

1 **Broflanilide prolongs the development of fall armyworm *Spodoptera frugiperda* by**
2 **regulating biosynthesis of juvenile hormone**

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19 **Abstract:** Broflanilide, a novel meta-diamide insecticide, has been registered worldwide to
20 control agricultural pests, and cause negative influence to insect under not only lethal but also
21 sublethal level in the field. Fall armyworm (FAW) *Spodoptera frugiperda* is a worldwide
22 distributed insect frequently controlled by using insecticides, and the potential regulating
23 mechanism of broflanilide on this key insect prompt careful characterization. In the present
24 study, we exposed FAW larvae to sublethal dose (LD₅), low lethal doses (LD₁₀ and LD₃₀) and
25 median lethal dose (LD₅₀) of broflanilide and measured various subsequent physiological
26 sublethal effects. FAW larvae body length became shorter (LD₅-LD₅₀), the larvae and pupae
27 duration were increased by 0.96-4.63 days (LD₅-LD₅₀), and the juvenile hormone (JH) titer
28 significantly increased up to 134.46% (LD₁₀-LD₃₀). Meanwhile, the JH acid methyltransferase
29 gene (*JHAMT*) and farnesyl diphosphate synthase 1 (*FPPS1*), which are critical enzymes of
30 JH biosynthesis, increased by 2.07- and 2.18- fold in LD₁₀ broflanilide-treated group, and by
31 2.22- and 1.78- fold in LD₃₀ broflanilide-treated group in 3rd day larvae of FAW, respectively.
32 In the 12-hour-old adults, *SfrFPPS1* increased to 1.92-fold in LD₃₀ broflanilide-treated group.
33 Broflanilide induced multiple physiological sublethal effects on the biosynthesis of JH by
34 regulating the expression of *SfrFPPS* and *SfrJHAMT* genes in FAW and likely in other insects
35 (both pests and non-target organisms). Therefore, its potential for Integrated Pest
36 Management should be further assessed.

37 **Keywords:** sublethal effect; hormone titer; juvenile hormone acid methyltransferase gene;
38 farnesyl diphosphate synthase gene; mRNA levels

39

40 **1 Introduction**

41 Broflanilide is a novel meta-diamide insecticide that shows high insecticidal activity on
42 insect pests, e.g. on cotton bollworm *Helicoverpa armigera* (Hübner), rice stem borer *Chilo*
43 *suppressalis* Walker, common cutworm *Spodoptera litura* Fabricius, beet armyworm
44 *Spodoptera exigua* (Hübner) and cotton leafworm *Spodoptera littoralis* (Boisduval). In 2021,
45 it has been used in China for control of the diamondback moth *Plutella xylostella* (Linnaeus)
46 and the flea beetle *Phyllotreta vittata* Fabr. (AgroNews, 2021; Katsuta et al., 2019; Qi et al.,
47 2017). The activity of broflanilide depends on its demethylation product acting on insect
48 γ -aminobutyric acid (GABA) receptor (GABAR) with unique mode of action (Nakao &
49 Banba, 2016).

50 To date, application of insecticides is still the critical measure to prevent the outbreak of
51 agricultural pests. However, large-scale usage of insecticides usually caused unpredictable
52 disadvantages in the field, such as insecticidal resistance, population growth, community
53 structure, environmental pollution and sublethal effects on organisms (Desneux et al., 2007;
54 Lira et al., 2020; Mansouri et al., 2017; Meng et al., 2020; Qu et al., 2020; Shen et al., 2021;
55 Xu et al., 2017). Lethal, sublethal and transgenerational hormesis effects are commonly used
56 insecticides. Insects are exposed to low concentrations in the field after initial application, i.e.
57 the pesticides degrade daily after field application (da Silva et al., 2021). Insecticide doses (or
58 concentrations) targeting pests may have sublethal effect to beneficial insects due to
59 environmental factors and metabolic process (Desneux et al., 2007). Exposure to lethal or
60 sublethal doses of insecticides could influence the whole lifecycle of insects, including
61 growth, development, reproduction and lifespan, *etc.* (Han et al., 2012; Lai & Su, 2011; Shen
62 et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2017). For example, in *Frankliniella occidentalis* (Pergande), the egg
63 stages was decreased and the preadult duration, adult longevity, pre-oviposition and total
64 pre-oviposition period was shorted at sublethal concentrations of spirotetramat (Liang et al.,

65 2021). The sublethal concentrations of chlorantraniliprole prolonged larval duration and
66 reduced hatching rate of eggs in *S. exigua* (Lai & Su, 2011), decreased survival rate and
67 reproduction in *P. xylostella* (Han et al., 2012). The mean generation time of F₁ melon aphid
68 *Aphis gossypii* Glover was extended after F₀ exposure to the low lethal and sublethal
69 concentration of imidacloprid (Ullah et al., 2019). They can also drive habitat changes, induce
70 hormesis effects in key pests, resistance development, modulate both direct and indirect
71 interactions among species within food webs, and lead to secondary pest outbreaks (Paula et
72 al., 2021; Desneux et al., 2007; Liang et al., 2021; Qu et al., 2020; Ullah et al., 2019; Ullah et
73 al., 2021).

74 The fall armyworm (FAW), *Spodoptera frugiperda* Smith & Abbot (Lepidoptera: Noctuidae)
75 is one of the most destructive crop pests worldwide due to its polyphagous nature and
76 voracity of feeding (Day et al., 2017; Kebede & Shimalis, 2019; Montezano et al., 2018).
77 Since broflanilide will be used worldwide and may cause potential negative effect to
78 environment and organisms, the sublethal effects on growth and development of FAW,
79 juvenile hormone (JH) titer, and the change in expression of JH biosynthesis related genes, JH
80 acid methyltransferase (*JHAMT*) and farnesyl diphosphate synthase (*FPPS*), were evaluated
81 after FAW were treated with sublethal and lethal doses of broflanilide to explore the
82 regulation mechanism of broflanilide to insect *in vivo*.

83

84 **2. Materials and methods**

85 **2.1 FAW and broflanilide**

86 FAW was collected from Guangdong province (113°E, 23°N) in April 2019, and reared with
87 a standard artificial food at temperature of 26 ± 2 °C, relative humidity (RH) of 60-70 % and
88 photoperiod of 16:8 h (light: dark). Broflanilide with technical grade (purity > 98.67 %) was
89 obtained from BASF Corporation (Florham Park, NJ, USA).

90

91 **2.2 Treatment of FAW with sublethal and lethal doses of broflanilide**

92 Third instar FAW larvae were treated with sublethal dose 5% (LD₅), low lethal doses (LD₁₀
93 and LD₃₀) and median lethal dose (LD₅₀) of broflanilide, respectively as described previously
94 (Jia et al., 2020; Meng et al., 2020). Briefly, broflanilide was dissolved in acetone,
95 subsequently diluted in 0.1% Tween-80 solution (1:1, v/v), and then mixed with 100-fold
96 volume of fresh artificial food (v/v) with final concentrations of 0.056 (LD₅), 0.074 (LD₁₀),
97 0.132 (LD₃₀) and 0.199 (LD₅₀) mg kg⁻¹ (Zhan et al., 2021). The artificial food containing
98 broflanilide was cut into slices and put into 12-well-plates. Three hundred FAW larvae were
99 used for bioassay, and sixty FAW larvae were divided into three technical repetitions for each
100 concentration. FAW larvae treated with artificial food containing only acetone and 0.1%
101 Tween-80 was used as control. Three days later, the body length of survival FAW was
102 measured, and then the FAWs were transferred into another 12-well-plate containing a new
103 artificial food without broflanilide, acetone or Tween-80. The duration of larvae and pupae of
104 broflanilide-treated larvae was also counted.

105 For biochemical and molecular assays, the 3rd instar FAW larvae were individually
106 transferred into 12-well-plates containing artificial food with LD₁₀ or LD₃₀ broflanilide, and
107 the artificial food containing only acetone and 0.1% Tween-80 was used as control. Two
108 hundred 3rd instar larvae were used for each treatment. Three days later, survival FAW larvae
109 were transferred into another 12-well-plate containing a fresh artificial food without
110 broflanilide, acetone or Tween-80. Six survival larvae at 3rd day (3rd day larvae), pre-pupae,
111 female pupae at 1st day (1st day pupae), 3rd day (3rd day pupae) and 5th day (5th day pupae),
112 and female adults at 0th hour (newly emerged adults), 12 hours (12-hour-old adults) and 1st
113 day (1st day adults) were collected, immediately frozen in liquid nitrogen, and stored in the
114 -80 °C refrigerator. Six individuals from each group were collected in triplicate.

115

116 **2.3 Measurement of JH titer**

117 FAW samples were ground into powder using pre-cooled pestles and mortars, and the titers
118 of JH was measured with the Insect JH ELISA Kit (Shanghai Enzyme-linked Biotechnology
119 Co., Ltd, Shanghai, CHN) (Liu, 2019). Briefly, 100 mg ground powder was mixed with 900
120 μ L ice-cold phosphate buffered solution (PBS, 0.01M, pH=7.4), and centrifuged for 5 min at
121 5,000 g to obtain the supernatant. Firstly, in the reaction well of microtiter plate, the
122 supernatant, standard substance and 100 μ L enzyme conjugate were mixed and incubated for
123 60 minutes at 37 °C. Secondly, the reaction wells were treated with washing solution for 5
124 times. Thirdly, 50 μ L of substrate A and 50 μ L substrate B were added into each reaction well,
125 gently mixed and incubated for 15 min at 37 °C without light. Fourthly, 50 μ L stop solution
126 was added into each reaction well and the optical density (OD) was read at 450 nm using a
127 Microtiter Plate Reader Rayto, RT-6100 (Rayto Life and Analytical Sciences Co., Ltd,
128 Shenzhen, Guangdong province, CHN) within 15 minutes. Finally, the standard curve is
129 generated by plotting the average OD_{450nm} obtained for each of six standard concentrations on
130 the vertical (X) axis versus the corresponding concentration on the horizontal (Y) axis, and
131 the JH titers were calculated according to the standard curve.

132

133 **2.4 Cloning and analysis of JHAMT and FPPS genes**

134 Total RNA was extracted using TRIzol[®] Reagent (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA) and purified
135 using the RNA Clean Kit (TianGen Biotech (Beijing) Co., Ltd, Beijing, CHN). The
136 complementary DNA (cDNA) was reverse - transcribed by the PrimeScript[™] RT reagent Kit
137 with gDNA Eraser (Takara Biomedical Technology Co. Ltd, Beijing) (Jia et al., 2020). Three
138 putative genes related to JH synthesis were identified from a published FAW transcriptome
139 (GenBank: GESP00000000.1) using the BLAST with amino acid query sequences from

140 *Bombyx mori* Moore [GenBank accession number: NP_001036901.1 (*BmJHAMT*),
141 BAF62113.1 (*BmFPPS1*) and NP_001093301.1 (*BmFPPS2*)]. The open reading frames
142 (ORFs) of these genes were amplified using the specific primers (Table S1) and 2 × Phanta[®]
143 Max Master Mix (Vazyme Biotech Co., Ltd, Nanjing, CHN). The amplified DNA products
144 were purified using the *EasyPure*[®] PCR Purification Kit (TransGen Biotech Co., Ltd, Beijing),
145 ligated into the *pEASY*[®]-Blunt 3 Cloning Vector (TransGen Biotech Co., Ltd), transferred into
146 *Trans1*-T1 Phage Resistant Chemically Competent Cells (TransGen Biotech Co., Ltd) and
147 sequenced using the Sanger sequencing (BGI Tech Solutions Co., Limited, Beijing).

148

149 The sequenced nucleotides were analyzed using DNAMAN 7 software (Lynnon
150 Corporation, San Ramon, CA) and conserved domains were predicted by alignment to other
151 published orthologs. The confirmed amino acid sequences were also aligned with those from
152 other insects to construct phylogenetic trees with 1000 bootstrap replications using MEGA 7
153 (Kumar et al., 2016), and the neighbor-joining method was used to evaluate the branch
154 strength of each tree. The phylogenetic trees were annotated using the EvolView
155 (<https://www.evolgenius.info>) (He et al., 2016).

156

157 **2.5 Detection of mRNA relative expression**

158 The relative mRNA expression levels of the putative JH synthesis genes in eight
159 developmental stages of FAW and in broflanilide-treated FAW were measured by real-time
160 quantitative polymerase chain reaction (RT-qPCR). For RT-qPCR reaction, 20 μL reactions
161 were performed on a Quant Studio[™] 6 Flex Real-Time PCR System (Life Technologies
162 Corporation, Carlsbad, CA) using TB Green[®] *Premix Ex Taq*[™] (Tli RNaseH Plus) (Takara
163 Biomedical Technology Co., Ltd) (Jia et al., 2020). The relative mRNA expression levels of
164 the putative genes were calculated using the $2^{-\Delta\Delta C_t}$ method (Livak & Schmittgen, 2001).

165 Primers for putative genes and reference gene (Table S1) were designed by Beacon Designer
166 8.13 (Premier Biosoft International, Palo Alto, CA).

167

168 **2.6 Statistical analysis**

169 Values for insect body length, larvae and pupae duration, ~~relative~~ JH titer and relative
170 mRNA levels were shown as mean \pm standard error (SE), and the statistical figures were
171 generated by GraphPad 5 (GraphPad Software, Inc., La Jolla, CA). Significant differences
172 were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 22 (International Business Machines Corporation,
173 Armonk, NY) by one-way ANOVA with Tukey tests, and values were considered statistically
174 significant when $P < 0.05$.

175

176 **3 Results**

177 **3.1 Broflanilide reduced larvae body length and prolonged development duration of** 178 **FAW**

179 The 3rd instar FAW larvae were treated with sublethal, low lethal and median lethal doses of
180 broflanilide, and the body length of FAW was measured at 3rd day after treatment. Compared
181 to the control group, the body length was significantly shorter in broflanilide-treated group
182 (Fig. S1). The average body length of FAW were decreased to 12.15 (LD₅), 11.37 (LD₁₀), 9.86
183 (LD₃₀) and 7.11 (LD₅₀) mm from 16.21 mm (control) ($F = 321.908$, $df = 4, 249$, $P < 0.0001$;
184 Fig. 1).

185

186 Compared with the control group, the duration of larvae was significantly prolonged for
187 1.02, 1.13, 2.34 and 4.63 days in LD₅, LD₁₀, LD₃₀ and LD₅₀ broflanilide-treated group,
188 respectively ($F = 115.028$, $df = 4, 189$, $P < 0.0001$; Fig. 2A), and the duration of pupae was
189 prolonged for 0.96, 1.38, 2.31 and 3.63 days, respectively ($F = 63.734$, $df = 4, 177$, $P <$

190 0.0001; Fig. 2B).

191

192 **3.2 Broflanilide induced the JH titer in FAW**

193 The JH titer in LD₁₀ and LD₃₀ broflanilide-treated FAW were determined (Fig. 3).
194 Compared with the control group, the JH titer in all tested stages including 3rd larvae ($F =$
195 406.984, $df = 2, 6$, $P < 0.0001$), prepupae ($F = 56.880$, $df = 2, 6$, $P < 0.0001$), 1st day pupae ($F =$
196 246.415, $df = 2, 6$, $P < 0.0001$), 3rd day pupae ($F = 63.770$, $df = 2, 6$, $P < 0.0001$), 5th day
197 pupae ($F = 341.477$, $df = 2, 6$, $P < 0.0001$), newly emerged adults ($F = 271.597$, $df = 2, 6$, $P <$
198 0.0001), 12-hour-old adults ($F = 237.408$, $df = 2, 6$, $P < 0.0001$) and 1st day adults ($F =$
199 80.789, $df = 2, 6$, $P < 0.0001$) were significantly increased to 22.32%-116.76% in LD₁₀ group,
200 and 37.94%-134.46% in LD₃₀ group, respectively. Compared with the LD₃₀
201 broflanilide-treated group, the JH titer in LD₁₀ broflanilide-treated group was lower at 3rd
202 instar larvae and higher at 5th day pupae, newly emerged adults, 12-hour-old adults and 1st day
203 adults.

204

205 **3.3 Isolation and characterizations of *JHAMT* and *FPPS* from FAW**

206 The full-length of cDNA of *SfrFPPS1*, *SfrFPPS2* and *SfrJHAMT* were cloned by RT-PCR.
207 The ORF of *SfrJHAMT* contains 816 base pair (bp) encoding 271 amino acid residues with a
208 conserved SAM binding motif (motif I) hh(D/E)hGxGxG (at position 38-46, Fig. S2A),
209 where of “h” represents a hydrophobic amino acid residue. The ORFs of *SfrFPPS1* and
210 *SfrFPPS2* contain 1,287 and 1,056 bp, respectively, encoding 428 and 351 amino acid
211 residues that contain the first-aspartate rich motif (FARM) (NDIME, N178-E182 for
212 *SfrFPPS1*; and DMIMD, D102-D106 for *SfrFPPS2*) and second-aspartate rich motif (SARM)
213 (DDFLD, D318-D322 for *SfrFPPS1*; and DDYID, D241-D245 for *SfrFPPS2*) (Fig. S2B).

214 *SfrJHAMT* shares the highest amino acid identity with *BmJHAMT* (52.52%) and 50.29%

215 and 48.25% amino acid identities in pairwise comparisons with *DpJHAMT* and *HaJHAMT*,
216 respectively (Fig. S3A). The deduced amino acid of *SfrFPPS1* showed 91.59%, 85.28% and
217 83.88% identities with *HaFPPS1*, *PxFPPS1* and *BmFPPS1*, respectively, while of *SfrFPPS2*
218 shared 48.12% and 49.10% identities with *CfFPPS2* and *BmFPPS3*, respectively (Fig. S3B).

219

220 **3.4 Change of *SfrJHAMT* and *SfrFPPS* during development**

221 The relative mRNA levels of *JHAMT*, *FPPS1*, and *FPPS2* in eight developmental stages of
222 FAW were determined (Fig. 4). The mRNA levels of *SfrFPPS2* and *SfrJHAMT* were highest
223 at the 5th day pupae, and lowest at the 1st day pupae or 3rd day larvae (*SfrFPPS2*: $F = 35.574$,
224 $df = 7, 58, P < 0.0001$; *SfrJHAMT*: $F = 50.114, df = 7, 59, P < 0.0001$). In contrast, except for
225 the 1st day pupae, the mRNA level of *SfrFPPS1* was not significantly different at the 3rd day
226 larvae, pre-pupae, 3rd day pupae, newly emerged adults and 12-hour-old adults stages ($F =$
227 $19.177, df = 7, 58, P < 0.0001$).

228

229 **3.5 Effect of broflanilide on *SfrJHAMT* and *SfrFPPS* mRNA**

230 Sublethal effects of broflanilide to *SfrJHAMT* and *SfrFPPS* were examined in three
231 representative stages (Fig. 5). Compared with the control group, the mRNA levels of
232 *SfrJHAMT* and *SfrFPPS1* were significantly increased to 2.07- and 2.18- fold in 3rd day larvae
233 in LD₁₀ broflanilide-treated group, 2.22- and 1.78- fold in LD₃₀ broflanilide-treated group
234 (*SfrJHAMT*: $F = 45.417, df = 2, 24, P < 0.0001$; *SfrFPPS1*: $F = 11.647, df = 2, 24, P < 0.0001$;
235 Fig. 5A and 5B), whereas the mRNA level of *SfrFPPS2* was significantly decreased ($F =$
236 $51.747, df = 2, 24, P < 0.0001$; Fig. 5C). In the 5th day pupae, the mRNA levels of *SfrFPPS1*
237 and *SfrFPPS2* in LD₃₀ broflanilide-treated group significantly down-regulated (*SfrFPPS1*: F
238 $= 72.912, df = 2, 24, P < 0.0001$; *SfrFPPS2*: $F = 30.230, df = 2, 24, P < 0.0001$; Fig. 5B and
239 5C), while the mRNA level of *SfrFPPS1* in LD₁₀ broflanilide-treated group up-regulated (Fig.

240 5B). For the 12-hour-old adults, the mRNA level of *SfrFPPS1* was significantly increased by
241 1.92-fold in LD₃₀ broflanilide-treated group ($F = 28.320$, $df = 2, 24$, $P < 0.0001$; Fig. 5B).

242

243 **4 Discussion**

244 Broflanilide, as a newly registered meta-diamide insecticide, has excellent insecticidal
245 activity against lepidopteran pests including *P. xylostella*, FAW and the rice leaf folder
246 *Cnaphalocrocis medinalis* (Guenée) (Xu et al., 2019). In addition, broflanilide at sublethal or
247 lethal doses can interrupt the normal physiological processes of FAW, such as significantly
248 shortening the body length and prolonging the development phase (Fig. 1 and 2).

249 As one important hormone in insects, the JH participates in various biological processes by
250 regulating the insect ecdysis and development (Jindra et al., 2013; Qu et al., 2018). Consist
251 with the shorten body and delayed durations, JH titers in the broflanilide-treated groups were
252 significantly higher than those in the control group (Fig. 3). In fact, the change of JH titer in
253 insect treated with sublethal doses of insecticides and toxins has been reported (Pérez-Hedo et
254 al., 2011; Yu et al., 2010; Yu et al., 2007). For example, sublethal concentrations of
255 chlorantraniliprole up-regulated JH titer for up to 41.38% during the lifespan of *C.*
256 *suppressalis*, with prolonged duration of larvae for 2.34 days (Xu et al., 2017). Sublethal
257 concentration of imidacloprid led to a significant up-regulation of JH titer combined with
258 change of fecundity in both of peach aphid *Myzus persicae* (Sulzer) (Yu et al., 2010) and *C.*
259 *suppressalis* (Yu et al., 2007). In the corn borer *Sesamia nonagrioides* Lefebvre, sublethal
260 dose of *Bt* protein also altered the JH titer (Pérez-Hedo et al., 2011).

261 As is well established, JH biosynthesis is regulated by the mevalonate pathway and JH
262 branch (Rivera-Perez et al., 2014). Both JHAMT and FPPS play important roles in the
263 biosynthesis of JH. JHAMT is a critical enzyme that converts JH acids or inactive precursors
264 of JHs to active JHs at the final step of JH biosynthesis pathway in insects (Shinoda &

265 Itoyama, 2003). FPPS, a crucial enzyme of biosynthesis of JHs, could catalyze the form of
266 farnesyl diphosphate (FPP), which is the precursor of JH (Alam et al., 2022). To explore
267 whether broflanilide affects these pathways, we firstly isolated the *JHAMT* and *FPPS* from
268 FAW, and detected their expression levels (Jindra et al., 2013; Shinoda & Itoyama, 2003). In
269 this study, one *JHAMT* and two *FPPS* genes were cloned from FAW. We found that only one
270 *JHAMT* and at least two *FPPS* appear ubiquitous to lepidopteran insects, such as *Pieris rapae*
271 L., *Papilio xuthus* L., and *C. suppressalis*, etc. However, there are three and six *FPPS*s in *B.*
272 *mori* and *H. armigera*, respectively (Bomtorin et al., 2014; Kinjoh et al., 2007; Li et al., 2013;
273 Shinoda & Itoyama, 2003; Xu et al., 2017).

274 To make clear the effect of broflanilide to *JHAMT* and *FPPS*, the LD₁₀ and LD₃₀ were
275 selected because the duration between LD₅ and LD₁₀ broflanilide-treated groups are same and
276 the LD₅₀ is not a sublethal dose. As shown in Fig. 5, the mRNA levels of *SfrJHAMT* were
277 significantly up-regulated in 3rd day larvae in LD₁₀ and LD₃₀ broflanilide-treated groups.
278 These findings are similar to those reported in *P. xylostella* (Duan, 2016). When *M. persicae*
279 nymphs were treated with sublethal concentration of precocene, the mRNA levels of *MpFPPS*
280 decreased up to 31-fold in adults (Ayyanath et al., 2015). When *C. suppressalis* was treated
281 with LC₃₀ chlorantraniliprole, the mRNA levels of *CsJHAMT* in larvae, and of *CsFPPS2* in
282 5th day female pupae as well as in older female adults were significantly higher than those in
283 the control group (Xu et al., 2017). Therefore, we speculated that sublethal and low lethal
284 doses of broflanilide could induce the up-regulation of JH biosynthesis related genes resulting
285 in the increase of JH titer, which might delay the development of FAW.

286 In fact, people always paid more attention to the sublethal effects of pesticides on
287 no-targeted insect, especially beneficial arthropods, e.g. *Coccinella septempunctata* L. (He et
288 al., 2019) , *Harmonia axyridis* (Pallas) (Oliveira et al., 2019), *Trichogramma brassicae*
289 Bezdenko (Parsaeyan et al., 2020), *Apis mellifera* (L.) (Williams et al., 2020) and African

290 honey bee (*A. mellifera intermissa*) (Menail et al., 2020). In this study, we used the FAW to
291 explore the potential sublethal effect of broflanilide to insect, because there are similar
292 regulation pathways or mechanism among target and non-target insect. In addition, exploring
293 the sublethal effect of novel insecticides to pest insects can provide useful information on pest
294 resurgence and a more definitive conclusions on suitability for Integrated Pest Management
295 (Desneux et al. 2007; Shah et al., 2020) .

296 In conclusion, broflanilide has been approved for crop protection in China and will likely
297 be widely used, its sublethal effects on organisms including insect should be studied. Based
298 on the results of this study, we concluded that broflanilide could shorten the body size and
299 prolong developmental phase of FAW larvae and pupae. In addition, the broflanilide probably
300 affect the JH titers by regulating JH biosynthesis genes, including *JHAMT* and *FPPS*.

301

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307

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453

454 **Figure Legends**

455 **Fig. 1** The body length of FAW after three days' treatment of sublethal dose
456 broflanilide. Histograms bearing different letters are significantly different ($P < 0.05$,
457 ANOVA followed by a Tukey's post hoc test).

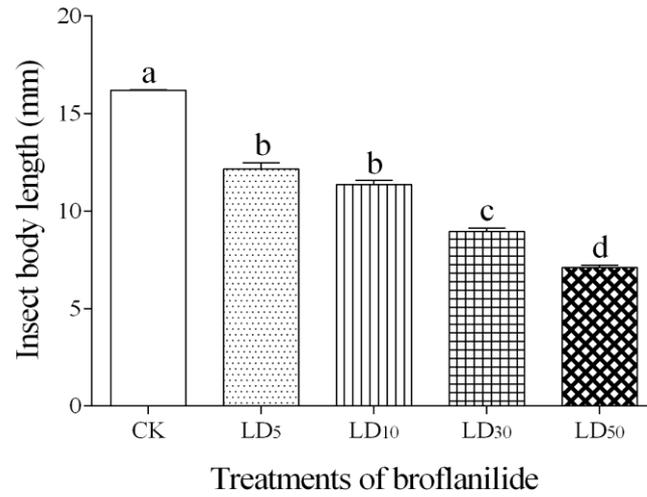
458 **Fig. 2** Duration of larvae (A) and pupae (B) after FAW larvae treated with low
459 lethal doses (LD_{10} and LD_{30}) of broflanilide (CK=control). Histograms bearing
460 different letters are significantly different ($P < 0.05$, ANOVA followed by a Tukey's
461 post hoc test).

462 **Fig. 3** Change of JH titers in FAW after exposure to LD_{10} and LD_{30} of broflanilide
463 (CK=control). Histograms bearing different letters, per FAW development step, are
464 significantly different ($P < 0.05$, ANOVA followed by a Tukey's post hoc test).

465 **Fig. 4** Relative mRNA levels of *SfrJHAMT*, *SfrFPPS1* and *SfrFPPS2* genes in FAW.
466 Histograms bearing different letters are significantly different ($P < 0.05$, ANOVA
467 followed by a Tukey's post hoc test).

468 **Fig. 5** Change of mRNA levels after exposure of FAW to low lethal doses (LD_{10}
469 and LD_{30}) of broflanilide (CK=control). Histograms bearing different letters, per FAW
470 development step, are significantly different ($P < 0.05$, ANOVA followed by a
471 Tukey's post hoc test).

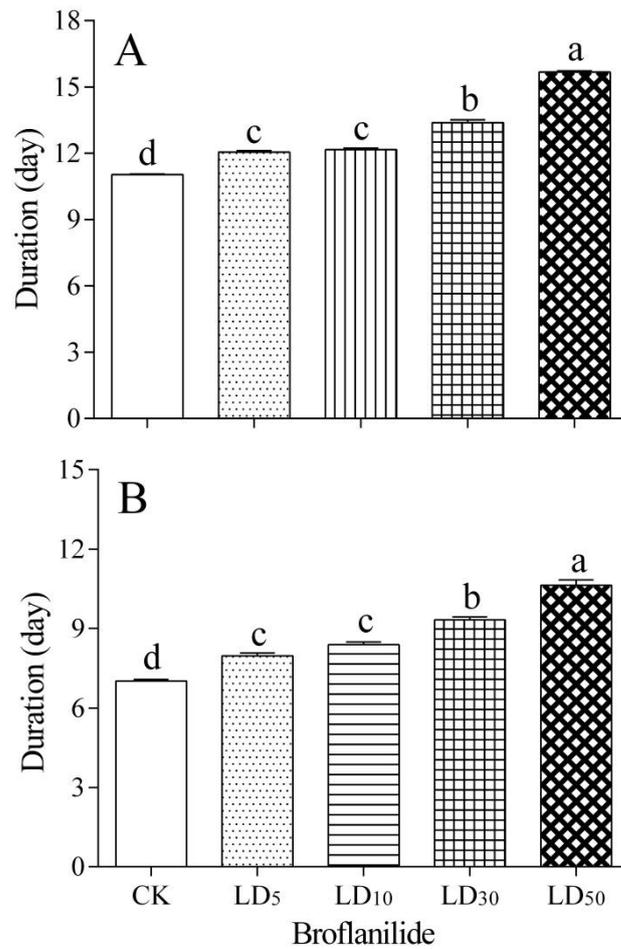
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474 **Fig. 1** The body length of FAW after three days' treatment of sublethal dose
475 broflanilide. Histograms bearing different letters are significantly different ($P < 0.05$,
476 ANOVA followed by a Tukey's post hoc test).

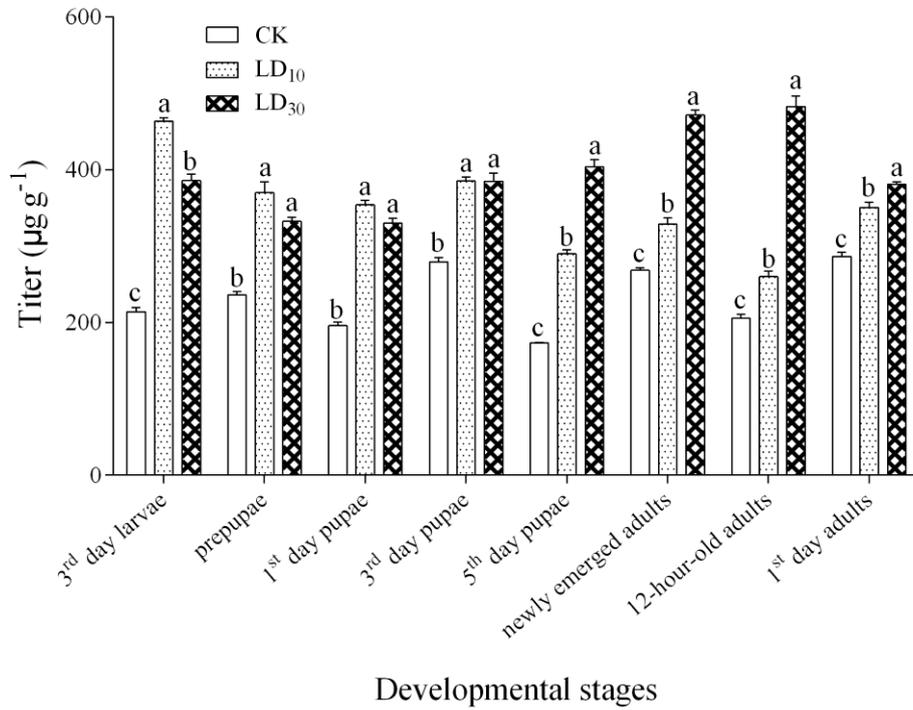
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478

479 **Fig. 2** Duration of larvae (A) and pupae (B) after FAW larvae treated with low
 480 lethal doses (LD₁₀ and LD₃₀) of broflanilide (CK=control). Histograms bearing
 481 different letters are significantly different ($P < 0.05$, ANOVA followed by a Tukey's
 482 post hoc test).

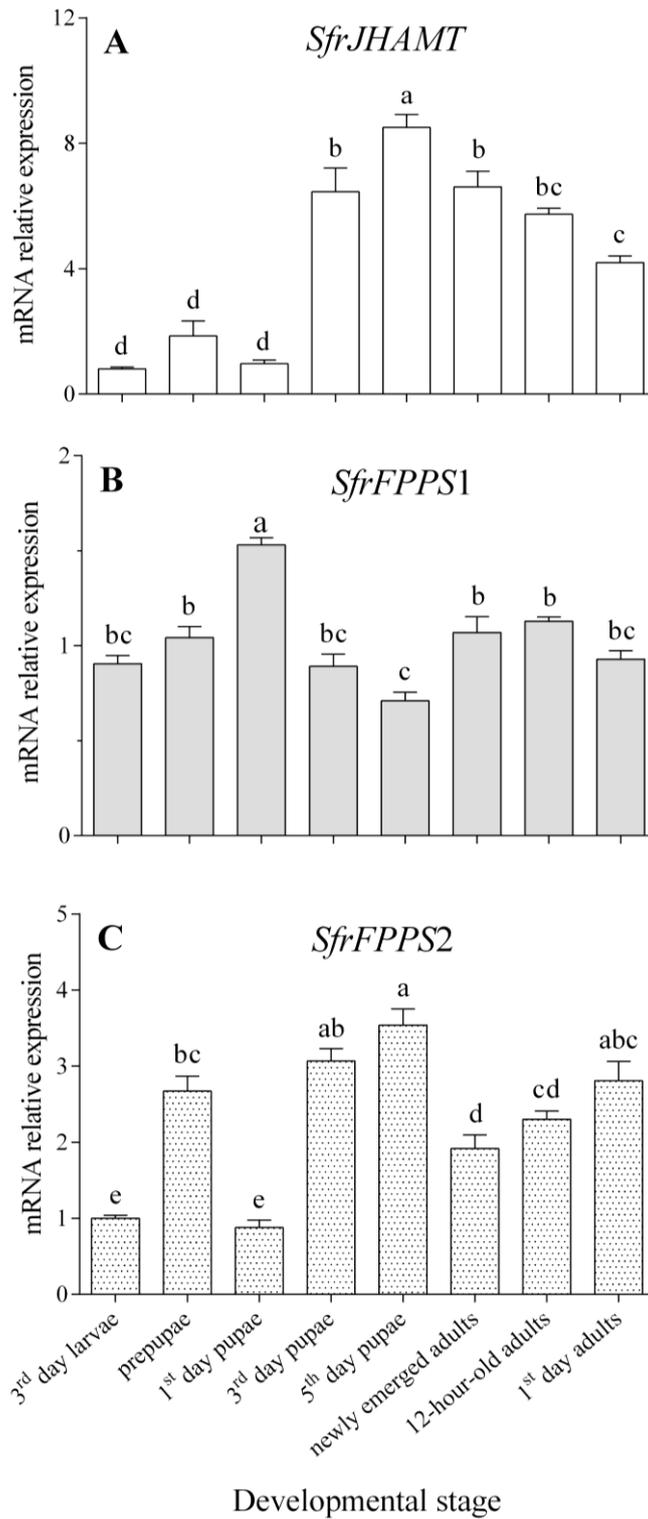
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484

485 **Fig. 3** Change of JH titers in FAW after exposure to LD₁₀ and LD₃₀ of broflanilide
 486 (CK=control). Histograms bearing different letters, per FAW development step, are
 487 significantly different ($P < 0.05$, ANOVA followed by a Tukey's post hoc test).

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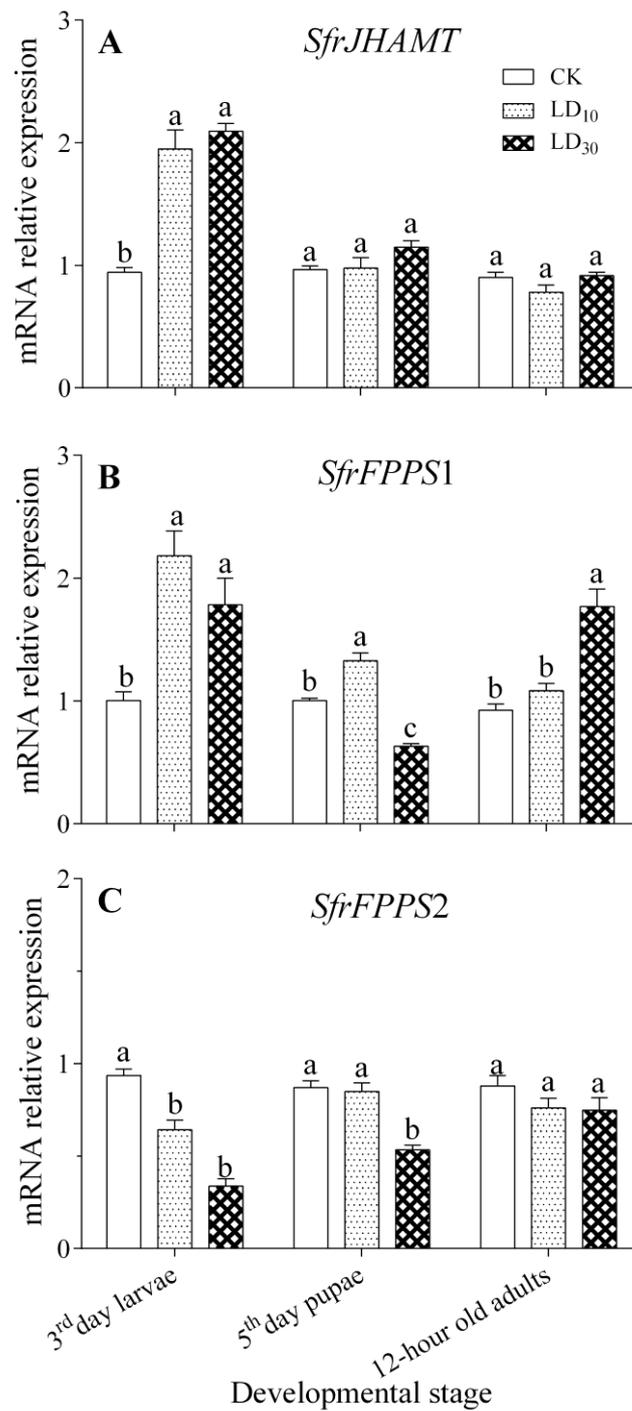


489

490 **Fig. 4** Relative mRNA levels of *SfrJHAMT*, *SfrFPFS1* and *SfrFPFS2* genes in FAW.

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493

494 **Fig. 5** Change of mRNA levels after exposure of FAW to low lethal doses (LD₁₀
 495 and LD₃₀) of broflanilide (CK=control). Histograms bearing different letters, per FAW
 496 development step, are significantly different ($P < 0.05$, ANOVA followed by a
 497 Tukey's post hoc test).