Garcia *et al.*, 2012). The objective of this study was to characterise the glufosinate resistant population from the preliminary study by Jalaludin *et al.*(2010) and evaluate for possible multiple resistance to herbicides of different modes of action.

73 Materials and methods

74 Plant material

The glufosinate resistant (R) *E. indica* population used in this study was preliminarily described (Jalaludin *et al.*, 2010). A glufosinate-susceptible population was originally provided by T S Chuah and a subset of this population that was confirmed to be susceptible to all herbicides examined in the current study was generated and used as the herbicide susceptible (S) population.

80 *Glufosinate dose response*

Eleusine indica seeds were germinated on water-solidified 0.6% agar containing 0.2% potassium nitrate (KNO₃) (Ismail *et al.*, 2002). After 4-7 days, seedlings were transplanted into pots (18 cm diameter with 15-20 seedlings per pot) and kept in a glasshouse during the 84 normal summer growing months (January to March) with average temperatures of 30/20°C (day/ night), and 15 hours photoperiod under natural sunlight. At the 3-5 leaf stage, seedlings 85 were treated at various rates of glufosinate (0, 20.6, 41.3, 82.5, 123.8, 247.5, 495, 1485, 1980, 86 3960 and 7920 g a.i. ha⁻¹) (Basta, 200 g a.i. L⁻¹, SC, Bayer CropScience Pty Ltd), using a 87 custom-built, dual nozzle cabinet sprayer delivering herbicide at 118 L ha⁻¹ at 210 kPa, with a 88 speed of 1 m s⁻¹. After herbicide treatment, plants were returned to the glasshouse. The pots 89 were arranged in a completely randomised block design with at least three replicate pots per 90 91 herbicide rate. Visual assessment for resistance (R) and susceptibility (S) were made 21 days 92 after treatment. Plants were considered as R if they are actively growing or tillering, while S plants were dead. Above-ground shoots were harvested and dried in oven (65°C) for 3 days 93 94 for dry weight measurements.

Additionally, six individual plants surviving 1485 and 1980 g a.i.ha⁻¹ of glufosinate
were allowed to grow together to produce seeds (*E. indica* is a self-pollinated species) and the
progeny was designated as selected glufosinate-resistant sub-population (referred as R*).
This sub-population was tested again for glufosinate resistance and used for subsequent
experiments.

100 *Glyphosate dose response*

Seed germination and seedling growth were the same as described above for glufosinate
experiments. Glyphosate rates at 0, 33.8, 67.5, 100, 135, 170, 200, 540, 1080, 4320, 8640,
103 12960, 17280 and 25920 g a.e. ha⁻¹ (Roundup Attack with IQ inside, 570 g a.e. L⁻¹, SL,
Nufarm Australia Ltd) were used.

105 *Paraquat dose-response*

Seed germination was carried out as described earlier. After transplanting into pots, the
seedlings were grown in a controlled environment room with alternating temperatures of
30/25°C (day/ night), 12 hours photoperiod with light intensity of 400 µmol m⁻² s⁻¹ and 75%
humidity. At the 3-4 leaf stage, the plants were treated with paraquat at 0, 47, 94, 188, 375,
750, 1500 and 3000 g a.i. ha⁻¹ (Gramoxone, 250 g a.i. L⁻¹, SL, Syngenta Crop Protection Pty
Ltd).

112 *Herbicide single-rate test*

In this experiment, germinating seedlings were transplanted to trays (50-60 seedlings per tray 113 with two to four trays per herbicide treatment) and kept in a glasshouse with day/night 114 temperature of 30/25°C under natural sunlight. Single discriminating or label rates of 115 ACCase-inhibiting herbicides fluazifop-P-butyl, 210 g a.i. ha⁻¹ (Fusilade Forte, 128 g a.i. L⁻¹, 116 EC, Syngenta Crop Protection Pty Ltd), haloxyfop-P-methyl, 60 g a.i. ha⁻¹ (Verdict 520, 520 117 g a.i. L⁻¹, EC, Dow Agrosciences Australia Ltd), clethodim, 100 g a.i. ha⁻¹ (Select, 240 g a.i. 118 L⁻¹, EC, Sumitomo Chemical Australia Pty Ltd), butroxydim, 100 g a.i. ha⁻¹ (Falcon, 250 g 119 a.i. kg⁻¹, WG, Nufarm Australia Ltd) and sethoxydim, 230 g a.i. ha⁻¹ (Sertin 186 EC, 186 g 120 a.i. L⁻¹, EC, Bayer CropScience Pty Ltd), and the ALS-inhibiting herbicide imazapyr, 50 g 121 a.i. ha⁻¹ (Arsenal, 250 g a.i. L⁻¹, SC, Nufarm Australia Ltd) was used for resistance screening. 122

123 *Statistics*

The herbicide rate causing 50% mortality (LD_{50}) or reduction in growth (GR_{50}) were estimated by non-linear regression analysis using Sigma Plot ® software (version 12.0, SPSS Inc. 233 South Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL, USA). The data were fitted to the three parameter logistic curve model:

129
$$y = \frac{a}{1 + (\frac{x}{ED_{50}})^b}$$
 Eq.

where a = upper limit, ED_{50} = estimated dose causing 50% response (LD_{50} or GR_{50}) and b = slope around ED_{50} . The LD_{50} and GR_{50} values of the susceptible and resistant biotypes were used to calculate the R/S ratio of the resistant population. There were several pilot trials prior to final herbicide dose response experiments, which contained at least three replicate pots per herbicide rate. Each dose-response experiment was repeated at least twice with similar results and therefore only results from a single experiment were presented for each dose response.

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137 ACCase gene sequencing

138 Genomic DNA was extracted from the leaf tissue of surviving plants from R* population and susceptible plants from S population according to Yu et al. (2008). Published primers (Osuna 139 et al., 2012) used to amplify two plastidic ACCase gene fragments in which point mutations 140 known to confer ACCase herbicide resistance in plants have been identified (Délye & 141 Michel, 2005; Powles & Yu, 2010; Beckie & Tardif, 2012). The PCR was conducted in a 25 142 143 µl volume that consisted of 1-2 µl containing 50-100 ng of genomic DNA, 0.5 µM of each primer and 12.5 µl of 2× GoTaq Green Master Mix® (Promega). The PCR was run with the 144 following profile: 94°C for 4 min; 40 cycles of 94°C for 30 s, 58°C (annealing temperature) 145 for 30 s, and 72°C for 1 min; followed by a final extension step of 7 min at 72°C. The PCR 146 product was purified from agarose gel with Wizard[®] SV Gel and PCR Clean-up System 147 (Promega Co., Madison, WI, USA) and sequenced by commercial services. All sequence 148 149 chromatograms were visually checked for quality and consistency before sequences were assembled and aligned. 150

151 **Results**

As expected, the S plants were well controlled with glufosinate (Fig. 1). In contrast, much 153 higher rates of glufosinate were required to cause substantial mortality for resistant (R and 154 R*) plants. The plants became dark grey from the middle of the leaves to the leaf tip, almost 155 burnt-like, with slight wilting, 24 h after treatment. The damaged area then extended in the 156 basipetal direction, developing necrosis over 14 days, turning wilted leaves from yellow into 157 brown. While the S plants die, the R and R* plants were observed to recover and grow again, 158 two weeks after treatment. The glufosinate LD_{50} for the R populations was 820 g ha⁻¹ as 159 compared with 58 g ha⁻¹ for the S population (Table 1), giving a LD_{50} R/S ratio of 14. This is 160 slightly higher than the previously reported LD₅₀ R/S ratio of 7.6 (Jalaludin *et al.*, 2010). The 161 difference may be due to different susceptible populations and experimental conditions used 162 in the two studies. The glufosinate GR_{50} for R population was found to be 156 g ha⁻¹, which 163 164 was about 5-fold greater than for the S population (Table 2). The selected R* population (the progeny of plants surviving glufosinate rates of 1485 and 1980 g ha⁻¹) was only about 2-fold 165 166 more resistant to glufosinate relative to the original R population (Fig. 2A, Table 1, 2), indicating the glufosinate-resistant sub population is still segregating. 167

168

Tables 1 & 2 and Figs. 1 & 2 near here

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170 *Glyphosate resistance*

As expected, the S population was susceptible to glyphosate, with 100% mortality at the glyphosate rate of 200 g ha⁻¹ (Fig. 2B). However, the glufosinate resistant sub population R* was found to be highly resistant to glyphosate, requiring an extremely high rate (25920 g ha⁻¹) to cause substantial mortality (Fig. 2B). Based on the LD₅₀ R/S ratio, the R* population was more than 144-fold resistant to glyphosate (Table 1). While the R* plants survived high glyphosate doses, their growth was affected. The GR_{50} for the R* and S population were 481 g ha⁻¹ and 41 g ha⁻¹, respectively, resulting in the R* population being 12-fold more resistant than the S population (Table 2). Therefore, in addition to glufosinate resistance, this R* population had a high level of glyphosate resistance.

180 *Paraquat resistance*

The S population was, as expected, well controlled by paraquat at 375 g ha⁻¹, whereas control of the R population required higher rates (Fig. 2C). Both S and R* plants displayed rapid desiccation and necrosis following treatment. Similar to glufosinate-treated plants, the R* plants recovered two weeks after treatment, while the S plants died. Based on the LD₅₀ or GR₅₀ R/S ratio (Tables 1, 2), paraquat resistance in the purified glufosinate-resistant population was confirmed, albeit at a low level (2 to 3-fold in relation to the used rate).

187 *Resistance to ACCase-inhibiting herbicides*

All ACCase herbicides examined (Table 3) caused 100% mortality in the S population at the respective rates used. However, there was about 50% of the R* population surviving haloxyfop-P-methyl, fluazifop-P-butyl or butroxydim. In contrast, the R* population remained susceptible to sethoxydim, clethodim and imazapyr (Table 3).

- 192
- 193

Table 3 near here

194 ACCase gene sequencing

The plastidic ACCase gene sequences from a total of 9 individual plants surviving fluazifop-P-butyl or butroxydim were analysed in comparison with those of the susceptible plants. The

primer pair ELEIN1781F/ELEIN1781R (Osuna et al., 2012) amplified a 600 bp DNA 197 fragment covering the known mutation site 1781 and primer 198 the pair ELEIN2027f/ELEIN2027r amplified an 832 bp fragment with the known mutation sites 199 200 1999, 2027, 2041, 2078, 2088 and 2096. Sequence alignment revealed an amino acid substitution of Trp-2027-Cys in R individuals, resulting from a G to T change at the third 201 position of the Trp codon (TGG). The same mutation was also recently found in several other 202 fluazifop-resistant E. indica populations in Malaysia (Cha et al., 2014). Generally, this 203 mutation has been known to confer resistance ACCase-inhibiting 204 to 205 aryloxyphenoxypropionate herbicides (e.g. diclofop-methyl, fluazifop-P-butyl, haloxyfop-Pmethyl) (Délye, 2005; Powles & Yu, 2010). However it also confers resistance to ACCase-206 207 inhibiting cyclohexanedione herbicides, for example, tralkoxydim in wild oats (Liu et al., 208 2007). As the frequency of resistance to haloxyfop-P-methyl, fluazifop-P-butyl and butroxydim is close to each other (around 50%, Table 3), it is very likely that the Trp-2027-209 Cys mutation confers resistance to these three herbicides. Thus, this is the first case 210 associating the Trp-2027-Cys mutation with butroxydim resistance at the rate used. 211

212 Discussion

213 In this study, we confirmed the preliminary report on the evolution of resistance to glufosinate in a Malaysian E. indica population (Jalaludin et al., 2010). The level of 214 glufosinate resistance determined for this population was modest (5- and 14-fold, based on 215 GR_{50} and LD_{50} , respectively), which is similar to the glufosinate-resistant *E. indica* 216 population reported by Chuah et al. (2010) (GR₅₀ R/S ratio 3.4), and slightly higher than 217 218 glufosinate-resistant Lolium perenne populations in Oregon, USA (GR₅₀ R/S ratios between 2.2 to 2.8) (Avila-Garcia & Mallory-Smith, 2011; Avila-Garcia et al., 2012). The level of 219 paraquat resistance in this population was also similar to that observed in a glufosinate- and 220 221 paraquat-resistant Malaysian E.indica population (Chuah et al., 2010). It is worth noting that usually GR_{50} R/S ratios are more variable than LD_{50} ratios, due to variations in growth conditions and especially, the length of experiments. In this sense, LD_{50} R/S ratios would be the better option to compare results across research groups.

225 Currently, documented glufosinate-resistance evolution is confined to a few E. indica (Chuah et al., 2010; Jalaludin et al., 2010) and L. perenne populations (Avila-Garcia & 226 Mallory-Smith, 2011; Avila-Garcia et al., 2012) and all exhibit low to moderate levels of 227 glufosinate resistance. Few resistance mechanisms studies have been undertaken. In resistant 228 L. perenne populations, the resistance mechanism in one population was non-target-site based 229 (Avila-Garcia & Mallory-Smith, 2011), while in another population it was due to a target-site 230 231 mutation in the glutamine synthetase gene (Avila-Garcia et al., 2012). We have commenced glufosinate resistance mechanism studies with this population. 232

Importantly, in addition to glufosinate resistance, individuals in this E. indica 233 population were also highly resistant to glyphosate (Fig. 2B; Table 1, 2). Resistant plants 234 235 survived very high glyphosate rates but suffered growth reduction, resulting in an R/S LD₅₀ 236 ratio (144) much higher than the R/S GR₅₀ ratio (12). The R/S ratios based on survival and plant biomass were both higher than any previously reported evolved glyphosate resistance in 237 238 any weed species (Baerson et al., 2002; Mueller et al., 2011; Lee & Ngim, 2000; Gaines et al., 2012; Culpepper et al., 2006). As is discussed above, we consider the LD₅₀ value is more 239 accurate and meaningful in describing resistance levels, because it is less affected by 240 experimental conditionals (e.g. harvest time, growth competition) as compared with the GR_{50} 241 value. Nevertheless, the large difference in the R/S LD₅₀ and GR₅₀ ratio obtained for 242 243 glyphosate response in this E. indica population indicate that the potential glyphosate resistance mechanism(s) may incur fitness cost in the presence of herbicide. This unusually 244 high level glyphosate resistance needs investigation. A few possible mechanism(s) are (1) a 245 246 new target-site EPSPS mutation, (2) multiple EPSPS mutations and (3) accumulation of several known glyphosate resistance mechanisms (e.g. EPSPS gene mutation or
amplification, reduced glyphosate translocation or enhanced sequestration). We have initiated
studies to reveal the mechanistic basis of this very high level of glyphosate resistance.

Multiple resistance in E. indica has been reported previously. These multiple 250 resistance cases encompass at most, two different herbicide groups at any one time, e.g. 251 fluazifop-P-butyl and glyphosate (Heap, 2013) or glufosinate and paraquat (Chuah et al., 252 2010). However, the current study is the first case where multiple resistance across four 253 dissimilar herbicide groups, glufosinate, glyphosate, paraquat and ACCase inhibitor 254 herbicides, is present in a single E. indica population. This is likely related to the herbicide 255 256 selection history of this population (involving application of at least paraquat, fluazifop-Pbutyl, glyphosate and up to 12 glufosinate applications per year). As resistance to glyphosate, 257 paraquat and ACCase-inhibiting herbicides was detected from a purified glufosinate-resistant 258 259 sub-population, it is very likely (although not examined) that multiple resistance is also displayed at the individual level. Multiple resistance to glyphosate, paraquat and ACCase-260 261 inhibiting herbicides in individual plants has been documented in Lolium rigidum L. due to accumulation of multiple resistance mechanisms (Yu et al., 2007). This is the first global 262 report of a weed species with evolved resistance across all three of the world's non-selective 263 264 herbicides (glufosinate, glyphosate and paraquat). It is an unavoidable consequence of the selection pressures resulting from over-reliance on herbicides for weed control, and therefore, 265 herbicides should be used wisely (e.g. in rotation or mixture) and in combination with other 266 non-chemical control options. 267

In summary, we have confirmed in an *E. indica* population the first case of multiple resistance across the three non-selective herbicides, glufosinate, glyphosate and paraquat. The same population also showed target-site resistance to ACCase-inhibiting herbicides, likely due to the Trp-2027-Cys mutation. The evolution of multiple resistance to herbicides across four different modes-of-action in this resistance-prone species is worrying, as it threatens the world's most important herbicide (glyphosate) and its alternatives (glufosinate, paraquat) and results in greatly reduced herbicide control options for the grower. Although other ACCaseor ALS-inhibiting herbicides (e.g. sethoxydim, clethodim, imazapyr) still provide effective short term control options, in the long run, additional diversity in weed control must be added, to limit seed set of resistant *E. indica* plants.

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- **Table 1** Parameter estimates for logistic analysis of glufosinate, glyphosate and paraquat
- dose-response survival data for the susceptible (S) and resistant (R) *Eleusine indica*
- 391 populations
- 392

Population	a	b	$x_0 = LD_{50}$	R^2 (coefficient)	R/S ratio of
			$(g a.i. ha^{-1})$		LD_{50}
Glufosinate dos	se-response				
S	100.00 (0)	5.71 (0.23)	58 (0.81)	0.99	
R	100.00 (0)	2.42 (0.37)	820 (85.6)	0.93	14
^c R*	100.00 (0)	2.3 (0.25)	1278 (63.9)	0.99	22
Glyphosate dos	e-response**				
S	100.00 (0)	15.28 (1.71)	148 (1.81)	0.98	
^{c,d} R*	100.00 (0)	0.99 (0.1)	21274 (1773)	0.98	144
Paraquat dose-1	response				
S	100.00 (0)	3.76 (0.66)	98 (23.6)	0.97	
^c R*	100.00 (0)	1.5 (0.2)	292 (27.9)	0.94	3

 c R* refers to the selected glufosinate-resistant sub-population.

394 ^d*Glyphosate LD_{50} is in g a.e. ha⁻¹.

395 Standard errors are in parentheses

- **Table 2** Parameter estimates for logistic analysis of glufosinate, glyphosate and paraquat
- dose-response biomass data for the susceptible (S) and resistant (R) *Eleusine indica*
- 400 populations

Population	а	b	$x_0 = GR_{50}$	R^2 (coefficient)	R/S ratio of
			$(g a.i. ha^{-1})$		GR ₅₀
Glufosinate do	ose-response				
S	100.00 (0)	2.23 (0.36)	31 (2.3)	0.94	
R	100.00 (0)	1.36(0.17)	156 (17.4)	0.98	5
^c R*	100.00 (0)	1.25 (0.25)	325 (37.1)	0.98	11
Glyphosate do	se-response**				
S	100.00 (0)	1.7 (0.22)	41 (3.6)	0.92	
^{c<u>.d</u>R∗}	100.00 (0)	0.88 (0.09)	481 (55.6)	0.95	11.8
Paraquat dose-	response				
S	100.00 (0)	3.22 (0.72)	52 (3.1)	0.95	
^c R*	100.00 (0)	1.84 (0.29)	105 (8.4)	0.96	2

 $^{c}R^{*}$ refers to the selected glufosinate-resistant sub population.

d*GlyphosateGR₅₀ is in g a.e. ha⁻¹.

404 Standard errors are in parentheses

Table 3 Percentage survival of the susceptible (S) and selected glufosinate-resistant (R*) sub

408	populations	of <i>E</i> .	indica	21	days	after	treatment	with	various	herbicides
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			409
Herbicide —	Mean %	5 survival	
	S	R*	410
ACCase inhibitor			411
Fluazifop-P-butyl (210 g a.i. ha ⁻¹)	0	47	117
Haloxyfop-P-methyl (60 g a.i. ha ⁻¹)	0	51	412
Sethoxydim (230 g a.i. ha^{-1})	0	0	413
Clethodim (100 g a.i. ha ⁻¹)	0	0	A1 A
Butroxydim (100 g a.i. ha^{-1})	0	49	414
ALS inhibitor			415
Imazapyr (50 g a.i. ha^{-1})	0	0	416





Fig. 1 Glufosinate dose-response for survival of the susceptible (S) population and resistant

438 (R) populations of *Eleusine indica*. Data were collected at 21 DAT.



Fig. 2 Survival response of the susceptible (closed circle; ●) and selected glufosinateresistant (opened circle; ○) R* sub populations of *Eleusine indica* to glufosinate (A),
glyphosate (B) and paraquat (C) treatment. Data were collected at 21 DAT. Glyphosate rates
are in g a.e. ha⁻¹.