

1 **Fitness costs of adaptive chlorantraniliprole resistance in the *Spodoptera*** 2 ***exigua* (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae)**

3 Abstract

4 The beet armyworm, *Spodoptera exigua*, is a multifeeding insect pest, which has developed high
5 resistance to chlorantraniliprole, a benzoylurea insecticide that targets on the ryanodine receptors
6 (RyRs). However, few studies have been conducted on the highly resistant strain. Here, the resistant
7 strain (SE-Sel) and sensitive strain (SE-Sus) were obtained by bidirectional screening for 6
8 generations. The potential oviposition and oviposition rate of the SE-Sel strain were dramatically
9 lower than those of the SE-Sus strain, on the contrary the weights of prepupae and preadult were
10 significantly increased. And the expression levels of *vitellogenin* (*SeVg*) and its receptor (*SeVgR*) in
11 the SE-Sel strain were consistently lower than those in the SE-Sus strain. The RyR^{I4765M} mutation
12 and the upregulation of detoxification genes, such as *SeABCOK*, *SeGSTI5*, *SeGSTZ2*, *SeCarEs1*,
13 *CYP6AEW* and *SeCYP6AB10*, contributed to the evolution of resistance to chlorantraniliprole. The
14 RyR^{I4765M} mutation could affect neuropeptide activation, and it conducted to the upregulated
15 expression of the neuropeptide *SeNPF* and its receptor, *SeNPFR*, which could inhibit courtship
16 behavior and reduce oviposition. And the neuropeptide *SeNPF* could influence the expression of
17 *juvenile hormone-binding protein* and *juvenile hormone diol kinase*, and it led to the downregulated
18 expression of *SeVg*. Therefore, these results indicate that the fitness cost accompanied by
19 chlorantraniliprole resistance in *S. exigua* is related to the wicked evolution of RyR.

20 **KEYWORDS:** *Spodoptera exigua*, Chlorantraniliprole, Vitellogenin, Fitness Cost, Ryanodine
21 Receptor Mutation

22

23

24 **1 | INTRODUCTION**

25 The beet armyworm, *Spodoptera exigua* Hübner, an important insect pest that threatens numerous
26 cash crops, such as *Zea mays*, *Nicotiana tabacum*, and *Medicago sativa*, survives wintering by
27 migration without diapause and causes economic losses worldwide (Moulton et al., 2002; Wu et al.,
28 2010; Zhou et al., 2011; Zheng et al., 2012). Chemical insecticides have been the most effective
29 means of controlling this pest for the last two decades, including some traditional
30 organophosphorus, pyrethroid, and benzoylurea insecticides and other supplemented newer
31 insecticides in recent years (Lai et al., 2011; Che et al., 2013; Su et al., 2014; Zhang et al., 2014).

32 Chlorantraniliprole is a novel benzoylurea insecticide that targets on the ryanodine receptors
33 (RyRs), which are ion channels that regulate intracellular Ca^{2+} release during physiological
34 excitation-contraction coupling (Truong et al., 2019), leads to the overrelease of internal calcium
35 ion (Ca^{2+}) stores, and subsequently causes feeding cessation, muscle paralysis and ultimately death
36 (Teixeira et al., 2013; Sun et al., 2015), and the overrelease of Ca^{2+} also enhances neuropeptide
37 activation to regulate ovarian development (James et al., 2014; McKinney et al., 2016; Truong et al.,
38 2019). It is effective against almost all lepidopterist pests and is safe for mammals, birds, and fishes
39 (Lahm et al., 2007; David et al., 2008). However, owing to the overuse of this insecticide, field
40 populations collected from different districts in China have evolved to a high level of resistance to
41 chlorantraniliprole (Lai et al., 2011; Gao et al., 2013). In 2012, 16 populations of *S. exigua* in seven
42 provinces in China were monitored on the resistance levels, with resistance ratios (RR) of 2-44-fold
43 to chlorantraniliprole (Che et al., 2013). In recent years, Guo et al. (2014a) also declared that their
44 group has found a field-resistant population of *Plutella xylostella* with 2,128 RR to
45 chlorantraniliprole in Yunnan Province. Wang et al. (2015) reported that the resistance of *P.*
46 *xylostella* to chlorantraniliprole in Guangdong Province had reached 2,000-fold. Wang et al. (2018b)
47 found that the resistances of *S. exigua* collected in 2016 were significantly higher than two years
48 earlier, especial for chlorantraniliprole with RRs rising from 173.4- to 582.6-fold.

49 Normally, the evolution of resistance to an insecticide is accompanied by a high expensive cost
50 or striking weaknesses that could diminish the insect's fitness in comparison to its susceptible
51 counterparts in the population (Kliot et al., 2012; Abbas et al., 2016), especially for reproduction
52 fitness costs; for example, resistant insects have lower fertility and longer developmental duration

53 than sensitive insects, which is not conducive to insect population growth. Cao and Han (2010)
54 found that the mating rate and hatching rate of tebufenozide-resistant *P. xylostella* strain were
55 significantly reduced. Ribeiro et al. (2013) found that the chlorantraniliprole-resistant strain of *P.*
56 *xylostella* presented significantly lower fecundity and higher larval and pupal periods, hatchability,
57 and male longevity compared with the susceptible strain. Abbas et al. (2014) also found that
58 profenofos-resistant strain of *Spodoptera litura* have reduced fertility and hatching rates and lower
59 intrinsic growth rates. The resistant strain has shown an adaptive cost in comparison to the
60 susceptible strain that could result in a delay in population growth in the field (Passos et al., 2019).

61 Vitellogenin (Vg) is an indispensable reproduction-related protein that is traditionally
62 identified as an appropriate parameter for appraising female fertility in insects (Ma et al., 2019). In
63 most insects, Vg is mainly synthesized by fat bodies or other tissues, for example ovarian tissues
64 (Wahli, 1988), secreted to the hemolymph, binds to the vitellogenin receptor and finally enters the
65 cell through endocytosis after reaching at the oocyte surface (Giorgi et al., 1999; Tufail et al., 2014).
66 In our laboratory, a resistant strain (SE-Sel) of *S. exigua* was established through continuous
67 selection with the sublethal dose of chlorantraniliprole. However, the resistance mechanism and
68 fitness cost accompanied by the insecticide were still not clearly. Identifying the fitness cost and the
69 dominance of the fitness cost accompanied by insecticide resistance could be useful for designing
70 an integrated pest management (IPM) program that limits the rapid propagation of the resistant
71 population (Abbas et al., 2016). Therefore, in the current study, a comparison of the ability and
72 gonad coefficient between the SE-Sel and sensitive strains (SE-Sus) was employed to investigate
73 whether the fitness cost was accompanied with chlorantraniliprole resistance in *S. exigua*. In
74 addition, transcriptome analysis of the SE-Sel and SE-Sus strains, and reproduction-related genes
75 was performed to investigate the underlying mechanism. The results of the present study can be
76 useful in designing appropriate management strategies for resistant insect populations.

77 **2 | METHODS**

78 **2.1 | Insects**

79 The resistance ratios for the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains (with LC₅₀ values of 0.502 µg/g and 5.837
80 µg/g respectively) were estimated at 3.72- and 226.69-fold, compared with the LC₅₀ value of 0.061

81 $\mu\text{g/g}$ in Sus-Lab to chlorantraniliprole. All stages were maintained under the same standard
82 conditions of 27 ± 1 °C, 70–80% RH, and a 16:8 h (L:D) photoperiod. The larvae and adults were
83 reared with an artificial diet and a 10% sugar solution, respectively. Pupae and newly laid eggs were
84 sterilized with a 0.2–0.3% sodium hypochlorite disinfectant solution (Wang et al., 2018b). The
85 susceptible strain (Sus-Lab) of *S. exigua* was alimented in the laboratory without exposure to any
86 insecticide since 2003. Leshan's population from the original field samples was collected in 2017
87 from vegetable fields in the Mouzi town of Leshan City in Sichuan Province, China. The SE-Sus
88 strain was established from the untreated offspring of pairs in the Leshan population with the
89 highest mortality by continual selection with gradually increasing concentrations of
90 chlorantraniliprole, on account of the LC_{70} values from the bioassay of their parent generations for a
91 total of 6 generations; In contrast, SE-Sel was screened by treating the offspring of pairs with
92 gradually diminishing concentrations of chlorantraniliprole, on account of the LC_{30} values for a
93 total of 6 generations, according to the method described by Huang et al. (2019). The resistance
94 ratios for the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains (with LC_{50} values of 0.502 $\mu\text{g/g}$ and 5.837 $\mu\text{g/g}$ respectively)
95 were estimated at 3.72- and 226.69-fold, compared with the LC_{50} value of 0.061 $\mu\text{g/g}$ in Sus-Lab to
96 chlorantraniliprole. All stages were maintained under the same standard conditions of 27 ± 1 °C,
97 70–80% RH, and a 16:8 h (L:D) photoperiod. The larvae and adults were reared with an artificial
98 diet and a 10% sugar solution, respectively. Pupae and newly laid eggs were sterilized with a 0.2–
99 0.3% sodium hypochlorite disinfectant solution (Wang et al., 2018b).

100 **2.2 | Insecticide and reagents**

101 Chlorantraniliprole (95%) was obtained from DuPont Agricultural Chemicals Co., Ltd. (Delaware,
102 USA). Triton X-100 was obtained from Amresco Co. (Texas, USA). All other chemicals, solvents,
103 and analytical grade reagents were obtained from Chengdu Aikeda Chemical Reagent Co., Ltd.
104 (Chengdu, China).

105 **2.3 | Reproductive system observation**

106 The newly hatched larvae were raised to pupae in glass tubes (diameter \times height: 2.0 cm \times 8.0 cm)
107 containing an artificial diet. The pupae were soaked in a 0.5% sodium hypochlorite solution and
108 disinfected. Three pairs of male and female of the SE-Sus strain or SE-Sel strains were placed in a

transparent plastic cup with a lid respectively. Each treatment was repeated eight times, and 10% honey water was provided to nourish their eggs. The plastic cups and honey water were replaced every 24 h, the eggs were collected, and the number of ovipositions per head (designated a) were recorded until the end of oviposition. During the peak period of oviposition, 10 eggs were randomly selected. After hatching, the number of hatched larvae (designated k) and the number of unhatched larvae (designated m) were counted. After the female adult died, the ovaries were dissected under an anatomical microscope to record the number of eggs left in the ovarian duct (considered nonoviposition, b). The potential oviposition (designated n), oviposition rate, and hatchability were calculated by the following formulas: potential oviposition = a + b; oviposition rate = $[a/n] \times 100 \%$; and hatchability = $[k / (k + m)] \times 100\%$.

2.4 | Ovary solution plane

Forty SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains at the pupal stage were collected and separated with finger tubes, and the weight of each pupa was recorded with an electronic balance after 24 h of pupation. After 24 h of eclosion, the female adults were weighed (designated c) under CO₂ anesthesia, washed in clear water and put into phosphate buffered saline. The abdominal epidermis of the adults was torn with two tweezers to expose the reproductive organs. The fat body and epidermis were removed as far as possible, the ovaries were gently pulled out, and the ovarian tubes were gently moved with an anatomical needle to fully expand the tubes. The length of the ovarian tubes was measured, and the absorbent paper was removed. The fresh weight of the ovary (designated d) was measured and recorded. The ovariole index was calculated using the following formula: Ovariole index = $(c / d) \times 100\%$.

2.5 | Gene expression pattern of SeVg in the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains

The SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains were fed in the finger tubes. When the larvae reached the prepupal stage, they were transferred to a culture plate with artificial feed cells. Ten female pupae, from the 1st to the 8th day of pupation, and female adults emerged for 0, 12, 24, 36, 48, 60 and 72 h were collected. The ovaries and fat bodies were obtained from the dissected pupae and dissected female adults, loaded into 2 mL centrifugal tubes, instantly quick-frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored at -80 °C. RNA extraction, reverse transcription, and qPCR of the *SeVg* gene were performed in

137 accordance with the procedure described below.

138 **2.6 | Transcriptome analysis**

139 **2.6.1 | Library construction and sequencing, splicing and unigenes annotation**

140 In accordance with the manufacturer's instruction for the TRIzol® Reagent (Invitrogen™,
141 ThermoFisher Scientific, Waltham, USA), approximately 10 ovaries and fat bodies of virgin adults
142 emerged for 36 h from the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains were used for total RNA isolation. cDNA
143 library construction and sequencing, splicing, and unigenes annotation, covering Nr annotation,
144 KEGG annotation, COG/KOG functional annotation and Gene Ontology (GO) annotation, were
145 orderly performed according to the method described by Wang et al. (2018b).

146 **2.6.2 | Gene expression and differential gene enrichment**

147 The expression level of unigenes was figured by the RPKM method, according to the formula
148 below: $RPKM(A) = (1000000 * C) / (N * L / 1000)$ (Mortazavi et al., 2008). The RPKM (A) value
149 denotes the expression level of gene A; the C value denotes the number of reads that uniquely
150 mapped to gene A; the N value denotes the total number of reads that uniquely mapped to all genes,
151 and the L value denotes the number of nucleic acid bases in gene A.

152 The dramatically differentially expressed genes (DEGs) between the SE-Sus and SE-Sel
153 strains were screened by edge R. The screening threshold value were $FDR < 0.05$ (P -value after
154 calibration by FDR) and $|\log_2FC| > 1$, and GO and KEGG enrichment analysis were performed for
155 the DEGs.

156 **2.6.3 | Quantitative PCR (qRT-PCR)**

157 Total RNA of the ovaries and fat bodies of virgin adults emerged for 36 h from the SE-Sus and
158 SE-Sel strains was extracted and reverse transcribed performed according to the procedure 2.6.1.

159 The cDNAs of Vg (*KT599434.1*), two ABC transporters (*SeABCG23* and *SeABCOK*), two
160 transcription factors (*SETF* and *SESp9*), three glutathione *S*-transferase epsilons (*SeGSTI5*, *SeGSTI*
161 and *SeGSTZ2*), a carboxylesterase (*SeCarEs1*), two cytochrome P450s (*CYP6AEW* and
162 *SeCYP6AB10*), two juvenile hormone-binding proteins (*SeJHBWDS3* and *SeJHBAN*), a vitellogenin
163 receptor (*SeVgR*), a juvenile hormone diol kinase (*SeJHDK*), a sex peptide receptor (*SeSPR*), two

164 lebocin genes (*SeLE* and *SeLE2*), two cecropin genes (*SeCE* and *SeCEB*), a neuropeptide (*SeNPF*),
165 a neuropeptide receptor (*SeNPFR*) and the *F-actin* gene (Wang et al., 2016) from the SE-Sus and
166 SE-Sel strains were amplified by PCR with twelve pairs of corresponding primers (Table 1). The
167 system and procedure of qRT-PCR were performed according to the method described by Wang et
168 al. (2016).

169 **2.7 | Diversity and collinearity of neuropeptide genes**

170 A total of 63 complete neuropeptide amino acid sequences of *Drosophila melanogaster* and
171 *Spodoptera* insects were down loaded from NCBI database and analyzed for the conserved
172 functional domains with the motif search ([https://www. genome.jp/ tools/ motif/](https://www.genome.jp/tools/motif/)) and meme ([http: //meme-suite. org/ tools/ meme](http://meme-suite.org/tools/meme)) tools. The results were visualized with TBtools software.

174 **2.8 | Statistics and annotation of single erroneously paired nucleotides and sequence analysis** 175 **of RyR genes**

176 Based on the alignment results between the reads of the two treatments and the assembled unigenes
177 database used by TopHat2, single erroneously paired nucleotides (SNPs), as determined by
178 comparison with the assembled unigenes, were distinguished by The Genome Analysis Toolkit
179 (GATK) (McKenna et al., 2010), then these SNP sites were analyzed by the program SnpEff
180 (Cingolani et al., 2012). Furthermore, it was possible to analyze whether these SNP sites affected
181 the gene expression level or encoded protein type. On the basis of the cDNA fragments
182 (*Unigene0007287* and *Unigene0010376*) of RyR from RNA-seq data compared with ALL55470.1
183 in NCBI, we cloned the sequence containing the specific amino acids 4631-4967 of RyR. The
184 cDNAs of RyR genes were amplified by PCR with corresponding primer pairs (Table 2).
185 TransStart® FastPfu DNA Polymerase (TransGen Biotech, Beijing, China) was used in the PCR.
186 PCR was conducted with a PCR cycle of 95 °C for 2 min, 35 cycles of 95 °C for 20 s, 60 °C for 20 s
187 and 72 °C for 1 min, ending with an extension at 72 °C for 5 min. Amplified fragments were purified
188 by a TIANgel® Midi Purification Kit (Tiangen, Beijing, China) and sequenced at Shanghai
189 Biological Engineering Co., Ltd.

190 **2.9 | Data analysis**

191 The relative normalized expression of the screened genes and validated genes, the number of
192 oviposition, nonoviposition, hatched and unhatched larvae; the weights of pupae, female adults and
193 organs; and the length and number of the ovarian tubes in the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains were
194 compared by using analysis of variance (ANOVA) followed by Duncan's test for multiple
195 comparisons ($P < 0.05$) with the SPSS version 17.0 software package (IBM).

196 **3 | RESULTS**

197 **3.1 | Comparison of the reproductive capacity and egg hatchability between the SE-Sus and** 198 **SE-Sel strains**

199 The average number of ovipositions per female of the SE-Sus strain was 715.50, which was
200 significantly higher than that of the SE-Sel strain (181.79) (Figure 1A). After dissecting dead
201 female adults, the average number of nonoviposition per female for the SE-Sus strain only reached
202 66.17, and was significantly lower than that in the SE-Sel strain (457.29) (Figure 1A). Therefore,
203 the potential fecundity and oviposition rates of the SE-Sus strain were 781.67 and 91.08%,
204 respectively, which were significantly higher than those of the SE-Sel strain at 639.08 and 27.11%
205 (Figure 1A, Figure 1B). The gap in egg hatchability between SE-Sus and SE-Sel was only 2.16%,
206 with no significant difference (Figure 1B).

207

208 **3.2 | Comparison of the ovariole index between the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains**

209 The mean pupal weights of each female and male of the SE-Sus strain were 0.0949 g and 0.089 g,
210 respectively, which were significantly lower than those of the SE-Sel strain (0.1086 g and 0.0974 g,
211 respectively) (Figure 2A). The mean weight of each female adult of the SE-Sus strain (0.0656 g)
212 was significantly less than that of the SE-Sel strain (0.0734 g), meanwhile the weight of preovary
213 and the length of ovarian tubes obtained from dissecting female adults of the SE-Sus strain (0.0286
214 g and 3.46 cm) were also lower than those of the SE-Sel strain (0.0300 g and 3.55 cm) even though
215 there was no difference ($P > 0.05$) (Figure 2A, Figure 2B); the ovariole index of female adults of
216 the SE-Sus strain (0.4382) was higher than that of the SE-Sel strain (0.4102), but the difference was
217 not significant (Figure 2B).

218 3.3 | Gene expression pattern of SeVg in the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains

219 The relative expression of *SeVg* gene in SE-Sus and SE-Sel females was detected at different times
220 and the results indicated that the *SeVg* gene in the two strains began to express at the fifth day of
221 pupal stage. With the elongation and emergence of pupae, the expression level of *SeVg* gene firstly
222 increased until 36 h after emergence, reached the highest value, then began to decline. At 60 h after
223 emergence, the expression level reached the second highest value, and then decreased again. The
224 expression of *SeVg* gene in the SE-Sus strain was significantly stronger than that in the SE-Sel
225 strain ($P < 0.05$), except for the 6th, 8th days of pupation and 0 h, 48 after emergence (Figure 3).

226 3.4 | Illumina sequencing and read assembly

227 The total number of reads (150 bp / read) obtained from the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains assessed in
228 triplicate was 296,690,624, with 42,072,370 reads at least for each sample. The proportion of reads
229 including linker sequences achieved 0.42 ~ 0.47%, and that of low-quality reads which included
230 reads with $> 10\%$ Ns and an abased number of $Q \leq 10$ in $> 50\%$ of the total reads reached
231 1.45~1.54%. After the linker sequences or low-quality reads filtered out, 290,810,118 clean reads
232 were received, and the Q20 and Q30 were more than 98.91% and 96.64%, respectively
233 (Supplementary Table 1).

234 3.5 | Transcriptome data splicing

235 The clean reads were constituted mixed pools and spliced into approximately 39,957 unigenes, and
236 the longest unigene contained 20,539 nt, but the shortest unigene contained 201 nt (Supplementary
237 Fig. 1A). The N50 value, that is, the cumulative fragmentary length reaches 50% of the total
238 fragmentary length, was 2,161 nt. There were 11,513 unigenes between 200-299 nt in length and
239 3,268 unigenes of over 3,000 nt in length. 4,295 unigenes contained over 10,000 reads, while
240 17,179 unigenes were composed of only 11~100 reads (Supplementary Figure 1B).

241 3.6 | Transcriptome annotation

242 In the Nr database, 18,474 unigenes were successfully obtained exegeses, and the species (top 4)
243 with the greatest number of homologous genes were *Amyelois transitella* (3493), *Bombyx mori*
244 (3234), *Papilio xuthus* (1850), and *Papilio machaon* (1426), respectively (Supplementary Fig. 2A).

245 Additionally, 11,891 unigenes were annotated in the SwissProt database, 11,671 unigenes were
246 annotated in the KOG database, 11,891 unigenes were annotated in the KEGG database, and 8,020
247 unigenes were annotated in these four databases (Supplementary Figure 2B). Among the 11,671
248 unigenes annotated in the KOG database, 5,024 unigenes were categorized as general function
249 prediction only, accounting for the largest proportion, and 3,388 unigenes were categorized as
250 signal transduction mechanisms (Supplementary Figure 2C).

251 **3.7 | Analysis of gene expression**

252 The correlations of gene expression levels in the SE-Sus strains (with a correlation index of 0.9989
253 to 1.0000) were dramatically higher than those in the SE-Sel strains (with a correlation index of
254 0.9871 to 0.9906) (Figure 4A). Additionally, there was a significant clustering relationship on PC1
255 between the samples in the SE-Sus strain and the SE-Sel strain, respectively, and the contribution
256 degree of PC1 (96.8%) was dramatically higher than that of PC2 (2.1%) (Figure 4B).

257 **3.8 | Cluster analysis of DEGs**

258 Under the screening threshold value of $FDR < 0.05$ and $|\log_2 FC| > 1$, 8,253 DEGs were obtained from
259 the SE-Sel strain in comparison with the SE-Sus strain, 4,020 of which were upregulated, while
260 4,233 were downregulated (Figure 5A and Figure 5B).

261 **3.9 | GO enrichment**

262 The DEGs were enriched and assessed in the three Gene Ontology (GO) categories of biological
263 process, cellular component, and molecular function. Among these DEGs enriched in molecular
264 function, catalytic activity (GO: 0003824) was the most abundant (109), accounting for 72.19%,
265 while in the cellular component category, cell (GO: 0005623) and cell part (GO: 0044464) were the
266 most abundant (34.4%), and in the biological process category, metabolic process (GO: 0008152)
267 was the most abundant (94), accounting for 65.73% (Supplementary Figure 3).

268 **3.10 | Enrichment of DEGs in the KEGG database**

269 A total of 385 DEGs were enriched in the KEGG database and were related to metabolism,
270 environmental information processing, and cellular processes. The enriched DEGs found in the
271 KEGG database were mainly in categories such as “biosynthesis of secondary metabolites” (with a

272 *P*-value of 4.72E-06), “neuroactive ligand-receptor interaction” (*P*-value of 1.82E-05), “metabolic
273 pathways” (*P*-value of 3.94E-05), “lysosome” (*p*-value of 0.000223), “glycine, serine and threonine
274 metabolism” (*p*-value of 0.000385), and “drug metabolism – other enzymes” (*p*-value of 0.00055).
275 Additionally, the greatest number of unigenes enriched in metabolic pathways was 163 (Figure 6).

276 **3.11 | Screening the candidate genes**

277 The results showed that among 39,957 unigenes, 487 unigenes were involved in the detoxification
278 and metabolism of foreign substances, including 85 cytochrome P450s, 329 cytochrome
279 transporters, 45 glutathione *S*-transferases, and 28 carboxylesterases, enriching the detoxification
280 and metabolism genes of *S. exigua*. Compared with the SE-Sus strain, the SE-Sel strain exhibited
281 22 significantly up- or downregulated DEG unigenes, annotated as ABC transporters, transcription
282 factors, glutathione *S*-transferases, carboxylesterases, cytochrome P450s, juvenile hormone-binding
283 proteins, vitellogenin receptors, juvenile hormone diol kinases, sex peptide receptors, lebocin,
284 cecropin, neuropeptides, and neuropeptide receptors (Supplementary Table 2).

285 **3.12 | Quantitative PCR (qRT-PCR)**

286 The results indicated that the relative normalized expression levels of the ABC transporter
287 (*SeABCOK*), glutathione *S*-transferases (*SeGST15* and *SeGSTZ2*), carboxylesterases (*SeCarEs1*),
288 and cytochrome P450s (*CYP6AEW* and *SeCYP6AB10*) in the SE-Sel strain reached 3.27-, 3.81-,
289 3.64-, 2.25-, 2.70- and 2.98-fold, respectively and were significantly higher than those in the
290 SE-Sus strain ($P < 0.05$). In contrast, the relative normalized expression levels of the juvenile
291 hormone-binding protein *SeJHBWDS3*, vitellogenin receptor *SeVgR* and juvenile hormone diol
292 kinase *SeJHDK* in the SE-Sel strain were significantly decreased by 0.01-, 0.36-, and 0.31-fold ($P <$
293 0.05), whereas the sex peptide receptor *SeSPR*, neuropeptide *SeNPF*, and neuropeptide receptor
294 *SeNPFR* showed 3.04-, 4.33- and 16.39-fold increases, respectively, in the SE-Sel strain compared
295 with the SE-Sus strain ($P < 0.05$), and the relative normalized expression levels of the lebocin *SeLE*
296 and *SeLE2* genes and cecropin *SeCE* and *SeCEB* genes were significantly decreased by 0.84-, 0.78-,
297 0.26-, and 0.43-fold ($P < 0.05$) (Figure 7).

298 **3.13 | Neuropeptide diversity analysis**

299 Ten motifs (motif1~motif10), composed of highly conserved amino acid residues, were found in 63
300 *neuropeptide* amino acid sequences of *Drosophila melanogaster* and *Spodoptera* insects by meme
301 search (<http://meme-suite.org/tools/meme>). In contrast, 41 motifs annotated with different
302 functions were identified by motif search (<https://www.genome.jp/tools/motif/>) (e.g., Porin_5).
303 All *neuropeptide* genes exhibited the conserved structural domains of motif5 but multifarious
304 functional domains. Based on the structural domains and functional domains, the *neuropeptide*
305 genes were divided into different subfamilies, such as PBAN, FMRF, allatostatin, neuropeptide Y
306 and neuropeptide F. The PBAN (pheromone biosynthesis activating neuropeptide) family contains
307 PBAN functional domains and a highly conserved domain (consisting of motif5, motif1 motif4,
308 motif3, motif8, and motif2). The FMRF amide-related peptide family includes FARP functional
309 domains and highly conserved residues (consisting of Phe-Met-Arg-Phe-NH₂). The allatostatin
310 family has allatostatin functional domains and highly conserved residues (consisting of
311 Tyr/Phe-Xaa-Phe-Gly-Leu/Ile-NH₂), and it could inhibit juvenile hormone biosynthesis by the
312 corpora allata. Neuropeptide Y possesses PAH functional domains and a highly conserved domain
313 (consisting of motif5, motif1, and motif6). Neuropeptide F harbors N_NLPC_P60 and kinocilin
314 functional domains and a highly conserved domain (consisting of motif5, motif1, motif6, and
315 motif7). Not only highly homologous sequences but also functional domains, such as PAH
316 (pancreatic hormone domain, neuropeptide Y), were found in *AXY04281.1* (the sequences of
317 neuropeptide F2 in *S. exigua* downloaded from NCBI) and *SeNPF*. Therefore, these sequences were
318 similar in function, and GO annotation showed that both were classified as neuropeptides and that
319 *SeNPF* was classified as neuropeptide Y (Figure 8 and Supplementary Figure 4).

320 **3.14 | Statistics and annotation of SNPs and sequence analysis of the RyR genes**

321 Principal component analysis (PCA) and cluster dendrogram of the SNPs of six samples also
322 showed that there was a significant clustering relationship in the samples of the SE-Sus strains
323 (SE-Sus-1, SE-Sus-2, SE-Sus-3) and the SE-Sel strains (SE-Sel-1, SE-Sel-2, SE-Sel-3)
324 (Supplementary Figure 5A and Supplementary Figure 5B). Additionally, the degree of the
325 contribution of PC1 (60.3%) was significantly higher than that of PC2 (11.6%) (Supplementary
326 Figure 5A). Some SNPs in *Unigene0007287* and *Unigene0010376* mapped to the specific amino
327 acids 4631-4967 of RyR were identified through transcriptome data and sequence alignment

328 between the SE-Sus and the SE-Sel strains. The sequence mapped to the specific amino acids
329 4631-4967 of RyR showed that I4765M (ATA-ATG) in RyR was found in the SE-Sel strain
330 compared with the SE-Sus strain and ALL55470.1 in NCBI (Figure. 9).

331 **4 | DISCUSSION**

332 At present, the resistance of *S. exigua* to chlorantraniliprole is becoming increasingly serious.
333 Fortunately, the development of insecticide resistance is commonly accompanied by fitness costs,
334 along with the evolution of resistance (Ma et al., 2019). Ribeiro et al. (2013) revealed that the *P.*
335 *xylostella* of chlorantraniliprole-resistant field population presented a significantly lower larval
336 weight and fecundity than the susceptible strain when not exposed, suggesting a fitness cost
337 associated with resistance. When the resistant strain of *Nilaparvata lugens* was obtained by
338 continuous selection in the presence of nitenpyram, the resistant strain showed a lower intrinsic rate
339 of increase in the net reproductive rate, egg survival rate, and fecundity (eggs/female) compared to
340 the susceptible strain (Zhang et al., 2018). However, both of the resistant strains ImiLabSel and
341 ImiRes exhibited higher activities of cytochrome P450 monooxygenases by 72.3% and 40.5% and
342 severe fitness costs (reductions of 86% for ImiLabSel and 68.0% for ImiRes) (Castellanos et al.,
343 2019). Our data also indicated that the ability of potential oviposition and oviposition rate for per
344 female of the SE-Sel strain were significantly decreased when successively exposed to
345 chlorantraniliprole.

346 The formation and deposition of *Vg* is a fundamental step during the procedure of the
347 vitellogenesis of insects, which is a prerequisite for the regulation of insect reproduction and the
348 maturity of egg cell development (Amdam et al., 2010), and is traditionally considered a key factor
349 in the female fertility of insects (Zhao et al., 2018). The decreased expression of *Vg* exerted
350 negative impacts on the fecundity of *Chilo suppressalis* and *A. lucorum*, and there were
351 significantly positive linear correlations between *SeVg* and *SeVgR* expression in *S. exigua* (Huang et
352 al., 2016; Zhen et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2018). Our results demonstrated that the mRNA expression
353 levels of *SeVg* and *SeVgR* were significantly reduced in the SE-Sel strain compared with the SE-Sus
354 strain and were consistent with the number of potential ovipositions. Shu et al. (2011) and Zhao et
355 al. (2016) also revealed that *Vg* was expressed specifically in the female fat body and was

356 detectable after the 5th day of female pupation, then reached a maximum in 48-h-old or 36-h-old
357 female adults and started to decrease quickly, which was similar to our results.

358 The *Vg* contents in the ovary depend not only on uptake by *VgR* into oocytes during
359 vitellogenesis but also on its synthesis affected by various elements, such as ecdysone and juvenile
360 hormone (JH) (Hansen et al., 2015; Subala et al., 2017). Parthasarathy et al. (2010) confirmed that
361 JH directly regulated the synthesis of *Vg* in the fat body, and hibernation-triggered JH changes
362 resulted in the upregulation of *Vg1* and *Vg2* and the production of queens (Romain et al., 2013).
363 There is a significant relationship among JH titers and the biosynthesis of insect JHs is regulated by
364 juvenile hormone-binding proteins (transported to the target cells), juvenile hormone diol kinases
365 (catalyzes the formation of JHDP from JH diol) (Hidayat et al., 1994; Maxwell et al., 2002) and
366 neuropeptides, such as allatostatins (Stay and Tobe, 2007) and allatotropins (Elekonich and
367 Horodyski 2003). Neuropeptides also regulate the synthesis of *Vg*, and injections of corazonin
368 peptide caused a decrease in *Vg* mRNA levels (Gospocic et al., 2017). Our transcriptome data and
369 qRT-PCR results also indicated that the expression levels of *SeNPF* and *SeNPFR* were significantly
370 increased, even though those of the juvenile hormone-binding protein and juvenile hormone diol
371 kinase significantly decreased in the SE-Sel strain compared with the SE-Sus strain; this could
372 explain why the expression levels of *SeVg* and *SeVgR* in the SE-Sel strain were low.

373 Except for the difference in potential oviposition, the oviposition rate was also significantly
374 lower because most of the eggs of SE-Sel strain remained in the ovaries. Oviposition was stimulated
375 after copulation, known as the postmating responses (PMRs) in inseminated females, which was
376 mediated by the (sex-peptide) SP/SPR (sex-peptide receptor) system (Oh et al., 2014; Tsuda et al.,
377 2016). PMRs require SPR in a limited number of sensory neurons in the female reproductive organ,
378 and the knockdown of *SPR* in either fruitless or pickpocket expressing neurons fails to induce PMR
379 after mating (Hasemeyer et al., 2009). However, the expression levels of *SeSPR*, *SeNPF*, and
380 *SeNPFR* in virgin adults of the SE-Sus strain were significantly increased compared with the
381 SE-Sus strain. Then, neuropeptide F expression levels and intracellular Ca²⁺ activity (as an indicator
382 of neural activation) in NPF neurons were altered by the animal's mating status (Yao et al., 2012;
383 Shohat-Ophir et al., 2012; Gao et al., 2015). Liu et al. (2019) found that knocking out *NPF*, a
384 homolog of the mammalian neuropeptide Y, or suppressing the activity of NPF neurons reduced the

385 inhibition of courtship behavior in sexually satiated males. Tuelher et al. (2017) also found that
386 chlorantraniliprole-treated males coupled with untreated females exhibited a higher number of
387 mating events because the release and depletion of Ca^{2+} might affect the activity of NPF neurons.
388 Phylogenetic tree analyses and gene molecular structure comparisons showed that there was high
389 homology between neuropeptide F2 *AXY04281.1* and neuropeptide *SeNPF*. All neuropeptide F and
390 neuropeptide Y family members in *Drosophila melanogaster* and *Spodoptera* insects had motif5,
391 motif6, and motif1, but other neuropeptide families did not have a similar structure. Therefore, we
392 speculate that the upregulation of neuropeptide *SeNPF* resulted in a lower probability of mating and
393 oviposition rate and may be the direct cause of the fitness cost of the SE-Sel strain. Gospocic et al.
394 (2017) found that the overexpression of neuropeptide and neuropeptide receptor stimulated insect
395 feeding and increased body weights of pupae and adults, similar to our results. The expression of
396 antimicrobial peptides, small cationic peptides with broad-spectrum antimicrobial activities that are
397 mainly synthesized by adipose somatic cells, such as lebecin and cecropin, could be induced by
398 mating (Lawniczak and Begun, 2004; McGraw et al., 2004), which is also similar to our results.

399 Our results of transcriptome analysis and cloning revealed the RyR^{I4765M} mutation in the
400 SE-Sel strain. Mutation in RyR (such as T4826I) could cause a gain-of-function, i.e., Ca^{2+} leakage
401 from the sarcoplasmic reticulum (Lyfenko et al., 2004; Robinson et al., 2006), which regulates
402 neuropeptide activation (James et al., 2014; McKinney et al., 2016; Truong et al., 2019).
403 Chlorantraniliprole engaged critical residues within the C-terminal transmembrane assembly, in
404 particular, the amino acids 4610-4946 and 4631-4967 in *S. exigua*, according to BLAST analysis
405 (Tao et al., 2013). The wicked evolution of these regions in targets made it less susceptible to the
406 action of the pesticide (Gould et al., 2018). Guo et al. (2014a and 2014b) discovered that there was
407 a significant correlation between the frequency of mutation (G4946E and I4790M) in RyR and the
408 chlorantraniliprole resistance ratios in *P. xylostella*. The RyR^{G4946E} mutation introduced with
409 CRISPR/Cas9 technology into the susceptible strain of *S. exigua* led to 223-fold resistance to
410 chlorantraniliprole (Zuo et al., 2017). In addition to target-mediated resistance, the overexpression
411 of detoxification metabolism genes, MFOs, carboxylesterases (CarEs), glutathione *S*-transferases
412 (GSTs) and ABC transporters, increases the efficiency of an enzyme that degrades the insecticide
413 (Chen et al. 2012; Hu et al., 2014; Tian et al., 2014; Lu et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2018a; Xu et al.,

2019). Our transcriptome data and qRT-PCR results also indicated that ABC transporter *SeABCOK*, glutathione S-transferases *SeGST15* and *SeGSTZ2*, carboxylesterases *SeCarEs1*, and cytochrome P450s *CYP6AEW* and *SeCYP6AB10* were clearly upregulated in the SE-Sel strain. However, Silva et al. (2019) found that the wicked evolution of RyR led to the increase in the resistance to chlorantraniliprole in the tomato pinworm *Tuta absoluta* rather than enhanced detoxification. Thus, the evolution of RyR might have a greater impact on resistance evolution, but this requires further verification. Therefore, the increase of the resistance to chlorantraniliprole in the SE-Sel strain, accompanied by the fitness cost, was the result of the wicked evolution of RyR, but how RyR mutation affects the upregulation of neuropeptides and induces a fitness cost requires further verification.

5 | CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of our results, the main findings showed that *S. exigua* would likely further improve in resistance to chlorantraniliprole, owing to the upregulation of detoxification enzymes, such as ABC transporters, GSTs, CarEs and P450s, and the wicked evolution of RyR. However, we also showed that the fitness costs were accompanied by the development of insecticide resistance; for example, the potential oviposition and the oviposition rate of the SE-Sel strain were significantly lower than those of the SE-Sus strain because the expression of *SeVg* and *SeVgR* in the SE-Sel strain were always lower than those in the SE-Sus strain. Moreover, the RyR mutation could affect the activities of neuropeptides, it conducted to the upregulated expression of the neuropeptide *SeNPF* and its receptor, *SeNPFR*, which could inhibit courtship behavior and reduce oviposition. And the neuropeptide *SeNPF* could influence the expression of *juvenile hormone-binding protein* and *juvenile hormone diol kinase*, and it led to the downregulated expression of *SeVg*. Therefore, these results indicate that the fitness cost accompanied by chlorantraniliprole resistance in *S. exigua* is related to the wicked evolution of RyR. We also found that the relative normalized expression of leucokinin and cecropin was significantly decreased; therefore, the combination of RyR activator insecticide and insect virus preparation might be more effective in controlling insect resistance.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section.

TABLE 1 Primers of differentially expressed gene for qRT-PCR

Gene	Prime	Squence (5'-3')	Length
<i>SeSPR</i>	4099-F	AGAGCGTGTCAAGCATGGAA	142
	4099-R	TTGTACACCATGTCCGAGCG	
<i>CYP6AEW</i>	4495-F	AAAAAGAATGTACCGCACGCC	148
	4495-R	CCGTTCCGTAGTAAGCTCCA	
<i>SeLE2</i>	5787-F	CATCCTGGATATAATCGACGCA	113

	5787-R	CTAGCTGCTCCCAATTGCTC	
<i>SeABCG23</i>	6176-F	TGGAAGCTACGGAGCACTTG	124
	6176-R	GGTCCAGCGAAGTCAGTCAA	
<i>SeTF</i>	8289-F	TGTGATGTTGAGGATGTACCGA	137
	8289-R	TCGTCAAAATCAGATGGCAAGC	
<i>SeSp9</i>	9845-F	GCTGAAATGAGCGGCGTTAG	199
	9845-R	GTGTTGGCAGCACAGACTTG	
<i>SeCEB</i>	11921-F	CTCCCGAGCCACGATGGAAA	105
	11921-R	CTGATCCCACAACGGCCACT	
<i>SeVgR</i>	12209-F	CCCAGGAAGAGAATGTTAGCGA	116
	12209-R	GGTAGATACCTTGAGGGGTGC	
<i>SeABCOK</i>	15443-F	GCTGGTAGTATGCTCGGTCC	106
	15443-R	TTCAATGGTCCCGTGGAAGG	
<i>SeJHBWDS3</i>	16076-F	CTAGTAACGCAAGCCACGGT	145
	16076-R	GAACTTCGGTGCCAACCTCT	
<i>SeJHDK</i>	18681-F	ACACTGGCACATCGACAACCT	146
	18681-R	CACGCATAACATCACGCCAG	
<i>SeJHBAN</i>	18636-F	CAAGAACCCATCCGAAGCCT	149
	18636-R	CCACAGCCTCGTCTTTGTCT	
<i>SeGST15</i>	19590-F	CCCGGAGGTGTAGCCAAAAT	169
	19590-R	TGTTGGGGTACGTTGCTTCA	
<i>SeLE</i>	19665-F	GACATCAAGCTGGACCCCAA	126
	19665-R	GTTGTACCCCGGATGAGTGG	
<i>SeGST1</i>	20364-F	CCGTGCCATCAGCAGATACT	182
	20364-R	CATCGTCAGCTTTTGCTCCG	
<i>SeGSTZ2</i>	21647-F	AGGGAACTCTGTGAGGTGGT	124
	21647-R	TTAAGCCACGGTCAGTCCAG	
<i>SeCarEs1</i>	27390-F	TCGATGTGCTCGGCTTTCTT	120
	27390-R	GGTCACCACCGAAGTTAGCA	

<i>SeCE</i>	28139-F	TTCTCTCGTGTGTTTTTGTGTTGTT	84
	28139-R	GACCTTCCATCTTGGTTCTGGC	
<i>SeCYP6AB10</i>	34483-F	TTCATCGGTGTCTGCGCATT	131
	34483-R	ATAATCTTCAGGGCACCGGC	
<i>SeNPFR</i>	35241-F	TAGGCGAGGCTTCAAACAGG	132
	35241-R	CGCCGCGTCATACCATTTAC	
<i>SeNPF</i>	38343-F	GAACGTTTCGACACTGCTGA	130
	38343-R	CTCTGAAGATCACGGAGGCA	
<i>vitellogenin</i>	Vg-F	CACTCTGCCGTATCTCGCAT	130
	Vg-R	GTTGAACGTGGCTGTGAACC	
<i>actin</i>	Actin-F	AGGGAAATCGTGCGTGACAT	120
	Actin-R	GACCGTCGGGAAGTTCGTAG	

TABLE 2 Primers of partial *RyR* for clone

Gene	Prime	Squence (5'-3')
<i>RyR</i>	RyRs-F	GCAAGCTCAAGAGCGTATGG
	RyRs-R	CGGTAGACCTCGGAGTCATC

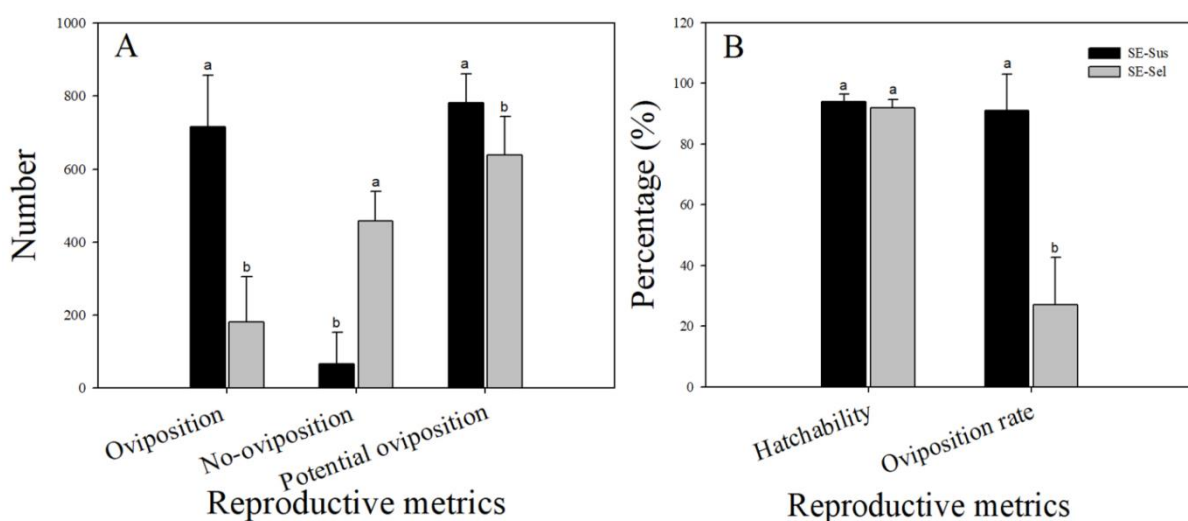
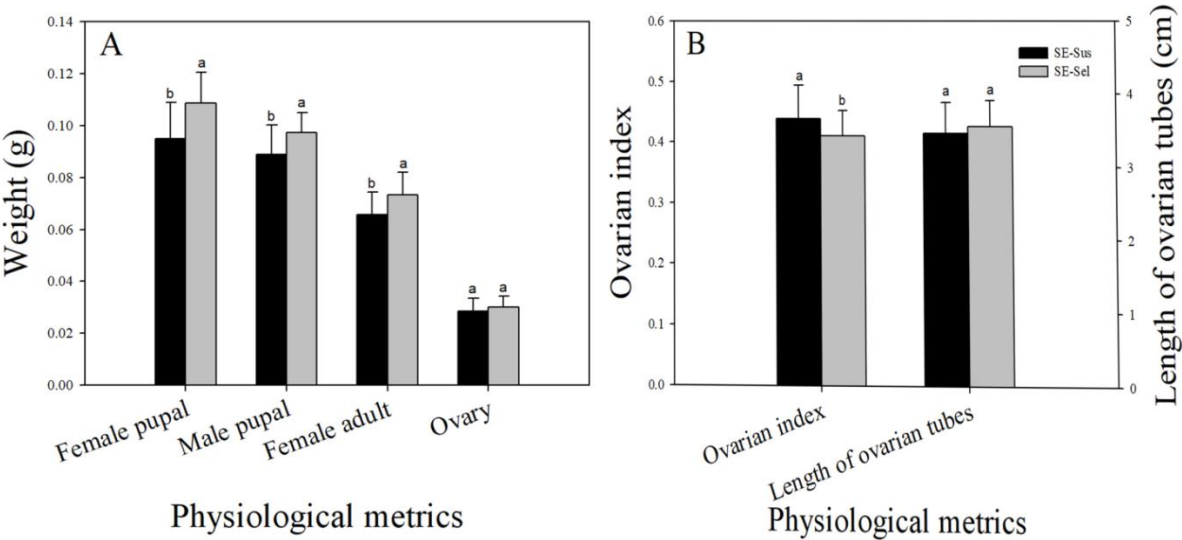


FIGURE 1 The Comparison and statistics of capacity between SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains. A—The

669 numbers of oviposition, no-oviposition and potential oviposition; B—The hatchability and
 670 oviposition rate. Means followed by the same letters did not differ significantly ($P > 0.05$)
 671 according to Duncan's multiple range test. The $F_{1,14}$ values of different treatments on the number of
 672 oviposition, no-oviposition, potential oviposition and oviposition rate of *S. exigua* were 65.324,
 673 85.618, 9.277, 86.205, and the P -values on the numbers of oviposition, no-oviposition, potential
 674 oviposition and oviposition rate of *S. exigua* were $= 0.000 < 0.01$, $= 0.000 < 0.01$, $= 0.009 < 0.01$, $=$
 675 $0.000 < 0.01$, respectively. While the $F_{1,18}$ values of hatchability of SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains was
 676 3.298, and the P values was $= 0.086 > 0.05$.



677 **Physiological metrics**
 678 **FIGURE 2** The comparison of physiological metrics and ovariole index between SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains.
 679 A—The weight of female pupal, male pupal, female adult and ovary; B—The ovarian index and length of ovarian
 680 tubes. Different letters (a, b) above bars indicate significant differences ($P < 0.05$), and means followed by the
 681 same letters did not differ significantly ($P > 0.05$) according to Duncan's multiple range test. The $F_{1,78}$ values of
 682 the weight of female pupal, male pupal, female adult and ovary, the ovarian index and the length of ovarian tubes
 683 of SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains were 15.703, 21.938, 16.333, 1.859, 6.517, 1.092, and the P -values on the weight of
 684 female pupal, male pupal, female adult and ovary, the ovarian index and the length of ovarian tubes of *S. exigua*
 685 were $= 0.000 < 0.01$, $= 0.000 < 0.01$, $= 0.000 < 0.01$, $= 0.177 > 0.05$, $= 0.013 < 0.05$, $= 0.299 > 0.05$, respectively.

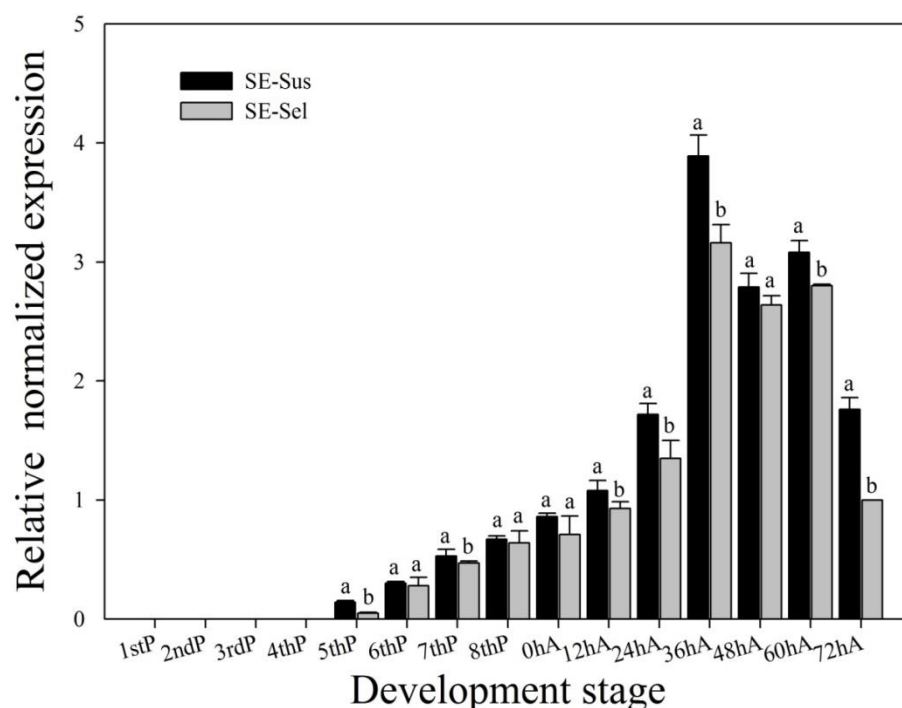


FIGURE 3 The relative normalized expression of *SeVg* gene at different development stages of in the SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains. Different letters (a, b) above bars indicate significant differences ($P < 0.05$) according to Duncan's multiple range test. The $F_{1,4}$ values of the relative expression qualities of *SeVg* genes of SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains at 5thP, 6thP, 7thP, 8thP, 0hA, 12hA, 24hA, 36hA, 48hA, 60hA, 72hA were 72.200, 8.977, 4.327, 2.118, 2.801, 10.075, 13.818, 43.361, 5.400, 47.040, 353.633, and the P -values on the relative expression qualities of *SeVg* genes of SE-Sus and SE-Sel strains at 5thP, 6thP, 7thP, 8thP, 0hA, 12hA, 24hA, 36hA, 48hA, 60hA, 72hA were $=0.013 > 0.05$, $=0.096 > 0.05$, $=0.173 > 0.05$, $=0.283 > 0.05$, $=0.170 > 0.05$, $=0.034 < 0.05$, $=0.021 < 0.05$, $=0.003 < 0.01$, $=0.081 > 0.05$, $=0.002 < 0.01$, $=0.000 < 0.01$, respectively.

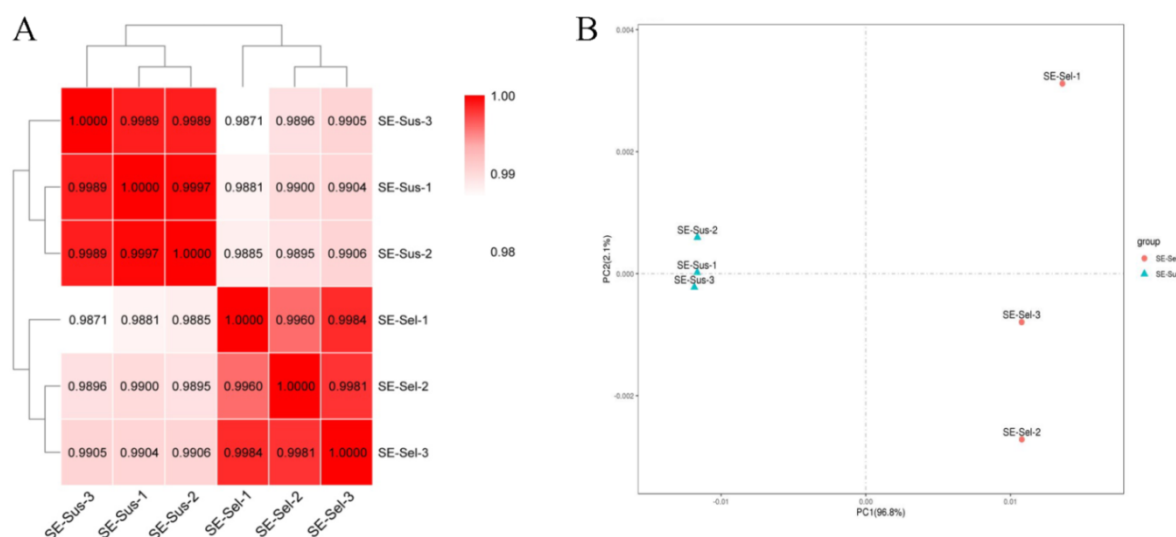


FIGURE 4 Heat map and principal component analysis (PCA) of gene expression levels in the six samples. A—Heat map; B—Principal component analysis (PCA). In the Fig. 4A, the darker the color is, the greater the correlation is.

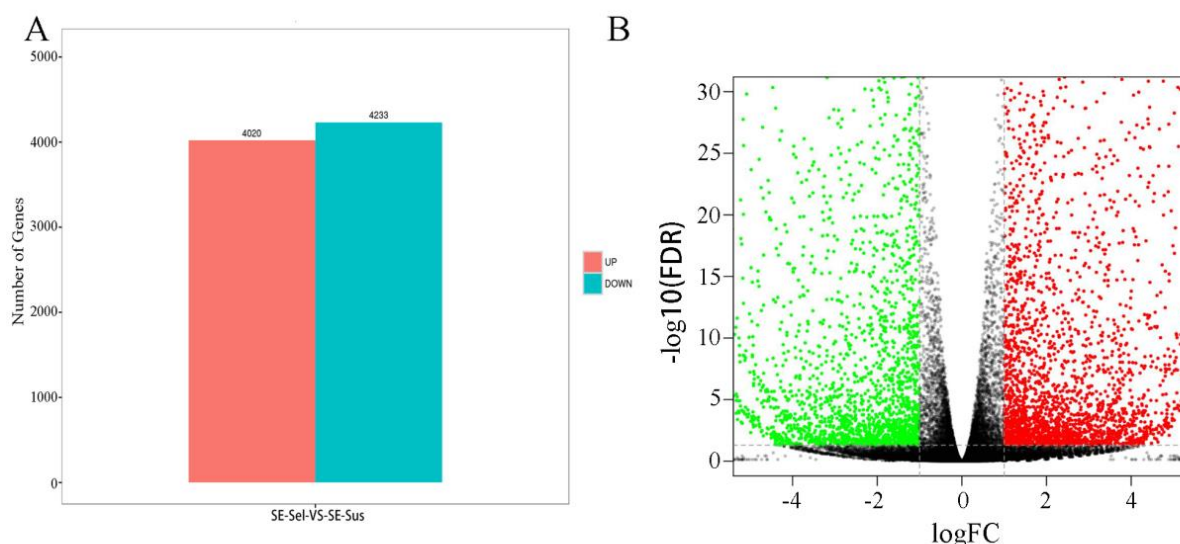


FIGURE 5 The statistical maps and volcano plot of DEGs among SE-Sel -vs- SE-Sus. A—The statistical maps; B—The volcano plot. In the Fig. 5B, color-scaled represents \log_2 (fold change) values for resistant lines, red indicates up-regulated genes, green indicates down-regulated genes, and black indicates genes with no difference in expression.

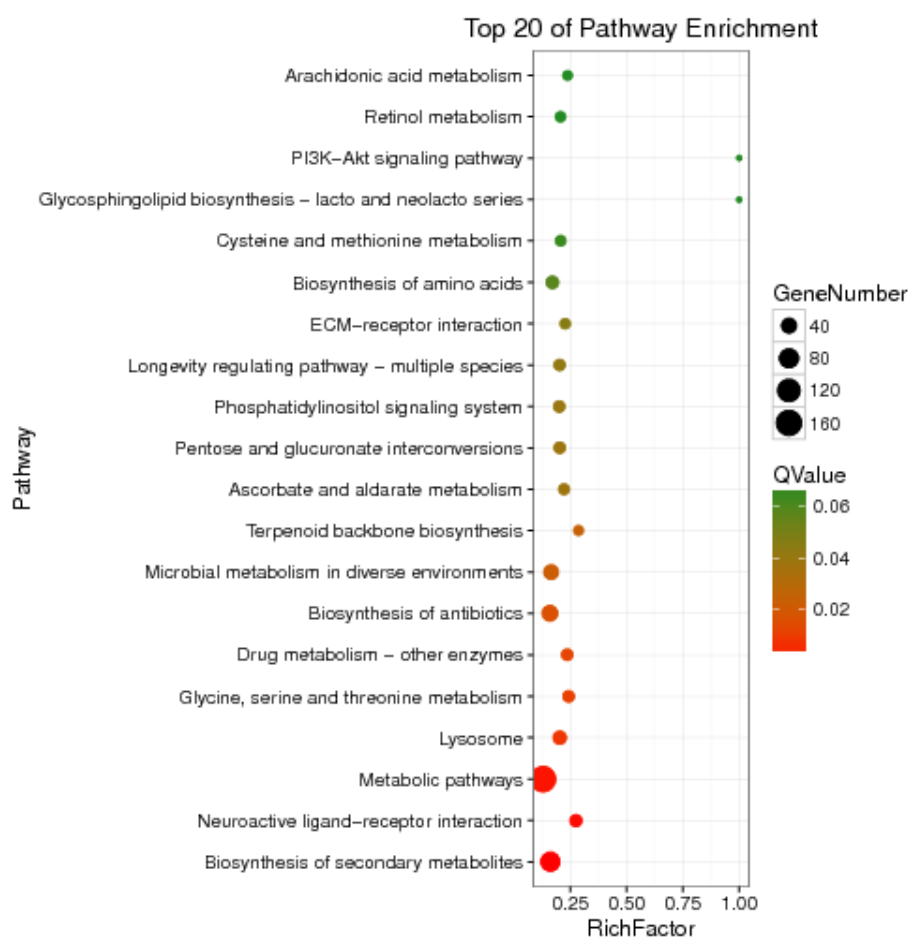


FIGURE 6 Bubble diagram of pathway enrichment of unigene on the different groups (Top 20). The abscissa means KEGG terms, and the ordinate means rich factor of each term. Red color means the terms of significant enrichment, and the bubble size indicates the number of enriched genes.

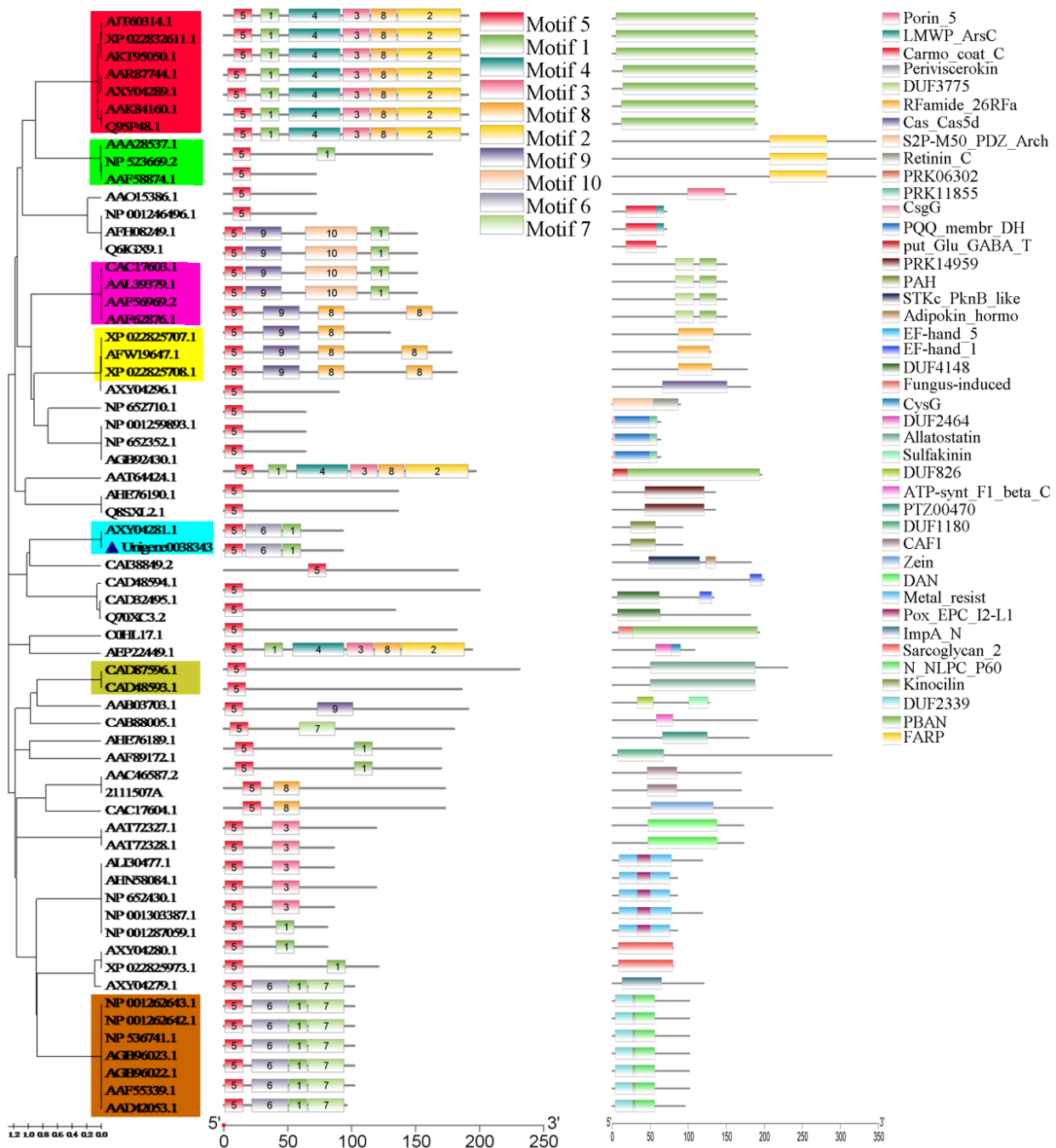
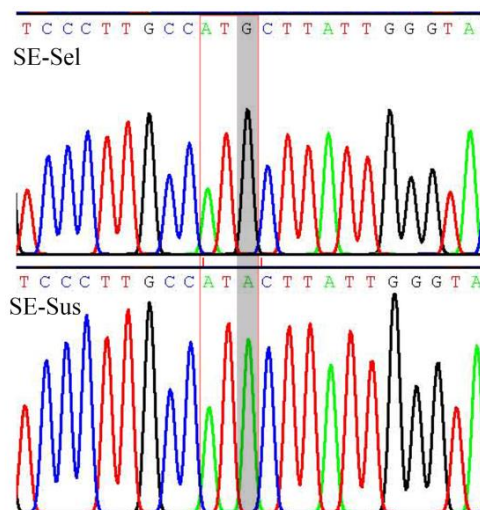


FIGURE 8 Phylogenetic tree of *neuropeptide* gene family constructed by NJ method and gene molecular structure map predicted by motif search and meme. In the phylogenetic tree, red-marked areas represents the PBAN family, green-marked areas represents the FMRF family; purple-marked areas represents the PBAN family with the adjunction of DUF3775 functional domains, brown-marked areas represents the neuropeptide F family in, tan-marked areas represents the Allatostatin family, blue-marked areas represents the neuropeptide Y family.



731

732 **FIGURE 9** Peak map of cloned partial sequence of RyR in SE-Sel and SE-Sus strains, the box
 733 marked with black solid line indicates the mutation area, similarly hereinafter.