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Monique Oliveira, Thais Zorzeto-Cesar, Romis Attux, Luiz Henrique Rodrigues

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Leveraging data from plant monitoring into crop models

Monique Pires Gravina de Oliveira^{a1*}, Thais Queiroz Zorzeto-Cesar^{a2}, Romis Ribeiro de Faissol Attux^{b3}, Luiz Henrique Antunes Rodrigues^{a4}

^a Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Faculdade de Engenharia Agrícola
Av. Cândido Rondon, 501 - Cidade Universitária - 13083-875 - Campinas, SP, Brazil

^b Universidade Estadual de Campinas (UNICAMP), Faculdade de Engenharia Elétrica e de Computação, Departamento de Engenharia de Computação e Automação Industrial.

Av. Albert Einstein, 400 - Cidade Universitária -13083-970 - Campinas, SP, Brazil

¹ moniquepgoliveira@gmail.com , <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7167-4473>

² thaisqzc@unicamp.br , <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6959-7990>

³ attux@unicamp.br , <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2961-4044>

⁴ lique@unicamp.br , <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1756-7367>

* Corresponding author

Abstract

Researchers using crop models have been devising new roles for data and crop modeling based on the former's increased availability and the new techniques developed for the latter. From the various available techniques, modeling may be tackled by data-driven methods or through a process-based approach. Process-based or mechanistic models may nonetheless take advantage of real-time observations through data assimilation. And while this approach has been widely used for field crops, this is not the case for crops grown in protected environments. We present a case study of data assimilation in a protected environment, capturing tomato growth data from different sources. We updated growth estimates of the Reduced State TOMGRO model, by assimilating

24 observational data obtained through the continuous monitoring of plant mass and images captured
25 by low-cost cameras, using the Unscented Kalman Filter and the Ensemble Kalman Filter. Since
26 these techniques had not been used yet in the protected cultivation of tomatoes, it was necessary to
27 develop the observation models as well, establishing the relationship between the observed
28 variables and the ones estimated by the process-based model. The employed measurements, i.e.,
29 area of organs observed in pictures and plant-water mass, seemed suitable for tracking plant growth
30 and for obtaining good approximations of the state variables estimated by the model. However, the
31 quality of observations and of observation models was crucial for good performance of the
32 assimilation techniques. As with other crops, it was not the case that assimilating one observation
33 was useful for improving the value of others, including yield. We also observed that the
34 assimilation performed better than calibrated models when there was a need to adjust the estimates
35 to growth disturbances and that when filters lead to better yield estimates, continuous observations
36 may not be required. There are then several steps and decisions that should be considered when
37 bringing the idea from its application in field crops to protected environments and more studies are
38 required to better determine the best approach.

39

40 **Keywords**

41 Crop model, data assimilation, greenhouse, proximal sensing

42

43 **1. Introduction**

44 Food production using as few resources as possible is the goal of researchers and growers all
45 over the world. For protected environments, this would mean determining the exact requirements
46 and trade-offs of energy demands on heating, cooling, carbon dioxide enrichment, and lighting, in

47 addition to irrigation and fertilization. To quantify those requirements and trade-offs, it is necessary
48 to understand how the plant would respond to changes in these elements without sacrificing yield
49 and quality, which is an application of simulation models.

50 Until now, crop simulation models have relied on crop growth data mainly for their
51 development and calibration, steps prior to their use, as well as for performance assessment.
52 However, the recent developments in sensors and computational power allow for more data
53 regarding growth and development to be collected and processed, providing information in real-
54 time. Keating and Thorburn (2018) posed that these developments further new roles for data in
55 crop modeling, such as model-data fusion and inverse modeling, and new roles for remote and
56 proximal sensing in model initialization and calibration.

57 Currently, real-time data obtained in protected environments has been explored by data-
58 driven modeling approaches, such as in Gong et al. (2021). However, in their recent review of the
59 status of vertical farming systems, van Delden et al. (2021) mentioned the downsides of relying
60 solely on machine learning techniques and suggested sensor-informed artificial intelligence (AI)
61 could be used to update self-learning dynamic growth prediction models that are partially process-
62 based and partially data-driven, as a strategy to increase radiation use efficiency. Given the overall
63 goal of reducing the use of resources in food production, the several paths available for its
64 achievement should be explored. A different approach that could be explored to combine the
65 outcomes of process-based and real-time data is called data assimilation.

66 Data assimilation is a widely used method in hydrology and meteorology which consists of
67 combining observed values to the states estimated by models, taking into account the uncertainty
68 that exists in model estimates and observations (Pellenq and Boulet, 2004). In the case of crop
69 modeling, data assimilation has mostly been used with remote sensing images of field crops to
70 update state variables related to crop canopy or soil properties, obtaining better estimates of yield,

71 leaf area index (LAI), and soil moisture (Dorigo et al., 2007; Jin et al., 2018; Luo et al., 2023).
72 Recently, Luo et al. (2023) quantified applications of data assimilation in research using satellite
73 images, pointing to the Ensemble Kalman Filter (EnKF) as the most explored method and to
74 WOFOST, DSSAT, AquaCrop, and SAFY as popular crop models used in data assimilation for
75 yield estimation studies.

76 For vegetables and other crops usually grown in greenhouses and other protected
77 environments, there have been few studies and little is known about the use of monitoring data to
78 update their simulations of growth, even though the idea has been adopted for environmental
79 monitoring of greenhouses (van Mourik et al., 2019). In an application of data assimilation in a
80 protected environment, Ruíz-García et al. (2014) worked with lettuces and the Nicolet model, but
81 used data from destructive analyses. Differently from field crops, for which monitoring often
82 depends on the frequency of satellite images, in protected environments, it is possible to obtain
83 observations for data assimilation at greater temporal and spatial resolutions. Automatic plant-
84 related measurements in protected environments have been applied to obtain different kinds of
85 information. For example, growers monitoring plant growth through load cells had been registered
86 in the Netherlands by de Koning and Bakker (1992) and has been suggested by studies such as
87 Helmer et al. (2005) and Lee and Son (2019), and Chen et al. (2016) for plant factories. It has also
88 been suggested for determining water demand (De Graaf et al., 2004). But mostly, images are easily
89 explored to provide indirect estimates of growth (Liu et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023).

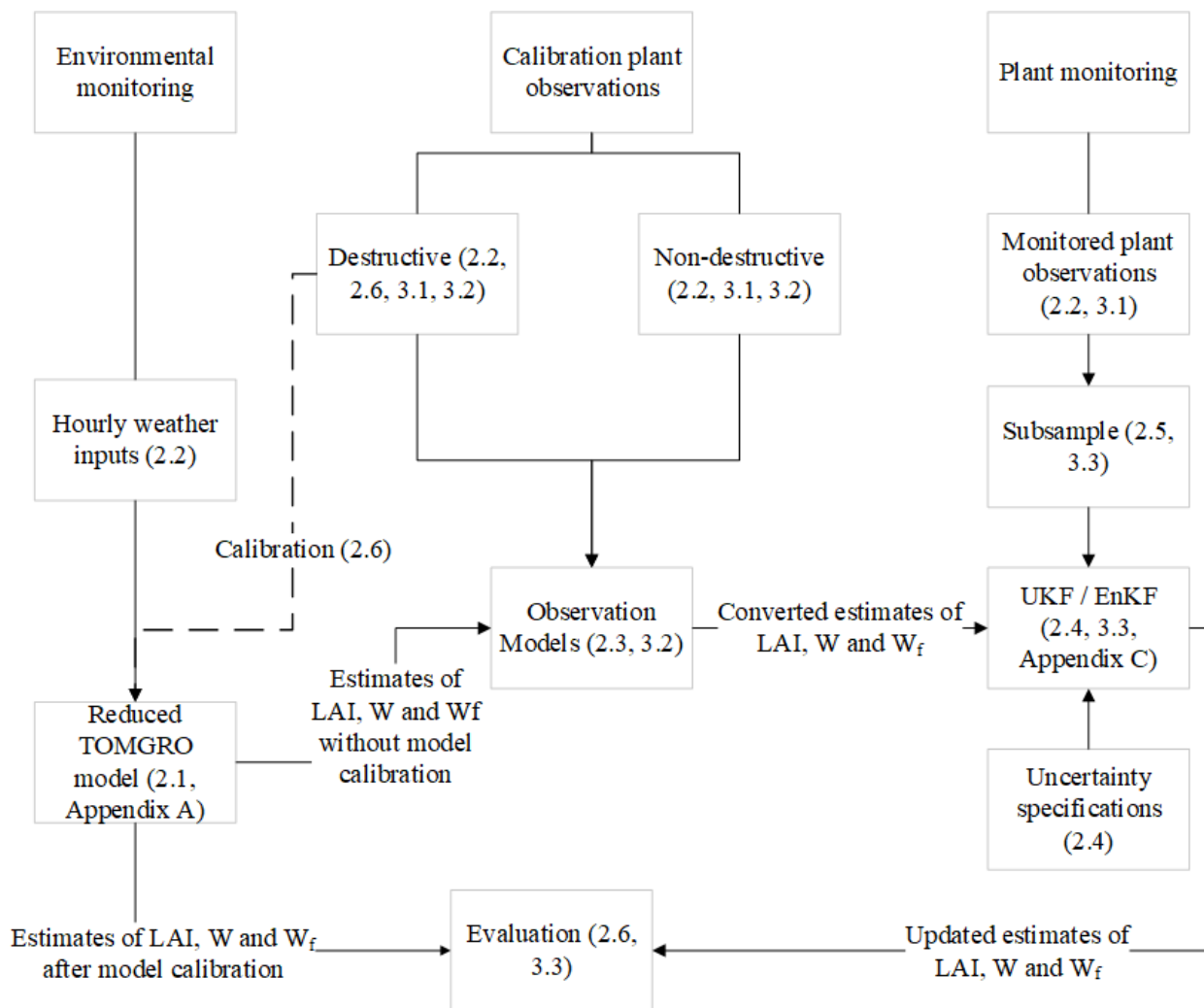
90 Therefore, while for field crops reviews are being published discussing which crops,
91 variables, models, data sources and techniques are being used and their limitations (Huang et al.,
92 2019; Jin et al., 2018; Luo et al., 2023), there have been few studies exploring this approach for
93 coupling proximal monitoring data and horticultural crops. This means little has been discussed
94 with regard to which type of data could be useful, which variables could be explored or how

95 models' estimates respond to assimilation. Our goal was to revisit the steps required to perform
96 data assimilation, applying them in a simple greenhouse tomato growth example, and to discuss
97 these aspects of the approach. We monitored growth of tomato plants, obtained the measurement
98 functions required for assimilation, and, using the Reduced State Tomgro model (Jones et al.,
99 1999), obtained estimates of tomato growth, which were updated by data assimilation techniques
100 with data extracted from pictures of the plants and from a weighting system.

101

102 **2. Material and methods**

103 This study is based on the steps of crop monitoring, observation model building, and data
104 assimilation. Figure 1 provides an overview of what a daily step in the assimilation process entails.
105 Monitoring the environment provides the inputs for the crop model (Reduced State Tomgro), which
106 is used, without being locally calibrated, to obtain an estimate of the state variables of the tomato
107 plant. This estimate is converted by an observation model, which is a simple relationship between
108 destructive and non-destructive observations of plants grown in the same environment, into a
109 measurement analogous to that being obtained by the monitoring systems. Both the converted
110 estimates and the continuously measured observations were used in the filters, along with the pre-
111 determined uncertainties estimates, to obtain the updated model estimates. The updated estimates
112 are then combined with those obtained by the calibrated model. Since the model is executed in a
113 daily step, the updated state is used as an input for the following day.



114

115 Figure 1. Flowchart of a daily step of data assimilation in this study. References in parentheses
 116 indicate the section of the manuscript in which the item is further described. The state variables
 117 assimilated are the leaf area index (LAI), aboveground dry biomass (W), and fruit dry biomass
 118 (W_f). The filter assimilation techniques used are the Unscented Kalman Filter (UKF) and the
 119 Ensemble Kalman Filter (EnKF).

120

121 2.1. Crop model

122 This study uses the Reduced State Tomgro (RT) model, which is a summary model derived
 123 from the TOMGRO model, aimed at being used in greenhouse control systems (Jones et al., 1999).

124 The model quantifies the growth and development of the tomato plant when water and nutrients do
 125 not limit growth, based on hourly air temperature (T) and photosynthetically active solar radiation

126 data (PPFD). Its equations are presented in Appendix A. Briefly, the model has only five state
127 variables: number of nodes (N), leaf area index (LAI), aboveground dry biomass (W), fruit dry
128 biomass (W_f), and mature fruit dry biomass (W_m). Development is indicated by the number of
129 nodes, and growth, by the other state variables. The leaf area index influences photosynthesis,
130 which, along with respiration, determines the total carbohydrates available for growth of
131 aboveground biomass and fruit biomass. The RT model, which has its variables and parameters
132 further detailed in Jones et al. (1999), does not include root growth or irrigation, and this
133 simplification may help in this first assimilation approach.

134 The RT model used in this study was implemented in Python, using Jones et al. (1991), Jones
135 et al. (1999), and the spreadsheet provided by Dr. James W. Jones as sources. The difference
136 equations were integrated by the Euler method. All code used in this study, including the model
137 code, is available in Oliveira (2023).

138

139 **2.2. Data sources**

140 The experiments were conducted in research greenhouses at the School of Agricultural
141 Engineering of the University of Campinas (22° 49' 06" S, 47° 03' 40" W, 635 m altitude). Three
142 cycles of tomato growth were performed from 2019 to 2021. In each cycle, environmental and
143 plant growth data were obtained. Plant growth data refers both to the plants that were continuously
144 monitored, which provided inputs for assimilation, and to calibration plants, which provided inputs
145 for model calibration and for the development of observation models. All data is available in
146 Oliveira et al. (2021). Full experiment description, with extensive details regarding plant
147 management and infrastructure, will be submitted separately as a data paper and can currently be
148 seen in Oliveira (2022).

149 For environmental monitoring, measurements of air temperature (T) were obtained by SHT75
150 transducers protected by porous capsules which, by their turn, were protected by tubes of
151 polyvinylchloride tubes coated with aluminum foil and which included downstream fans. The
152 sensors were installed in a hardware platform for wireless sensor networks (Radiuino BE900), with
153 daily backup. For measurements of photosynthetic photon flux density (PPFD), we used quantum
154 sensors Licor LI-190SA with a datalogger Licor LI-1400. Each sensor node was positioned
155 adjacent to the monitored plants.

156 Plant growth was characterized by destructive analyses (calibration plants) and by non-
157 destructive observations (calibration and monitored plants). Destructive analyses were performed
158 to determine the biomass of plant organs and the leaf area. In intervals of one to three weeks, three
159 plants were removed from the greenhouse, and the leaves, stem, and green and mature fruits were
160 separated. Leaves were digitized with a scanner and the digitization included a reference of known
161 dimensions, which was used for calculation of the area occupied by leaves in the image. Plant
162 material was then weighed before and after drying, in a forced-air circulation oven (60 °C) for four
163 days or until constant mass was reached, so both fresh and dry mass data were determined.

164 For both calibration and monitored plants, non-destructive data includes pictures taken from
165 side and top-down views. For monitored plants, they were obtained by fixed Raspberry Pi Camera
166 Modules v2, connected to Raspberry Pi Zero, one positioned above the plant and one in an adjacent
167 row (Appendix B, Figure B1 and Figure B2). For calibration plants, non-destructive observations
168 were obtained prior to removal for destructive analyses. Before removal, those plants were
169 photographed laterally and from a top-down view with a smartphone camera (Figure 2 and
170 Appendix B, Figure B3). Pictures included references of known size.

171 Labeling of the plant organs in all images was done manually, using the software GIMP.
172 Annotations were made only in areas in which there was certainty the organ corresponded to the

173 correct plant, i.e., if there was uncertainty or occlusion, the area was not marked. The organs were
174 colored differently (Figure 2). The size references were used to calculate the area corresponding to
175 plant organs in the images. All image processing — of plant photos and of digitized leaves — was
176 performed by scripts in python, also included in Oliveira (2023).

177 Monitored plants were also subject to continuous — every minute — weight monitoring. To
178 do so, they were placed in a support isolated from contact with other surfaces, which was hanged
179 in force transducers HBM S2M with nominal force of 10 N (0.02 % accuracy). Data was stored in
180 a data logger PMX WGX002. As fluctuations in weight caused by changes in water content in the
181 substrate were not determined, we refer to this measurement as plant-water system mass.



182

183 Figure 2. Example of non-destructive observation of lateral leaf area and fruit area of a calibration
184 plant. Leaves are marked in green, mature fruits are marked in red, and non-mature fruits are
185 marked in yellow. The A4 sheet used as a reference is marked in cyan.

186

187 Therefore, plant monitoring led to three types of observations used in assimilation: top-down
188 images, lateral images and plant-water system mass. We used images captured every other day as
189 the full set of image observations. Data from the weighting system was averaged in the hour and
190 averages from between 4 am and 5 am, before sunrise in all cycles, were used as the observation

191 for each day, providing the plant-water system mass dataset. The choice allowed for the lowest
192 interference of water content in the measurement.

193 The three cycles presented different developments, which are explored in this study: the first
194 may be characterized by low irrigation, subjecting plants to water deficit (Cycle 1), the second, by
195 an excess of nitrogen fertilization and an attack of tomato rust mite by the end of the cycle (Cycle
196 2), and the third cycle was conducted closer to full water and fertilization (Cycle 3).

197

198 **2.3. Observation models**

199 In order to establish a relationship that would allow for comparing the outcomes of the model
200 and the observed values, observation models or measurement functions are required. In this study,
201 observation models were created from data obtained from the calibration plants, from which
202 destructive and non-destructive data is available. Our modeling strategy focused on obtaining
203 simple empirical relationships, and the generalized least squares method was used to account for
204 the heteroscedasticity and correlation between residues. To avoid data leakage, we made the choice
205 of obtaining different models for each cycle. Therefore, despite the different growth conditions,
206 data from the cycle was not used to obtain the relationship that would be used for the conversion
207 of measurements in that cycle e.g. the observation model of Cycle 1 was developed only with
208 observations from Cycles 2 and 3. All observations obtained per plant were multiplied by plant
209 density to make units compatible with the state variables in the model.

210 We used areas identified from lateral and top images as proxies of the leaf area index, fruit
211 area extracted from lateral images to infer fruit dry mass, and weight as determined by the
212 weighting system to infer aboveground biomass. In this last case, we had to make an assumption

213 as to which percentage of the system corresponded to the roots, and we did so based on the
214 developmental stage (20% before fruit appearance and 10% after).

215

216 **2.4. Data assimilation**

217 Two assimilation techniques were used: Ensemble Kalman Filter (EnKF) and Unscented
218 Kalman Filter (UKF). The first was pointed by Luo et al. (2023) among the most used with satellite
219 images while the latter, was used by Torres-Monsivais et al. (2017), in a problem similar to ours.
220 Both of these methods belong to the class of state estimators based on Kalman filtering. The
221 problem of state estimation, in simple terms, corresponds to the task of determining the values of
222 a set of “hidden” state variables based on the available observations and on knowledge about the
223 system dynamic model and certain signal properties. Ideally, this must be done using information
224 provided by several samples for the sake of improving the attainable precision (Haykin, 2013).

225 The properties of the system of interest and of the relevant signals are essential to determine
226 the complexity of the problem. The classical Kalman Filter (KF) is optimal under assumptions that
227 are typically summarized as linearity and Gaussianity. However, for more general system and
228 signal/noise models, the KF is not optimal and may not even lead to satisfactory performance
229 (Arulampalam et al., 2002).

230 The Ensemble Kalman Filter, proposed in 1994 (Evensen, 1994), adopts an ensemble-based
231 estimation process that is very well-suited for high dimensional systems. It was initially applied in
232 practical applications related to geophysics but became a widespread filtering approach in other
233 large-scale scenarios (e.g. meteorological analysis, marine ecosystem modeling, etc.) (Evensen,
234 2003). Although the method relies on the Gaussian assumption, it is employed also in nonlinear
235 contexts (Mandel, 2006).

236 The Unscented Kalman Filter is an approach aimed at dealing with the problem of recursive
237 nonlinear estimation. Instead of resorting to a linearization process, it represents the state
238 distribution by a carefully chosen set of points, which are able to capture its true mean, as well as
239 the posterior mean and covariance, when propagated through the true non-linear system (Julier and
240 Uhlmann, 1997; Wan and Van Der Merwe, 2000), leading to a more precise estimation when the
241 state equations are pronouncedly nonlinear.

242 In this study, three of the state variables simulated by the model were assimilated:
243 aboveground dry biomass, leaf area index, and fruit dry biomass. Uncertainty in the initial states
244 was determined as the variance of the samples analyzed on the transplanting day. For the EnKF,
245 uncertainty in the process was ascribed to a model parameter, depending on the state variable being
246 assimilated. An added perturbation to the parameter was sampled from a normal distribution with
247 zero mean and a standard deviation of 10% of its value. Parameters were chosen following a
248 sensitivity analysis (Oliveira, 2022): for the leaf area index, the maximum leaf area expansion per
249 node was perturbed, for aboveground biomass, the leaf quantum efficiency, and for fruit biomass,
250 the maximum partitioning of new growth to fruit. The number of elements in the ensemble was
251 tested and defined as 100. Uncertainty in the model for the UKF was determined as the squared
252 absolute error, calculated by the difference between observations of the states in the calibration
253 samples in the cycle and the simulated value of the uncalibrated model. We used the
254 implementation of the library `filterpy`¹ with modifications to account for the perturbation of model
255 parameters in the EnKF. More details on the theoretical aspects of the filters implemented in the
256 library are presented in Appendix C.

¹ <https://github.com/rlabbe/filterpy>

257 Variance in the measurements was determined as the variance of the non-destructive
258 observations of the calibration samples in the growth cycle. While we are aware that this
259 corresponds to partial data leakage, we believe this was the best way to provide an estimate for
260 these filter parameters, as the different characteristics of each cycle would lead to unreasonable
261 estimates of uncertainty.

262

263 **2.5. Frequency of assimilation**

264 We subsampled the full datasets of monitoring observations to assess the effect of the
265 frequency of assimilation. Subsampling corresponded to using 50% and 10% of the data available
266 in the cycle. To avoid results being biased by sampling, the procedure was performed 20 times.
267 One of the repetitions was sampled in regular intervals through the cycle, and the others were
268 randomly sampled, so that the days from which observations were retrieved varied in each
269 sampling.

270

271 **2.6. Evaluation**

272 To conclude the common steps of data assimilation in a crop model, we compared the results
273 from data assimilation in the model without calibration to the results of the calibrated model (open
274 loop, OL, calibrated). We also present the non-calibrated simulations (open loop not calibrated) as
275 a reference. To avoid errors caused by internal variability of the greenhouse environment,
276 simulations for each monitored plant were performed individually with the data provided by each
277 sensor node associated with them.

278 Calibrated runs used data from the destructive analyses of the respective cycle, in order to
279 fully represent the growth conditions and non-calibrated runs used parameters' values from the

280 calibration performed by the developers of the model for their Gainesville data. Calibration
281 followed the approach of minimizing the relative squared error using a global optimization
282 algorithm.

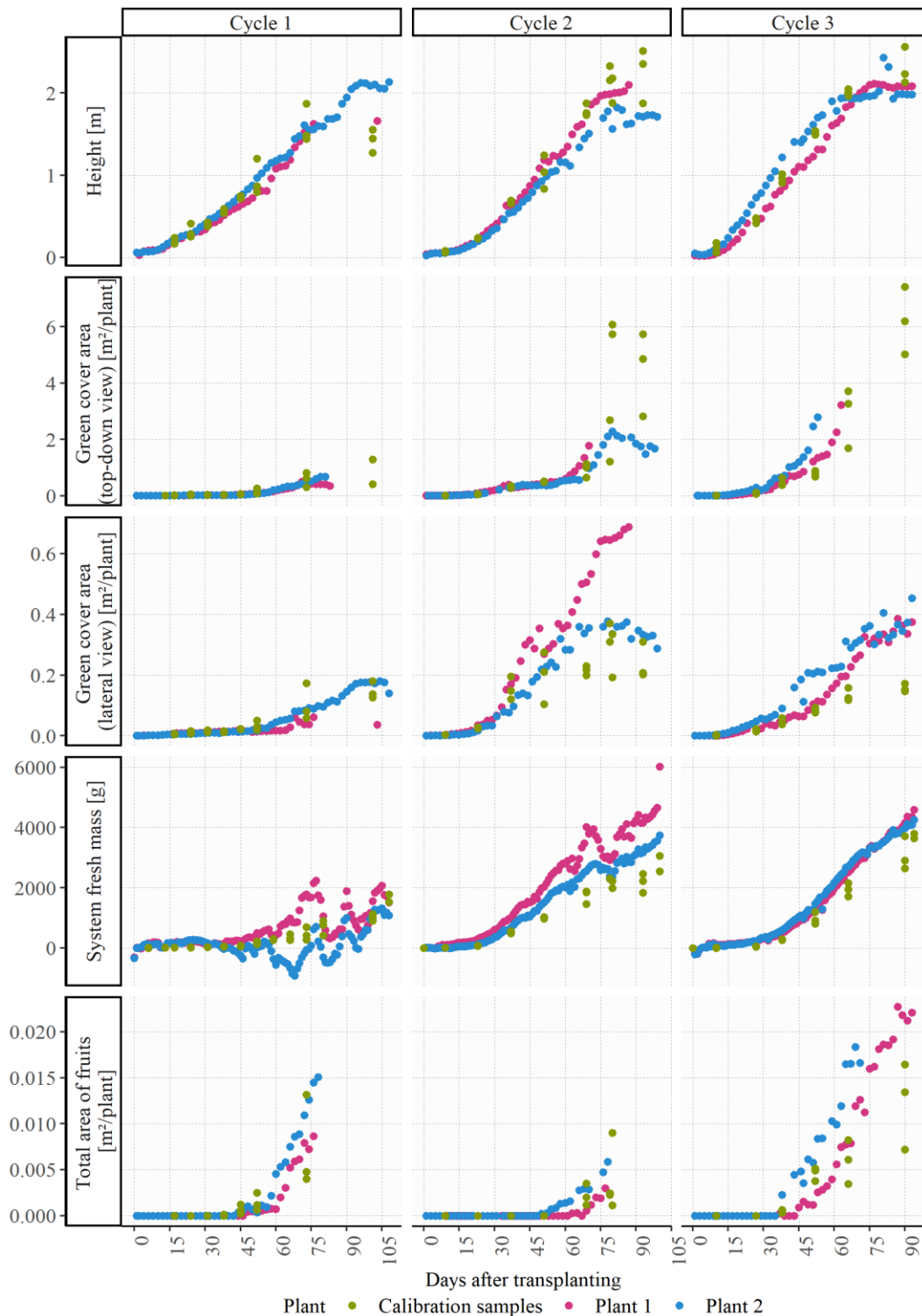
283 In addition to the comparison of the Open Loop Calibrated simulation and Updated Non-
284 Calibrated simulation, we compared the Open Loop Calibrated of Cycles 1 and 2 to the assimilation
285 using model calibration of Cycle 3, i.e., under full fertilization and irrigation, as a manner of
286 incorporating particularities of growth in tropical conditions. This would be equivalent to updating
287 simulations by a model calibrated under appropriate conditions with observations from real-world
288 problematic observations. We calculated the root mean squared error through the cycle, using
289 samples from destructive analysis, comparing non-calibrated, calibrated, and filtered series.

290

291 **3. Results and discussion**

292 **3.1. Plant monitoring**

293 While several studies have estimated biomass from images, we had to ensure that data
294 provided by continuous monitoring was representative of growth, and that these observations were
295 equivalent to the observations obtained by the other methods, destructive or not, used in the
296 calibration plants. Both aspects were suggested by the results (Figure 3). Since the measurements
297 obtained by photographs from the same angle but different sources were comparable, they allowed
298 for the approach of using smartphone pictures of calibration plants for obtaining observation
299 models that represent data from the fixed cameras. Similarly, measurements of growth from
300 monitored plants obtained through the weighting system were similar to the estimated fresh weight
301 of the whole plant in calibration plants.



302

303 Figure 3. Time series of observations for Cycles 1 to 3. from monitored plants, i.e. Plants 1 and 2,
 304 and values for the same variables from the calibration plants' samples. For the calibration samples
 305 associated with the system fresh mass, the observations refer to the aboveground fresh mass of
 306 calibration plants, except for the last observations, which correspond to destructive analyses of the
 307 monitored plants.

308 Areas corresponding to leaves, i.e. green cover area on lateral and top-down views, and total
309 area of fruits extracted from the images obtained with smartphones, for calibration plants, usually
310 followed the same trends and magnitudes of the ones extracted from images obtained by the fixed
311 cameras, for monitored plants (Figure 3). Discontinuities on these curves are often explained by
312 changes in lighting and by occlusion, which is a downside of this type of measurement. When
313 visible areas, i.e. the areas annotated in pictures, of the lateral view of monitored plants were larger
314 than visible areas in pictures from calibration plants, this effect likely can be attributed to occlusion
315 in calibration plants. Furthermore, because of the weighting system, monitored plants were slightly
316 dislocated from the planting line, allowing for larger visible area in lateral images, while visibility
317 of calibration plants was more affected by adjacent plants, an effect that is more noticeable in Cycle
318 3. Conversely, visible areas of calibration plants in Cycles 1 and 3 are equivalent, despite maximum
319 leaf area per plant having reached an average of 0.44 m² leaves/plant in Cycle 1 and in Cycle 3,
320 1.91 m² leaves/plant, i.e., similar visible areas representing quite different values of leaf area index.
321 This was likely a consequence of fewer leaves reducing the complexity of annotations in the
322 environment of Cycle 1, which led to larger visible area, affecting observation models, as will be
323 further discussed.

324 Curves of total area of fruits in Cycles 1 and 2 are interrupted before the end of the cycle
325 because as plants were harvested, observations did not correspond to total fruit mass any longer
326 and were not compatible with the principle of accumulated biomass used in the growth model. To
327 fully account for this effect, the area of each truss would have to be identified and summed to
328 measurements obtained after harvest.

329 In Figure 3, height was also included with two purposes: as a reference of information
330 extracted from pictures in a comprehensible unit, but also to show how monitored plants having
331 their growth interrupted earlier than plants used in calibration — when they reached the height of

332 the fixed cameras — is particularly noticeable in Cycle 3, and the measurement remains constant
333 by the end of the cycle. In the green cover area identified from the top-down view, interruption
334 often refers to this moment when plants reached the camera and occupied all visible area, so that
335 these observations were no longer informative. The very low values observed in Cycle 1 for the
336 top-down view may be connected not only to lower leaf area, but also to a slight dislocation of the
337 camera, so that it did not fully capture the plant. As for the system fresh mass, one can observe
338 how Cycle 1 did not present a regular mass growth trend, and variability mostly corresponded to
339 water fluctuation in the system. Negative values correspond to measurements lower than the initial
340 state of the weighting system, which only included the support and moist substrate, indicating loss
341 of water. In the second and third cycles, these fluctuations are less common and there is a clear
342 trend of biomass increase, suggesting the validity of the approach of using hourly average before
343 sunrise to represent the weight of the system. In those two cycles, we can observe more clearly that
344 values from monitored plants are larger than for calibrated samples, since roots are also included
345 in the system.

346

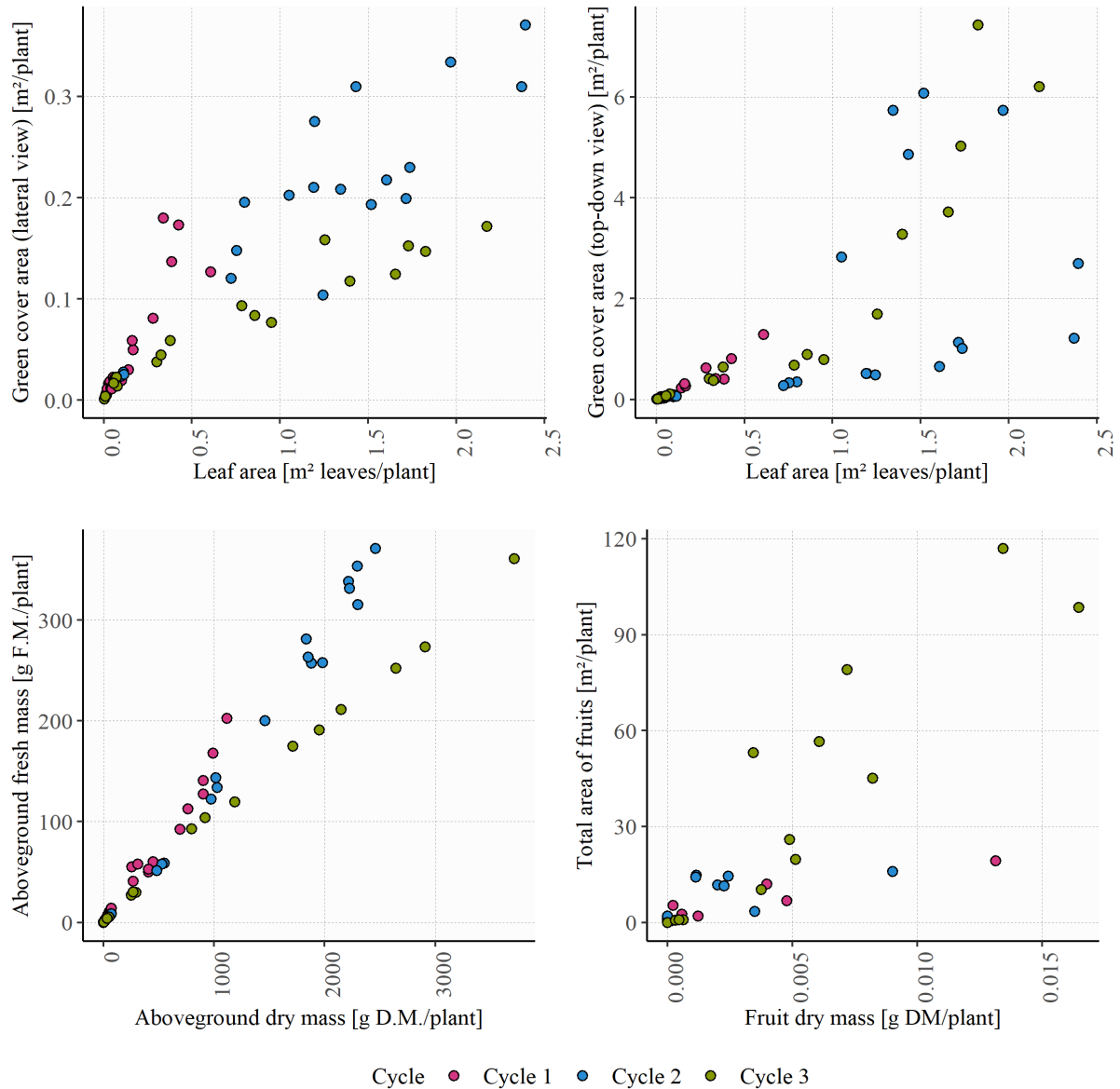
347 **3.2. Observation models**

348 In the case of assimilation for large areas using remote sensing images as the source of
349 observations, several products are already available. This step, however, was still needed in this
350 study, as there is no established relationship between the non-destructive observations used and the
351 state variables (LAI, W and W_f) to be updated.

352 Although linear relationships may be observed in the scatterplots of the relationships that
353 gave basis to the observation models (Figure 4), particularities of each cycle are noticeable, such
354 as larger fruit biomass in Cycle 3 and lower leaf area in Cycle 1. For Cycle 2, excessive nitrogen

355 fertilization at the beginning of the cycle, followed by mite attack after the beginning of the fruit
356 stage, led to large leaf areas but low fruit mass.

357 As mentioned for the indirect observations, as plants reach the camera, one can no longer
358 distinguish leaf area from images taken from the top-down view. In this sense, the relationship
359 becomes non-linear, and images from the lateral view represent the leaf area better than from top-
360 down. One can also see that in all cases of observations extracted from images, particularly for
361 fruits, observed values are concentrated in the lower range, making it harder to obtain good
362 relationships for larger values. Besides the length of the cycles, lower values may also have been
363 caused by our choice of not compensating for occlusion and only including areas in which there
364 was certainty the area corresponded to the plant. These choices did not impair our attainment of
365 reasonably good linear relationships between said areas and their corresponding observed state
366 within a cycle. For aboveground biomass, although the linear relationship is very visible,
367 uncertainty relates to the other aspect of conversion i.e. the fraction of system biomass ascribed to
368 aboveground biomass, which could not be measured and had to be inferred.



369

370 Figure 4. Scatterplots of relationships between observations of plants used in the destructive
 371 analyses, used for the development of observation models in each growth cycle. In the Y-axis,
 372 observations that refer to an area were extracted from images and aboveground fresh mass was
 373 obtained by weighting plants before drying.
 374

375 We noted in the previous section that different leaf area per plant in Cycle 1 and Cycle 3 led
 376 to similar visible areas in pictures. This is noticeable in Figure 4, through the similar ranges in the
 377 y-axis despite the different ranges in the x-axis, which also shows that the model obtained with

378 data from Cycles 2 and 3 will overestimate leaf area index for Cycle 1, by ascribing larger leaf area
379 values to the range of green cover observations of this cycle.

380 However, even as the differences between growth cycles existed, the individual models
381 obtained presented similar slope coefficients (Table 1) and, except for the conversion of fruit
382 biomass (W_f), since these coefficients are at least one order of magnitude larger than the intercept,
383 they dominate the results. Visibly, the most discrepant model corresponds to fruit biomass (W_f),
384 with the largest coefficient of variation for the slope coefficient (62% for slopes 1.19×10^{-4} , 1.31
385 $\times 10^{-4}$ and 3.34×10^{-4}), particularly in Cycle 3, which has a much lower intercept (1.36×10^{-4}). The
386 difference affected assimilation, as will be discussed, but the other results suggest it should be
387 possible to generate simple models that could be generalized for several conditions.

388 Table 1. Equations derived from calibration data for observation models, i.e., conversion of state
 389 variables (W_f , W and LAI) into the equivalent observation.

Growth Cycle	Equation	State variable	Observed variable
Cycle 1	$wf_lat = 1.19 \times 10^{-4} \times W_f + 1.97 \times 10^{-3}$		
Cycle 2	$wf_lat = 1.31 \times 10^{-4} \times W_f + 1.77 \times 10^{-3}$	W_f	Area W_f
Cycle 3	$wf_lat = 3.34 \times 10^{-4} \times W_f + 1.36 \times 10^{-4}$		

Cycle 1	$w_fm = 8.32 \times W + 4.74 \times 10^{-1}$		
Cycle 2	$w_fm = 7.81 \times W - 5.26 \times 10^{-1}$	W	W_fm
Cycle 3	$w_fm = 6.90 \times W + 6.79 \times 10^{-1}$		

Cycle 1	$lai_lat = 1.42 \times 10^{-1} \times LAI + 3.44 \times 10^{-3}$		
Cycle 2	$lai_lat = 2.54 \times 10^{-1} \times LAI + 2.97 \times 10^{-3}$		GC Lat
Cycle 3	$lai_lat = 2.26 \times 10^{-1} \times LAI + 4.75 \times 10^{-3}$	LAI	

Cycle 1	$lai_td = 9.87 \times 10^{-1} \times LAI + 5.74 \times 10^{-4}$		
Cycle 2	$lai_td = 1.30 \times LAI - 1.28 \times 10^{-3}$		GC TD
Cycle 3	$lai_td = 1.16 \times LAI - 4.81 \times 10^{-4}$		

390 W_f : dry mass of fruits [$g\ m^{-2}$], W : aboveground dry biomass [$g\ m^{-2}$], LAI : leaf area index [$m^2\ m^{-2}$],
 391 Area W_f : area of fruits on images [$m^2\ m^{-2}$], W_fm : aboveground fresh mass [$m^2\ m^{-2}$], GC Lat: area
 392 of leaves identified on images from lateral view [$m^2\ m^{-2}$], GC TD: area of leaves identified on
 393 images from the top-down view [$m^2\ m^{-2}$].

394 Correlations between state variables and indirect observations are compatible with what is
395 visible from the scatterplots i.e. reasonably linear relationships within cycles in most cases, but
396 error metrics point to large uncertainties for some variables, even within the training set (Table 2).

397 While an error of 0.40 g FM m^{-2} may be considered very small when compared to the mass
398 of the weighting system, $0.61 \text{ m}^2 \text{ m}^{-2}$ could be considered very large for the area visible on images
399 and is likely caused by the different behaviors from the three growth cycles. It is not uncommon
400 for remote sensing LAI products used in assimilation to reach errors larger than $0.5 \text{ m}^2 \text{ m}^{-2}$. Fang
401 et al. (2019) report validation RMSE errors from moderate and high-resolution leaf area index
402 products for crops ranging from 0.2 to $0.8 \text{ m}^2 \text{ m}^{-2}$. However, Mean Absolute Percentage Errors
403 suggest that given the error in the unseen cycle, using these models to convert state variables in the
404 assimilation may lead to lower efficiency of the process. In the case of mature fruit biomass, which
405 was not explored here as there were not enough observations to develop the models, obtaining good
406 relationships should be a lot easier, as occlusion by leaves is minimized by pruning practices.

407 Table 2. Standard error (SE), mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) and coefficient of
 408 determination (R^2) from each observation model for data from each cycle. SE from a cycle is
 409 reported from training in the other cycles and MAPE is reported from validation in the same cycle.

Assimilated		LAI	LAI	W	Wf
variable					
Observed		GC TD	GC Lat	W_fm	Area Wf
Variable		[m ² m ⁻²]	[m ² m ⁻²]	[g FM m ⁻²]	[m ² m ⁻²]
Cycle 1	SE (training)	0.988	0.311	0.395	0.062
Cycle 2		0.597	0.613	0.339	0.084
Cycle 3		0.921	0.436	0.257	0.252
Cycle 1	R^2 (training)	0.64	0.73	0.94	0.81
Cycle 2		0.86	0.82	0.98	0.77
Cycle 3		0.44	0.87	0.99	0.36
Cycle 1	MAPE (validation)	30 %	41 %	34 %	373 %
Cycle 2		122 %	55 %	29 %	82 %
Cycle 3		26 %	113 %	58 %	122 %

410 *Observations as: GC Lat: green cover (lateral view), GC TD: green cover (top-down view), W_fm
 411 fresh mass from destructive analyses, Area Wf: total area of fruits.

412 **3.3. Data assimilation**

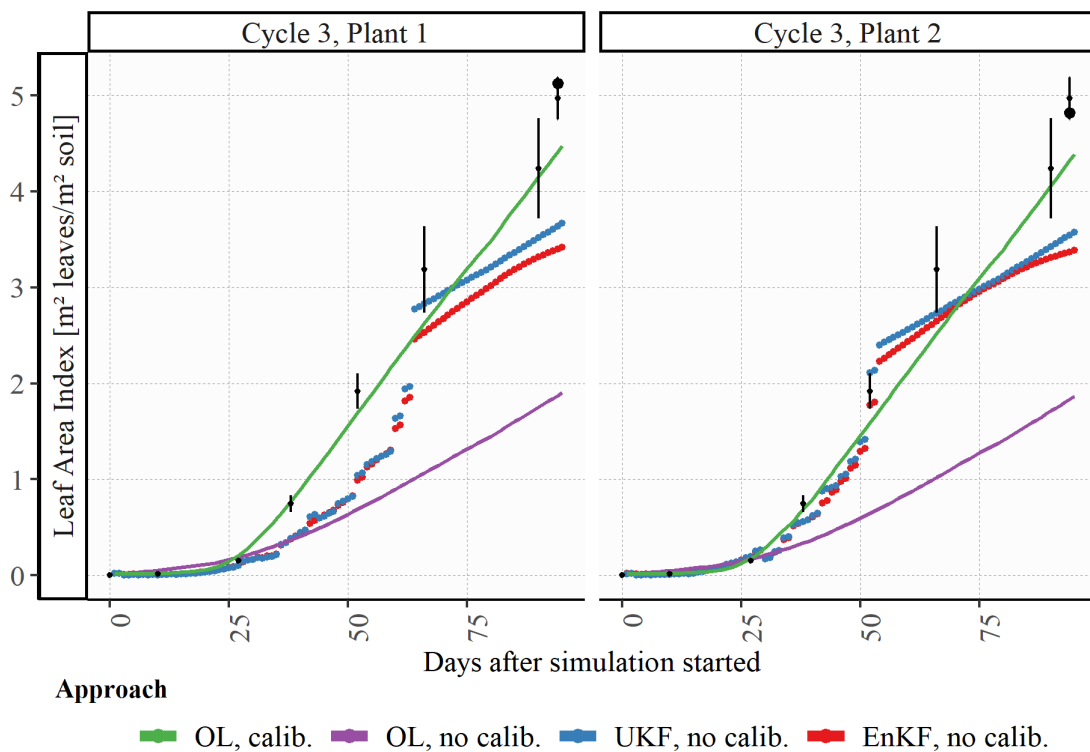
413 Overall, assimilation of aboveground biomass led to the largest improvements in Cycles 2
414 and 3 (Table 3). Without the disturbances that happened in Cycle 1, this was the most precise
415 measurement, as suggested by sensor accuracy and by observed trends of monitored and calibration
416 plants (Figure 3). Additionally, the observation model for fresh and dry aboveground biomass was
417 not affected by the fluctuation in water content of the substrate, which did not compromise the
418 conversion (Table 2). The combination of high-quality observations and observation model
419 allowed for the UKF to reach the same performance as the calibrated model.

420 Table 3. Average root mean squared error (RMSE) for state variables assimilated in the evaluations.

State variable	Filter	Assim. State	Obs. Variable*	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
LAI	None – Calib.	-	-	0.08	0.53	0.31
[m ² m ⁻²]	None – Not Calib.	-	-	0.17	1.17	1.76
	EnKF			0.07	1.04	0.78
	UKF		GC TD	0.09	0.98	0.67
	EnKF	LAI		0.08	0.70	1.83
	UKF		GC Lat	0.10	0.70	1.83
W	None – Calib.		-	42.4	29.8	124.8
[g m ⁻²]	None – Not Calib.	-	-	30.8	148.8	275.4
	EnKF			61.6	59.0	142.8
	UKF	W	W_fm_full	68.1	66.5	124.4
Wf	None – Calib.	-	-	15.9	82.7	12.4
[g m ⁻²]	None – Not Calib.	-	-	25.8	34.8	90.1
	EnKF			25.2	30.9	88.7
	UKF	Wf	Area Wf	23.4	16.1	86.2

421 *Observations as: GC TD: green cover (top-down view), GC Lat: green cover (lateral view),
422 W_fm_full: weighting system, Area Wf: total area of fruits. Bold numbers refer to root mean
423 squared errors lower than the larger RMSE between the non-calibrated and calibrated error.

424 Another example in which the observation model had lower validation error (Table 2) and in
 425 which observations tracked quite well the calibration plants (Figure 3) comes from using the
 426 pictures from the top-down angle to estimate the leaf area index in Cycle 3 (Figure 5). Both
 427 techniques were able to increase the estimates, with the UKF presenting slightly better results. The
 428 absence of images led the final half of the growth cycle to be simulated by the non-calibrated
 429 model, without the increase in magnitude that the observations provided.



430

431 Figure 5. Assimilation of leaf area observations. Growth curves for each monitored plant without
 432 assimilation (OL, calib. And OL, no calib.) and with the different methods used for assimilation
 433 (UKF and EnKF) of the indirect measurement of leaf area index corresponding to the area of leaves
 434 in images obtained from a top-down angle. Dots refer to the average equivalent observation
 435 determined by destructive measurements, and the bar represents the associated standard deviation.
 436 The final equivalent value for the monitored plant is represented by a larger dot. The equivalent
 437 observations were converted from the original value to account for plant density.

438 To comment on the other results, we have to take into account the other elements of our
439 study. By proposing the use of new observations and their respective observation models, with a
440 previously not used model, in three different conditions, we have to dissect each aspect.

441

442 **3.3.1. Effect of growth disturbances**

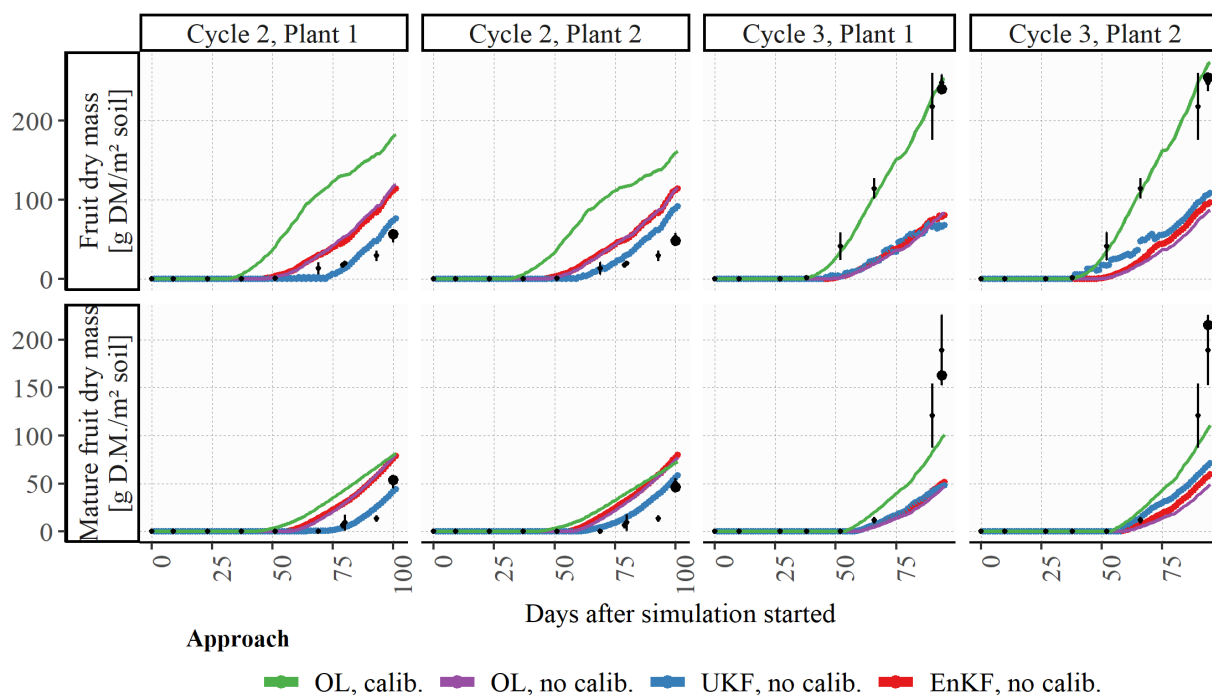
443 Assimilation studies in crop modeling often focus on using additional information to account
444 for spatial variability, planting dates, or other uncertainties that impair model best estimates (Hu et
445 al., 2019; Jin et al., 2018). And as crop models often simulate potential — sometimes limited —
446 growth, actual growth requires this additional information to be included in the estimates. From
447 the three growth cycles, one represented potential growth while the others were at least limited. As
448 such, we dealt with multiple scenarios that serve as examples of issues in assimilation.

449 For instance, while locally calibrating the model usually led to the best results (Table 3), this
450 was not the case when the state variable was impaired by growth conditions. Therefore, there were
451 two references to which the results of assimilation could be compared: the calibrated model, which
452 should give the best performance in potential conditions, and the non-calibrated model, which
453 provided the estimates for assimilation. In our study, using data assimilation with the non-
454 calibrated model was often able to improve the outcomes in comparison with the poorest
455 performance from the standalone model (Table 3). No assimilation technique from both assessed
456 was consistently better either across variables or across growth cycles.

457 As previously mentioned, although calibration is expected to improve model performance,
458 this was not observed in some cases, since growth not always corresponded to the situation for
459 which the model was developed, i.e. potential growth. In Cycle 1, in which total biomass was
460 impaired by faulty irrigation, the optimization used in calibration could not determine parameters
461 that would generate compatible estimates between all variables. Similarly, in Cycle 2, excessive

462 nitrogen led to much lower fruit production, and this effect was not properly captured by the
 463 parameters selected.

464 Assimilation results in both cycles in which growth was disturbed also depended on the
 465 quality of observations. In Cycle 1, in which the system biomass, i.e., the observation assimilated,
 466 was affected by water content in the substrate, and measurements didn't correspond strictly to the
 467 expected quantity — plant biomass — poor estimates of aboveground biomass were obtained,
 468 leading to the best results coming from the non-calibrated simulation (Table 3). In Cycle 2, on the
 469 other hand, assimilation of fruit images led to the adjustment of the estimates to the lower values
 470 that actually happened (Figure 6, leftmost panels).



472 Figure 6. Assimilation of fruit area observations. Growth curves for each monitored plant without
 473 assimilation (OL, calib. And OL, no calib.) and with the different methods used for assimilation
 474 (UKF and EnKF) of the indirect measurement of fruit dry biomass corresponding to the area of
 475 fruits in images. Dots refer to the average equivalent observation determined by destructive
 476 measurements, and the bar represents the associated standard deviation. The final equivalent value
 477 for the monitored plant is represented by a larger dot. The equivalent observations were converted
 478 from the original value to account for plant density.

479 **3.3.2. Observation models**

480 In Cycle 3, fruit area observations were apparently barely used, and the assimilated curve
481 closely resembles the simulation without calibration (Figure 6, rightmost panels). This is likely
482 caused by bias in the observation model. While Figure 3 showed that monitored plants in Cycle 3
483 had the largest areas of fruits by the end of the growth cycle, the scatterplot from Figure 4 shows
484 how a model obtained with data from the other two cycles would likely underestimate the fruit
485 mass observation. Therefore, when the model-estimated fruit biomass value was converted to the
486 equivalent observation, the difference in magnitude between what was estimated by the model and
487 the observation could not be captured in the residual calculation.

488 It is likely that the high errors of some observation models affected the ability of the
489 techniques to extract information from the observations. These errors lead to poorer estimates of
490 the residuals and the gain, shifting how much the filter should rely on observations. Our observation
491 models were limited, particularly for fruit area, as there were fewer observations, but obtaining
492 good relationships seemed feasible, as suggested by the overall high correlations (Table 2).
493 Additionally, we chose simple approaches both for monitoring and for the observation models, i.e.
494 only manual annotation of images and linear relationships for the observation models, but the use
495 of deep learning techniques could enhance the results obtained. Han et al. (2022) recently used
496 these techniques to extract observations and their uncertainties using smartphone pictures in an
497 assimilation experiment. In greenhouses, for monitoring, deep learning could be used for tracking
498 a fruit truss (Y. Ge et al., 2022), to account for their influence in simulated biomass after harvesting.
499 They are also useful to separate foreground and background leaves (Baar et al., 2022). Fruit
500 classification and automatic segmentation (Fonteijn et al., 2021) would allow for monitoring more
501 plants and making the assimilation results more robust and based on more observations, which also
502 impacts the observation models. In the case of observation models, deep learning methods could

503 extract more features from the observations and better characterize them. Moon et al. (2022)
504 explored deep learning techniques to model fresh weight and leaf area of sweet peppers. While the
505 error in fresh weight error measurements was similar to the ones obtained in this study, leaf area
506 ones were much lower. As the few previous assimilation studies in protected environments did not
507 go through this step of requiring observation models, their outcomes are not comparable (Ruíz-
508 García et al., 2014; Torres-Monsivais et al., 2017).

509

510 **3.3.3. Yield and assimilated variables**

511 Since the update of a variable should impact their own estimates as well as the ones from
512 other variables, we expected the assimilation of several different state variables to improve yield
513 outcomes in different ways. For instance, changes in leaf area index should affect aboveground
514 biomass and fruit biomass, since it affects photosynthesis. There are, however, several mechanisms
515 that govern other state variables, such as respiration and fruit abortion, so that it is not necessarily
516 the case that, even if there are improvements in the assimilated state, they are going to be
517 propagated to other variables.

518 When analyzing the results focusing on yield, often assimilation of either leaf area or
519 aboveground biomass did not improve the estimates (Table 4). While counterintuitive, this has
520 been observed in other studies, for other crops, such as wheat (Nearing et al., 2012), cotton, and
521 potato (Linker and Ioslovich, 2017). The absence of improvement in yield does not mean the
522 approach is not useful. Even though in this study the model used did not include irrigation or other
523 aspects that are relevant to the management of tomato growth, such as fertilization or supplemental
524 lighting, it could be the case that improvement in estimates of the state variables themselves could
525 be informative for other model states and possibly, management decisions.

526 There is no established method for determining previously which variables should be updated
527 so that model performance is improved when estimating yield. Recently, Orlova and Linker (2023)
528 used an interesting approach, in which sensitivity analysis is performed before an update step of
529 assimilation, and a particle filter estimates relevant models' parameters. In this manner, they
530 address the problem of parameter importance being variable through growth, which is analogous
531 to the issue of how one state variable impacts the other. A version of this approach could be
532 explored to better understand up to what point yield estimates could benefit from an update given
533 its representation encoded in a model.

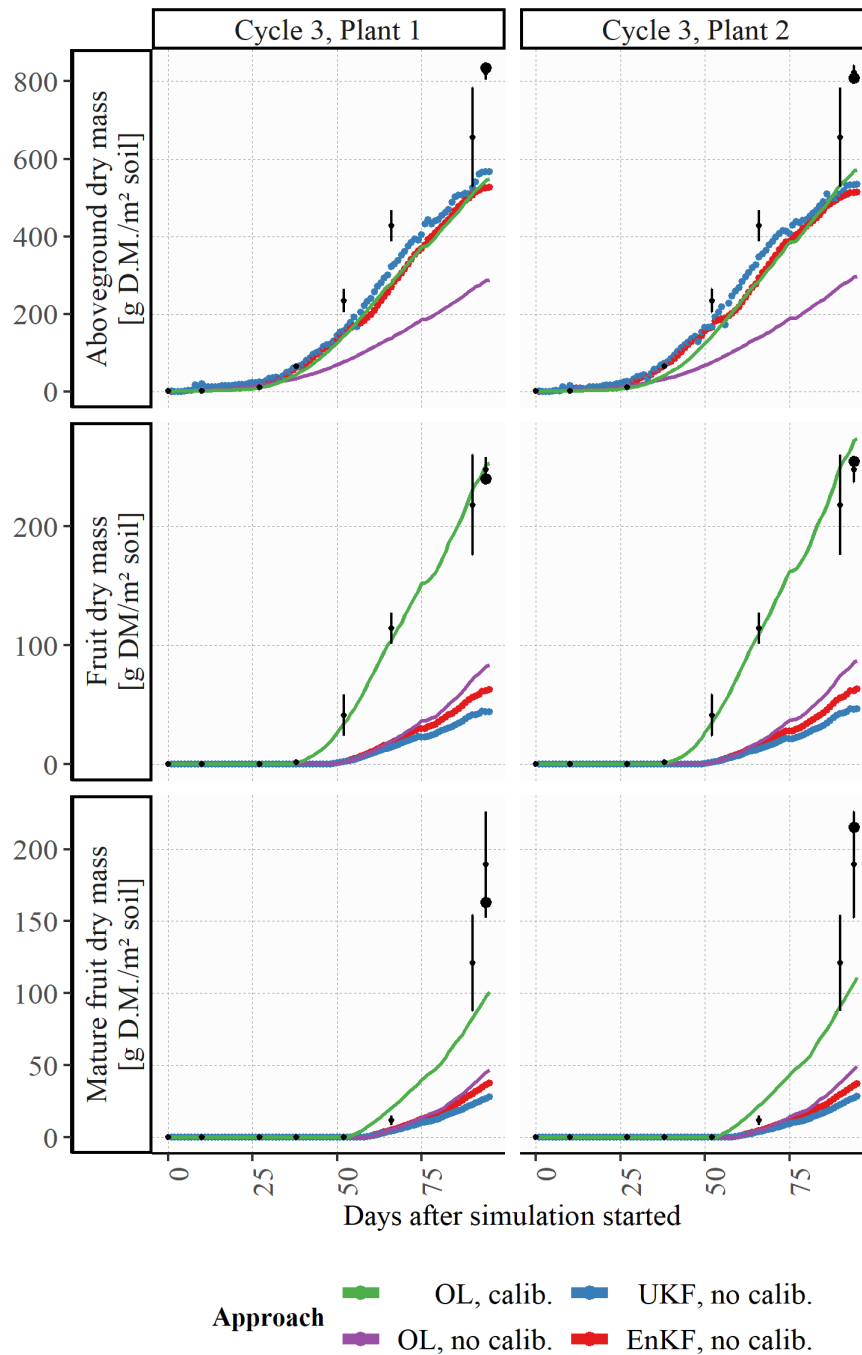
534 Table 4. Root mean squared error [g m^{-2}] from estimates of yield updated with data from different
 535 sources with the Unscented Kalman Filter and the Ensemble Kalman Filter, and from the model
 536 without assimilation with and without calibration.

Filter	Assim. state	Obs. variable*	Cycle 1		Cycle 2		Cycle 3	
			Plant 1	Plant 2	Plant 1	Plant 2	Plant 1	Plant 2
None – Calib.	-	-	5.05	10.1	29.1	25.3	36.0	31.5
None – Not Calib.	-	-	20.5	18.0	22.4	21.7	62.2	61.1
EnKF	LAI	GC TD	22.5	19.8	27.5	19.6	47.1	40.1
UKF			22.9	18.8	31.4	21.2	45.7	39.2
EnKF		GC Lat	25.5	19.2	64.9	41.5	63.7	58.5
UKF			24.4	18.1	65.7	41.7	63.6	58.8
EnKF	W	W_fm_full	20.2	14.9	26.89	28.1	67.3	67.6
UKF		-	20.8	9.93	7.19	11.4	71.7	71.7
EnKF	Wf	Area Wf	19.7	16.5	20.3	21.5	60.6	57.0
UKF			14.4	9.30	5.87	9.00	61.6	51.2

537 *Observations as: GC TD: green cover (top-down view), GC Lat: green cover (lateral view),
 538 W_fm_full: weighting system, Area Wf: total area of fruits. Bold numbers refer to root mean
 539 squared errors lower than the larger RMSE between the non-calibrated and calibrated error.

540 One example of how assimilation of one variable may unexpectedly affect the outcome of
541 another refers to the assimilation of aboveground biomass using the weighting system (Figure 7).
542 Even though it thoroughly improved aboveground biomass, it had an adverse effect on fruit dry
543 biomass. Because the Reduced Tomgro model calculates yield based on photosynthesis and
544 respiration (Equation A9, Appendix A), instead of previous values of aboveground biomass, the
545 increase in biomass may lead to an increase in respiration that is not compensated by an increase
546 in photosynthesis through LAI, thus decreasing assimilates available for fruits.

547



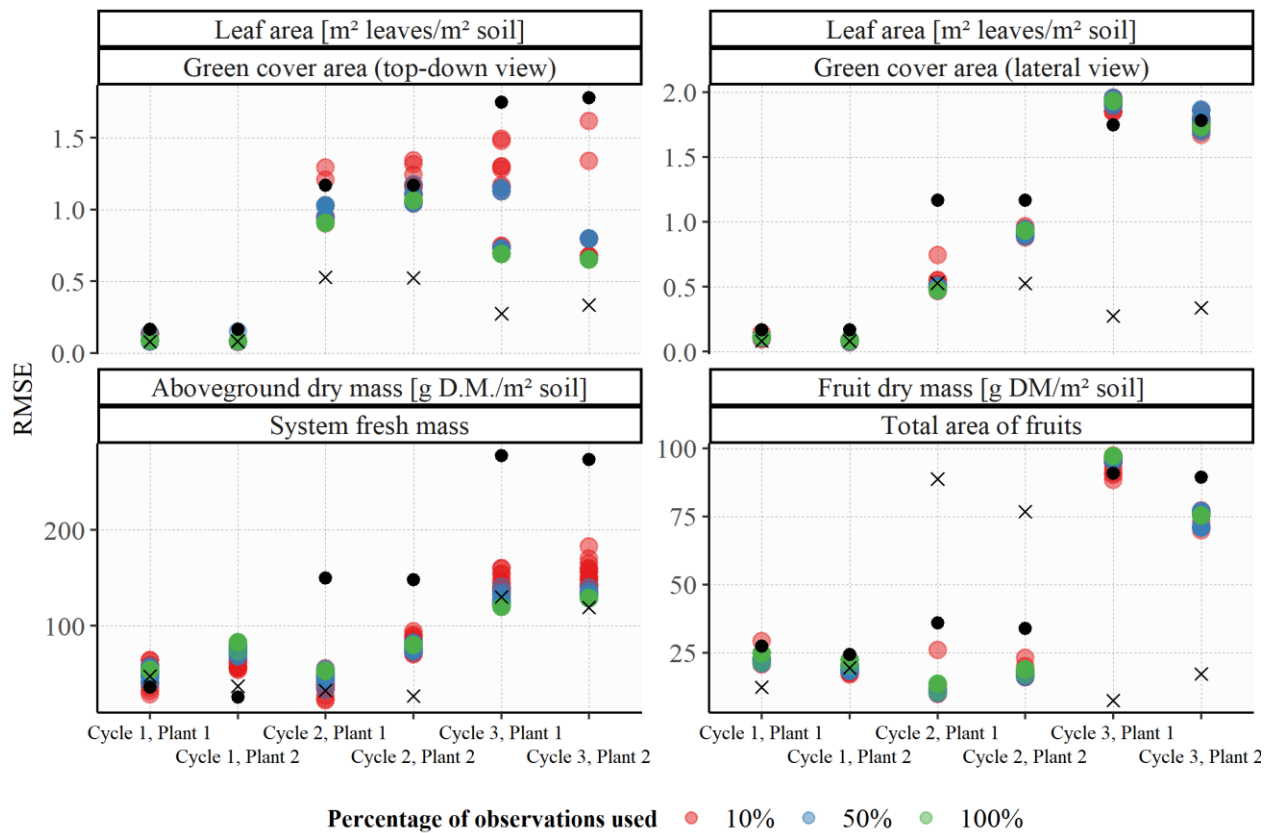
548

549 Figure 7. Assimilation of aboveground biomass observations. Growth curves for each monitored
 550 plant without assimilation (OL, calib. And OL, no calib.) and with the different methods used for
 551 assimilation (UKF and EnKF) of the indirect measurement of aboveground biomass corresponding
 552 to fresh plant weighting system. Dots refer to the average equivalent observation determined by
 553 destructive measurements, and the bar represents the associated standard deviation. The final
 554 equivalent value for the monitored plant is represented by a larger dot. The equivalent observations
 555 were converted from the original value to account for plant density.

556 **3.3.4. Frequency**

557 For field crops, observation availability has been mostly reliant on satellite temporal
558 resolution, and only recently unmanned aerial vehicles (H. Ge et al., 2022; Yu et al., 2020) or
559 pictures (Han et al., 2022) have become an additional source of data. In the high-frequency
560 observation scenario of a protected environment, data availability allows for obtaining more
561 prompt responses to plants' changes not captured by the model. However, since computational
562 capacity may limit exploring an excessive number of images, we assessed the difference in
563 performance caused by using fewer observations. While we observed similar outcomes of using all
564 available data (Figure 8), by reducing the frequency, in particular for the assimilation of top-down
565 images and the system fresh mass, the ranges of the errors obtained in the multiple simulations
566 increased.

567 This increase in range may have just been caused by the need of frequent assimilation given
568 the poor estimates of the non-calibrated model. But the variability among samples suggests it could
569 also have been caused by the usefulness of observations not being equal across time. For images,
570 it is also the case that later observations are connected to poorer data quality, since the environment
571 becomes more complex. This adds to the problem of determining which variable could improve
572 the outcome after assimilation, as variable importance, similar to what has been commented for
573 parameters, also depends on timing.



574

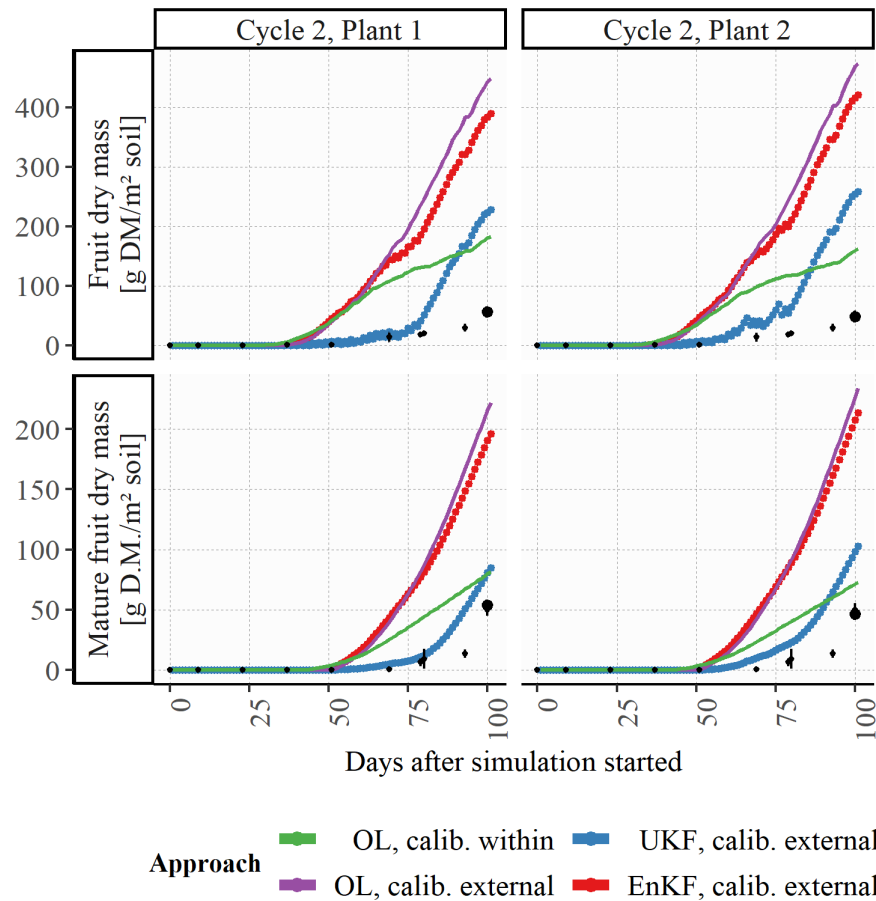
575 Figure 8. Differences in errors caused by sampling of observations. Root mean squared error
 576 (RMSE) for each state variable assimilated, from different sources, with the Unscented Kalman
 577 Filter for all the twenty samplings of the dataset. The black dot corresponds to the error of the
 578 simulation without calibration and the X mark, to the simulation with calibration.
 579

580 3.3.5. Different model calibration

581 For the most part of this study, we made a choice of not calibrating the model before
 582 assimilation, as in Lu et al. (2021), which assimilated canopy cover and soil moisture to improve
 583 maize yield. We did so because, even though it could influence filters' performances (Kang and
 584 Özdoğan, 2019), calibration may be an excessively laborious step, as the parameters obtained from
 585 calibration with data from one population do not necessarily correspond to the true parameter
 586 values (Wallach, 2011), leading to the necessity of calibration for every different location and
 587 cultivar. Within our exploration of data assimilation for a protected environment, we also tested

588 how well the assimilation of indirect measurements would bypass the need for calibration of the
589 available models.

590 However, as the results observed are also a consequence of which were the parameters in the
591 open loop simulation to which assimilation of observations was added, we also evaluated the results
592 using another set of parameters, i.e., the ones obtained in calibration in Cycle 3, for assimilation in
593 Cycles 1 and 2. The best example from the results is the case of the fruit estimates in Cycle 2
594 (Figure 9). One can see the model now overestimates fruit and mature biomass (OL, calib external).
595 Assimilation lowers the estimates while there are observations available, but as the rate of fruit
596 biomass is calculated independently from the current value of the state — relying exclusively on
597 net biomass, development stage, some parameters and air temperature (Equation A8, Appendix A)
598 —, the steep increase observed in the non-calibrated estimates is then also observed in the curves
599 of the assimilated cases as soon as observations are no longer available. Likely, for the EnKF, the
600 covariance generated by perturbation of the parameter was much lower than the ones in the
601 observations, leading to higher reliance on the model's estimates.



602

603 Figure 9. Assimilation of fruit area observations in a different model calibration. Growth curves
 604 for each monitored plant without assimilation (OL, within and OL, external) and with the different
 605 methods used for assimilation (UKF and EnKF) of fruit dry biomass corresponding to the area of
 606 fruits in images. Calibration with data from the cycle is referred to as “within” and with data from
 607 a different cycle, as “external”. Dots refer to the average equivalent observation determined by
 608 destructive measurements, and the bar represents the associated standard deviation. The final
 609 equivalent value for the monitored plant is represented by a larger dot. The equivalent observations
 610 were converted from the original value to account for plant density.
 611

612 4. Conclusions

613 This study covered aspects of the data assimilation framework of research, redirecting
 614 previous knowledge of assimilation in large areas with satellite images to protected environments.
 615 As an area not yet largely explored, several intermediate steps were required before achieving the

616 goal of assimilation, including determining viable monitoring approaches and observation models.

617 Our case study brings attention to the impacts these steps and decisions may have on the outcome.

618 One decision was connected to which variables would lead to effective assimilation. We used

619 observations that could lead to reasonable estimates of most state variables represented by the

620 Reduced-State Tomgro model, i.e., aboveground biomass, leaf area index and fruit biomass.

621 Overall, assimilation of observations only slightly improved estimates obtained by models, but the

622 approach seemed especially valuable to adjust estimates in growth cycles in which potential growth

623 was not observed. Simple measurements extracted from photos obtained during growth were able

624 to represent state variables, providing a good estimate to be used along with the one provided by

625 the model. The ability to further explore the approach also relies on the availability of good and

626 generalizable observation models.

627 As for the improvement of yield estimates, in our case, assimilation led to two different

628 outcomes: both improvement and deterioration of them. It is often unclear how assimilation may

629 affect the results, since how much one state affects the other is not fixed, even in potential growth,

630 because changes in the weather inputs or cultivars could modify crop behavior. A previous overall

631 assessment of how variables relate to each other is recommended for a more efficient application

632 of the technique.

633 As a first proposal of using real-time data for data assimilation in a protected environment,

634 several aspects could not be investigated, such as exploring the uncertainty reduction in final

635 estimates, and the impacts of assimilation of multiple observations simultaneously. Additionally,

636 deep learning identification of observations could increase data availability and when more

637 observations are available, one can delve deeper into the question of which is the more appropriate

638 timing for obtaining them, as it seems possible, with fewer observations, to achieve results as good

639 as with observations every other day.

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645

646 **6. Authors' contributions**

647 Monique Oliveira: Conceptualization, Methodology, Software, Investigation, Data Curation,
648 Writing - Original Draft; Thais Zorzeto-Cesar: Resources, Writing - Review & Editing; Romis
649 Attux: Writing - Review & Editing; Luiz Rodrigues: Writing - Review & Editing, Supervision,
650 Funding acquisition

651

652 **7. Conflicts of interest**

653 The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

654

655 **8. References**

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- 795

796 **Appendix A Reduced State Tomgro (RT) model equations**

797 The model calculates growth and development of tomato plants and its main calculations are
 798 based on Equations A1 to A9, extracted from (Jones et al., 1999) and (Jones et al., 1991). The
 799 model is represented by five difference equations of the states number of nodes (N), leaf area index
 800 (LAI), aboveground dry biomass (W), fruit dry biomass (W_f) and mature fruit dry biomass (W_m).
 801 It uses photosynthetic photon flux density (PPFD) and hourly air temperatures (T) as inputs.
 802 Parameters names are presented in Table A1.

803

$$804 \quad \frac{dN}{dt} = N_m \cdot f_N(T) \quad A1$$

$$805 \quad \frac{dLAI}{dt} = \rho \cdot \delta \cdot \lambda(T_d) \cdot \frac{e^{[\beta(N-N_b)]}}{1+e^{[\beta(N-N_b)]}} \cdot \frac{dN}{dt} \quad A2$$

$$806 \quad GR_{net} = E \cdot (P_g - R_m) \cdot [1 - f_R(N)] \quad A3$$

$$807 \quad R_m = \sum Q_{10}^{(T-20)} \cdot r_m \cdot (W - W_m) dt \quad A4$$

$$808 \quad P_g = \sum \left\{ \frac{D \cdot LF_{max} \cdot PGRED(T)}{K} \cdot \ln \left[\frac{(1-m) \cdot LF_{max} + Q_e \cdot K \cdot PPFD}{(1-m) \cdot LF_{max} + Q_e \cdot K \cdot PPFD \cdot e^{-K \cdot LAI}} \right] \right\} \quad A5$$

$$809 \quad \frac{dW}{dt} = GR_{net} - p_1 \cdot \rho \cdot \frac{dN}{dt} \quad A6$$

$$810 \quad \frac{dW}{dt}_{max} = \frac{dW_F}{dt} + (V_{max} - p_1) \cdot \rho \cdot \frac{dN}{dt} \quad A7$$

$$811 \quad \frac{dW_F}{dt} = GR_{net} \cdot \alpha_F \cdot f_F(T_d) \cdot [1 - e^{\theta - (N - N_{FF})}] \cdot g(T_{daytime}) \quad A8$$

$$812 \quad \frac{dW_M}{dt} = D_F(T_d) \cdot (W_F - W_M) \quad A9$$

813

814 Table A1. Parameters from the Reduced Tomgro model.

815

Parameter	Meaning
δ	Maximum leaf area expansion per node [$\text{m}^2 \text{ leaf node}^{-1}$]
β	Coefficient in expolinear equation [node^{-1}]
N_b	Project of linear segment of LAI vs N to horizontal axis [node]
α_F	Maximum partitioning of new growth to fruit [fraction d^{-1}]
ϑ	Transition coefficient between vegetative and full fruit growth [node^{-1}]
N_{FF}	Nodes per plant when first fruit appears [node]
T_{CRIT}	Mean daytime air temperature above which fruit abortion starts [$^{\circ}\text{C}$]
DF_{max}	Average development rate used to move fruits from green to mature stage [d^{-1}]
V_{max}	Maximum increase in vegetative tissue dry weight growth per node [g dry weight node^{-1}]
N_m	Maximum rate of node appearance (at optimal air temperatures) [node d^{-1}]
Q_e	Leaf quantum efficiency [$\mu\text{mol} (\text{CO}_2 \text{ fixed}) \mu\text{mol} (\text{photon})^{-1}$]
E	Growth efficiency, ratio of biomass to photosynthate available for growth [g d.w. $\text{g}^{-1}\text{CH}_2\text{O}$]
K	Light extinction coefficient
ρ	Plant density [plant m^{-2}]
p_l	Loss of leaf d.w. per node after LAI_max is reached [g leaf node^{-1}]

816

817 **Appendix B Examples of data obtained through non-destructive methods**

818



819

820 Figure B1. Example of photo of a monitored plant, captured by the fixed Raspberry Pi Camera
821 Module v2 positioned above the tomato plant weighting system. Image includes reference of
822 known dimensions.

823



824

825 Figure B2. Example of photo of a monitored plant, captured by the fixed Raspberry Pi Camera
826 Module v2 positioned in a row adjacent to the tomato plant weighting system. Image includes
827 reference of known dimensions.

828



829

830 Figure B3. Example of image of a calibration plant, obtained before removal from the greenhouse,
831 by a smartphone camera, from a top-down view. Image includes reference of known dimensions.

832 **Appendix C Equations for the EnKF and the UKF**

833 Equations C1 to C24 summarize the steps and relationships between states, observations and
 834 their uncertainties, expressed by their covariances. Overall, they follow a pattern of using the
 835 process or model equation to predict the next estimate and updating the estimate by including the
 836 information brought by the observation, accounting for the uncertainty present both in the model
 837 estimate and the observation. The first step is often called forecast, prior or predict and the second
 838 step, update, posterior or analysis. Relevant moments from the update step include the calculation
 839 of the residual, which consists in the difference between the estimate and the observation, and of
 840 the gain, which corresponds to the weight of the residual when modifying the value estimated by
 841 the model, as well as the uncertainty of the outcome.

842

843 **EnKF**

$$844 \quad \boldsymbol{\chi} \sim \mathcal{N}(\mathbf{x}_0, \mathbf{P}_0) \quad \text{C1}$$

$$845 \quad \mathbf{y} = f(\boldsymbol{\chi}) + \boldsymbol{\nu}_Q \quad \text{C2}$$

$$846 \quad \bar{\mathbf{x}} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_1^N \mathbf{y} \quad \text{C3}$$

$$847 \quad \bar{\mathbf{P}} = \frac{1}{N-1} \sum_1^N (\mathbf{y} - \bar{\mathbf{x}})(\mathbf{y} - \bar{\mathbf{x}})^T \quad \text{C4}$$

848

$$849 \quad \mathcal{Z} = h(\mathbf{y}) \quad \text{C5}$$

$$850 \quad \boldsymbol{\mu}_Z = \frac{1}{N} \sum_1^N \mathcal{Z} \quad \text{C6}$$

$$851 \quad \mathbf{y} = \mathbf{z} - \mathcal{Z} + \boldsymbol{\nu}_R \quad \text{C7}$$

$$852 \quad \mathbf{P}_{ZZ} = \frac{1}{N-1} \sum_1^N (\mathcal{Z} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_Z)(\mathcal{Z} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_Z)^T + \mathbf{R} \quad \text{C8}$$

$$853 \quad \mathbf{P}_{XZ} = \frac{1}{N-1} \sum_1^N (\mathbf{y} - \bar{\mathbf{x}})(\mathcal{Z} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_Z)^T \quad \text{C9}$$

$$854 \quad \mathbf{K} = \mathbf{P}_{XZ} \mathbf{P}_{ZZ}^{-1} \quad \text{C10}$$

$$855 \quad \boldsymbol{\chi} = \bar{\mathbf{x}} + \mathbf{K}\mathbf{y} \quad \text{C11}$$

$$856 \quad \mathbf{x} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_1^N \boldsymbol{\chi} \quad \text{C12}$$

$$857 \quad \mathbf{P} = \bar{\mathbf{P}} - \mathbf{K}\mathbf{P}_{zz}\mathbf{K}^T \quad \text{C13}$$

858

859 **UKF**

$$860 \quad \mathbf{y} = f(\boldsymbol{\chi}) \quad \text{C14}$$

$$861 \quad \bar{\mathbf{x}} = \sum w^m \mathbf{y} \quad \text{C15}$$

$$862 \quad \bar{\mathbf{P}} = \sum w^c (\mathbf{y} - \bar{\mathbf{x}})(\mathbf{y} - \bar{\mathbf{x}})^T + \mathbf{Q} \quad \text{C16}$$

863

$$864 \quad \mathcal{Z} = h(\mathbf{y}) \quad \text{C17}$$

$$865 \quad \boldsymbol{\mu}_z = \sum w^m \mathcal{Z} \quad \text{C18}$$

$$866 \quad \mathbf{y} = \mathbf{z} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_z \quad \text{C19}$$

$$867 \quad \mathbf{P}_{zz} = \sum w^c (\mathcal{Z} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_z)(\mathcal{Z} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_z)^T + \mathbf{R} \quad \text{C20}$$

$$868 \quad \mathbf{P}_{xz} = \sum w^c (\mathbf{y} - \bar{\mathbf{x}})(\mathcal{Z} - \boldsymbol{\mu}_z)^T \quad \text{C22}$$

$$869 \quad \mathbf{K} = \mathbf{P}_{xz}\mathbf{P}_{zz}^{-1} \quad \text{C22}$$

$$870 \quad \mathbf{x} = \bar{\mathbf{x}} + \mathbf{K}\mathbf{y} \quad \text{C23}$$

$$871 \quad \mathbf{P} = \bar{\mathbf{P}} - \mathbf{K}\mathbf{P}_{zz}\mathbf{K}^T \quad \text{C24}$$

872

873 In the predict equations (C1 to C4 and C14 to C16), \mathbf{x} and \mathbf{P} are the state mean and
 874 covariance, \mathbf{F} is the process function in matrix form, while f is the equivalent nonlinear process
 875 model and \mathbf{Q} is the process covariance. In the update equations (C5 to C13 and C17 to C24), \mathbf{z} and
 876 \mathbf{R} are the measurement mean and noise covariance, \mathbf{H} is the measurement function while h is the
 877 equivalent nonlinear observation model, \mathbf{y} and \mathbf{K} are the residual and Kalman gain. In the UKF, $\boldsymbol{\chi}$

878 are the sigma points and \mathbf{y} are the transformed sigma points while w^m and w^c are weights. In the

879 EnKF, \mathbf{v}_Q and \mathbf{v}_R correspond to added noise.

880

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