



, 144 .  
 240 .  
 32/21/87,  
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 ,  
 .  
 IV/63/81 22/17/87 2011 .,  
 .  
 1,08% ( 32/21/87,  
 ) 54,06% („Nada“,  
 ).  
 ,  
 34/41/87,  
 .  
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 ,  
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 ,  
 .  
 (Koskela et al., 2010),

the nucellus.  
 - Pollen tubes were predominantly  
 - observed in the ovary 144 h after  
 , pollination, while 240 h after pollination,  
 - penetration of pollen tube into the  
 - nucellus was not observed only in hybrid  
 - 32/21/87, in self-pollination variant.  
 .  
 240 The highest amount of pistils with  
 penetration into the nucellus 240 h after  
 pollination was obtained in cross-  
 pollination variant in all investigated  
 genotypes and in both years, except in  
 hybrids IV/63/81 and 22/17/87 in 2011  
 where this parameter achieved the  
 highest value in self-pollination and open-  
 pollination variants, respectively.  
 -  
 - The average value of initial fruit set varied  
 - from 1.08% (32/21/87, self-pollination) to  
 - 54.06% ('Nada', cross-pollination). The  
 - highest percentage of the initial fruit set  
 - for the majority of investigated genotypes  
 recorded in the cross-pollination variant,  
 except in hybrid 34/41/87, where the best  
 result was obtained in self-pollination  
 variant.  
 .  
 ,  
**Key words:** plum genotype, self-,  
 open- and cross-pollination, pollen tubes  
 dynamics, fruit set

## INTRODUCTION

- Optimal fruit set and yield of  
 - genotypes of European plum (*Prunus*  
*domestica* L.) is under strong control of a  
 - large number of factors that affect  
 - pollination and fertilization processes.  
 -  
 - The first step of pollination is transfer of  
 - pollen grains from the anthers to the  
 stigma and their adhesion followed by  
 their hydration and germination.  
 .  
 Factors that significantly influence the  
 success of this phase are flowering  
 overlap (Koskela et al., 2010), pollen of  
 adequate quantity and quality (Surányi,

<p>(Surányi, 2006), (Nikoli et al., 2012).</p>	<p>2006), assurance of its transfer and stigma receptivity (Nikoli et al., 2012).</p>
<p>S- Milatovi, 2010).</p>	<p>In the next step pollen tubes grow through the style. Their elongation can be interrupted in cases when the same S-alleles is present in the pollen grains and in the pistils (Nikoli and Milatovi, 2010).</p>
<p>(Kuzmanovi, 2008) (Neumüller, 2011), (Stott et al., 1973), (Hedhly et al., 2005). (Petropoulou and Alston, 1998, Radi et al., 2016).</p>	<p>Pollen tubes growth rate is under the influence of a number of factors such as male (Kuzmanovi, 2008) and female (Neumüller, 2011) genotypes, pollination mode (Stott et al., 1973), temperature fluctuation during the blooming period (Hedhly et al., 2005). Also, genotype-dependent reactions of male and female cultivars on different temperatures exist (Petropoulou and Alston, 1998, Radi et al., 2016).</p>
<p>(McCormick, 2004; Yadegari and Drewsb, 2004; Palanivlu and Tsukamoto, 2011).</p>	<p>The final phases of pollen tubes growth occur in the tissue of the ovary. When pollen tubes enter the ovarian tissue, they grow through the obturator area and micropyle into the nucellus, and then through one of the synergids in the embryo sac and penetrate the ovule.</p>
<p>(Cerovi</p>	<p>Sperm cells are delivered to the embryo sac of the ovary through the pollen tube. The growth of pollen tubes through the ovary is directed by the several structures of the female gametophyte (McCormick, 2004; Yadegari and Drewsb, 2004; Palanivlu and Tsukamoto, 2011).</p>
<p>Mi i, 1999).</p>	<p>During the double fertilisation process, one sperm cell fertilizes the egg cell and zygote is formed, while the other sperm cells fertilize two polar nuclei of the central cell and form the tetraploid endosperm.</p> <p>The presence of seeds is decisive for fruit development so that the fruit set is in direct correlation with fertilization (Cerovi and Mi i, 1999).</p> <p>Mature ovules have a limited lifetime, so fertilization must occur throughout this</p>



'Zelta Boutilcovidna'] (‘Stanley’ x ‘Scoldus’),	“Nada”	‘Zelta Boutilcovidna’] and a new cultivar Nada’ (‘Stanley’ x ‘Scoldus’), developed at Fruit Research Institute, a ak within the European plum ( <i>P. domestica</i> ) breeding programme. The trial was performed in an experimental orchard on the Ljubi facility, near a ak, which was established in spring 2003 with standard one-year old plantings of aforementioned genotypes grafted on myrobalan seedlings ( <i>Prunus cerasifera</i> Ehrh). Investigated genotypes were planted in three replications with 15 trees, with spacing of 6.0 m x 5.0 m and pyramidal crown training system.
<i>domestica</i> ).	(P.	
<i>(Prunus cerasifera</i> Ehrh).		
15	6,0 m x 5,0 m	
(2010/2011 .) 500 (	)	<p>Pollination procedure and pistils sampling</p> <p>During the two-year period (2010/2011) the branches with approximately 500 flowers at the late balloon stage of each genotype were randomly selected from all trees, emasculated and isolated with paper bags. At the same time, in order to prepare pollen for self- and cross-pollination, branches with flower buds at the late balloon stage of each studied genotype and cultivar a anska Lepotica were sampled in the field.</p>
Lepotica’.	„ a anska	
15		<p>In the laboratory, anthers of each genotype were collected and stored in paper boxes at room temperature until their opening and releasing of pollen grains. At the beginning of full flowering emasculated and isolated flowers of each genotype were self- and cross-pollinated by hand.</p>
240	72 ., 144 .	<p>In order to prevent uncontrolled pollination subsequently pollinated flowers were isolated again with the same paper bags during 15 days. Thirty pistils of each investigated genotype in both pollination variants were sampled 72 h, 144 h and 240 h after pollination.</p>
(70%	FPA	Sampled pistils were immediately soaked in FPA solution (70% ethanol, propionic

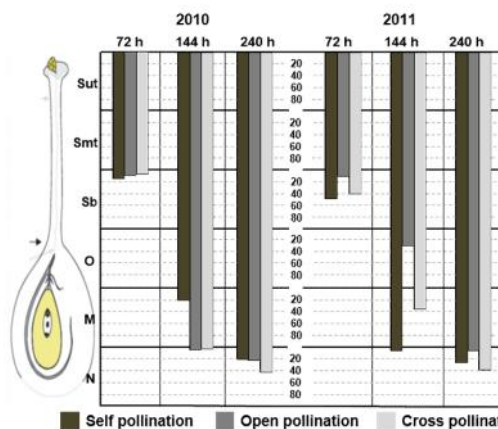
	90: 5: 5 4°	acid and formaldehyde, 90:5:5 percentages by volume) and stored at 4°C. In the same way and in the same terms, samples of each investigated plum genotypes were taken from the open-pollination.
<i>in vivo</i>	<i>in vivo</i>	<p>Pollen tubes growth <i>in vivo</i></p> <p>To investigate pollen tubes growth <i>in vivo</i> in the style and in the ovary, aniline blue staining method was used (Kho and Baër, 1971).</p>
and Baër, 1971).	(Kho	The separation of the style from the ovary under a stereo microscope was done. For better observation, the style was opened along the suture and squashed, while the ovary was separated along the suture and was cut longitudinally-tangentially.
UV BX61 ( , ). 240 .	Olympus (72 ., 144 . )	Observation of styles and ovaries was done under UV lights on Olympus BX61 microscope (Tokio, Japan). The pollen tubes growth rate was determined in three terms (72 h, 144 h and 240 h after pollination) as the percentage of pistils with the longest pollen tube penetrating to certain parts of the style or ovary.
		<p>Initial fruit set</p> <p>Determination of initial fruit set at the beginning of the maturation stage was done. Initial fruit set in variants of self- and cross-pollination was calculated as the number of fruits obtained from the pollinated flowers remaining after the last fixation.</p>
	300	To determine the initial fruit set in open pollination variant branches with approximately 300 flowers were selected at the time of full flowering. Initial fruit set represented the number of obtained fruits, in relation to the number of selected flowers.
(ANOVA),		<p>Statistical analysis</p> <p>The data relating to initial fruit set was analysed using Fisher's model of analysis of variance (ANOVA), with a two-factor design, using the <i>F</i> test with the</p>

$F$   
 $P \leq 0,05$ .  
 $F$   
 (LSD)  
 $P \leq 0,05$ .  
 SPSS,  
 Windows (SPSS Inc., 8.0).

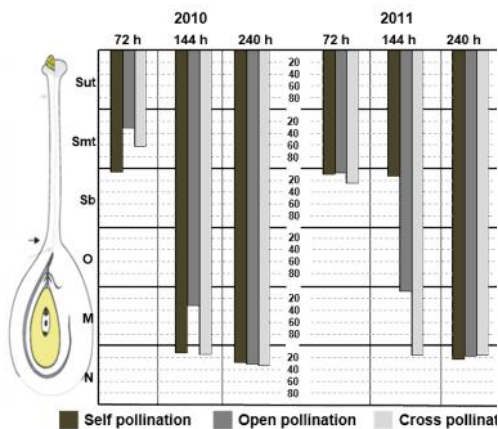
significance threshold set at  $P \leq 0.05$ . In cases where the  $F$ -test was significant, differences between arithmetic means were evaluated using the least significance difference (LSD) test with the significance threshold set at  $P \leq 0.05$ . Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS statistical software package, Version 8.0 for Windows (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The obtained results showed that the pollen tubes growth rate varied depending on genotype, pollination mode and year (Figures 1 to 6).



1.



2.

### 38/62/70

Fig. 1. Pollen tubes growth rate in the pistils of hybrid 38/62/70

### IV/63/81

Fig. 2. Pollen tubes growth rate in the pistils of hybrid IV/63/81

Sut – ; Smt – ; Sb – ; O -  
 ; M - ; N -  
 Sut - upper third of the style; Smt - medium third of the style; Sb - base of the style; O - obturator zone; M - micropyle, N - nucellus of the ovule.

72 :  
 38/62/70 ( 1),  
 IV/63/81 ( 2) 32/21/87 ( 3)  
 ; „Nada“

Pollen tubes were observed in the medium part or in the base of the style 72 h after pollination: in hybrids 38/62/70 (Figure 1), IV/63/81 (Figure 2) and 32/21/87 (Figure 3) in all variant of pollination and in both years; in cultivar 'Nada' in self-pollination and cross-

( 4); 34/41/87

2011 . ( 5),  
22/17/87

2010 . ( 6).

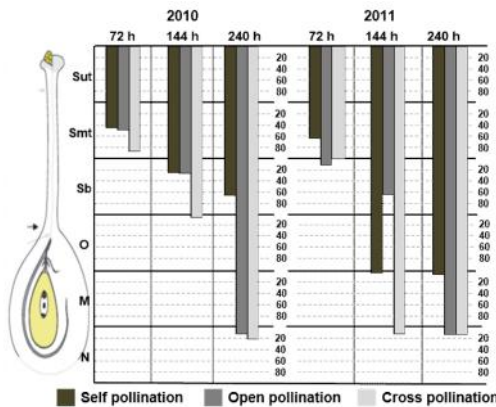
2011 .

2010 .

34/41/87

- pollination variants in both years (Figure 4); in hybrid 34/41/87 in all variants of pollination in 2010 and in variant of self-pollination in 2011 (Figure 5), and in hybrid 22/17/87 in variant of self-pollination and cross-pollination in 2010 (Figure 6).

- In the same term, the longest pollen tubes in all other treatments were located in the ovary, predominantly in the obturator zone. The occurrence of the longest pollen tubes in micropyle had lower rate, while penetration of pollen tube into the nucellus was observed only in hybrid 34/41/87 in variant of cross-pollination in 2011.



. 3.

32/21/87

**Fig. 3. Pollen tubes growth rate in the pistils of hybrid 32/21/87.**

Sut – ; M – ; N – ; Smt – ; Sb – ; O –

Sut - upper third of the style; Smt - medium third of the style; Sb - base of the style; O - obturator zone; M - micropyle, N - nucellus of the ovule.

144

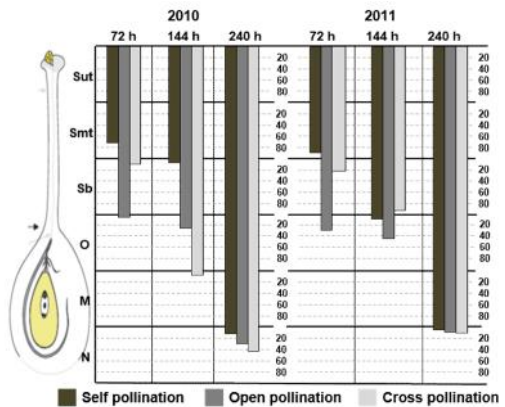
( 2),

32/21/87

IV/63/81

2011 .

- 144 h after pollination the longest pollen tubes were found in the ovary of the investigated genotypes, in all variants of pollination and in both years of investigation, with the exceptions of hybrid IV/63/81 in variant of self-pollination in 2011 (Figure 2), hybrid 32/21/87 in variant of self-pollination in 2010 and in variant of



. 4.

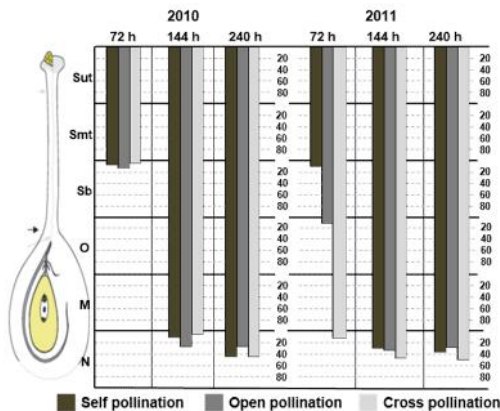
‘Nada’

**Fig. 4. Pollen tubes growth rate in the pistils of cultivar Nada .**

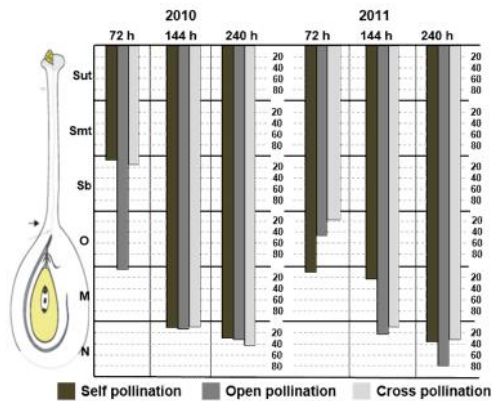


2010 . ( 3),  
 „Nada“ 2010 .  
 2011 . ( 4).

open-pollination in both years (Figure 3),  
 as well as in cultivar 'Nada' in variant of  
 self-pollination in 2010 and in variant of  
 cross-pollination in 2011 (Figure 4).



. 5.



. 6.

34/41/87

**Fig. 5. Pollen tubes growth rate in the pistils of hybrid 34/41/87**

Sut – ; Smt – ; M – , N –

Sut - upper third of the style; Smt - medium third of the style; Sb - base of the style; O - obturator zone; M - micropyle, N - nucellus of the ovule.

22/17/87

**Fig. 6. Pollen tubes growth rate in the pistils of hybrid 22/17/87**

; Sb – ; O -

240 . ,  
 32/21/87 ( 3).

240 h after pollination penetration of pollen tube into the nucellus was not observed only in hybrid 32/21/87 under self-pollination mode in both years (Figure 3).

(Stephanson et al., 2003),

The pollen germination and initial pollen tube growth depend on reserves stored in the pollen (Stephanson et al., 2003), while the influence of female genotype is reflected in physical and nutritional role (Bayer and Stösser, 2002; Hedhly et al., 2005).

(Bayer and Stösser, 2002; Hedhly et al., 2005). Keulemans (1984)

Keulemans (1984) pointed out that some plum cultivars as pollenizers behave as slow growers. The same author noted that an increase in air temperature accelerated pollen tubes growth, but also that all cultivars did not react in the same way. Results of the present study relating to obtained differences in pollen tubes

growth rate between investigated genotypes, pollination modes and years can be explained by the findings of aforementioned authors.

Also, the impact of the same factors has led to different results regarding pollen tubes growth rate in plum, which can be found in the literature.

On the third day after pollination, penetration of pollen tubes in ovary of plum was observed by Kuzmanovi (2008) and or evi et al. (2012).

On other hand, Jonese et al. (1971) stated that pollen tubes take five days to reach the base of the style, whereas DeCeault and Polito (2010) stipulated six days period, and Stott et al. (1973) a period of eight days.

The highest amount of pistils with penetration into the nucellus 240 h after pollination was obtained in cross-pollination variant in all investigated genotypes and in both years, except in hybrids IV/63/81 and 22/17/87 in 2011 where this parameter achieved the highest value in self-pollination and open-pollination variants, respectively.

A faster growth of pollen tubes under cross-pollination variant was also reported by Jia et al. (2008) and or evi et al. (2019) for plum, as well as by Radi evi et al. (2016) for sweet cherry. Data available in the literature show that the dynamic of pollen tube growth rate depends on the genotype of pollenizer (Kuzmanovi , 2008; or evi et al., 2019). Regarding this, it should be taken into account that in our study, as a pollen source for cross-pollination a anaska Lepotica was used.

This cultivar is considered as the best pollenizer for all genotypes of European plum (Neumüller, 2011). In addition to hybrid 32/21/87, in which pollen tube

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240		penetration into the nucellus was not observed 240 h after self-pollination, a low amount of pistils with penetration of pollen tubes into the nucellus in the same term and pollination mode was observed in cultivar Nada . This is related to the low level of self-fertility of the mentioned genotypes (Gliši et al., 2017).
“Nada“.		
(Gliši et al., 2017).		
	(	1).
-	,	
	34/41/87,	
-	.	
	9,27% (32/21/87)	
33,65% (34/41/87).		
(2019),	Milatovi	
	,	
	0% 50%.	
	Szabó (2003)	
	,	
	(32/21/87),	
(38/62)/70, IV/63/87	“Nada“]	
(34/41/87 22/17/87)		
	1,08 (32/21/87)	
48,72 (34/41/87).		
Gliši et al. (2017),		
(32/21/87 „Nada“),	(38/62/70	
IV / 63/81)	(34/41/87 22/17/87)	
	.	
	31.02%	
(38/62/70) 54.06% („Nada“),		
,	“ a anska Lepotica“	
	(Miši et al., 1979;	
Wertheim, 1996 ; Szabó, 2003).		

1.

(%)

**Table 1. Initial fruit set (%) of investigated plum genotypes under different pollination modes**

	Hybrid 38/62/70	Hybrid IV/63/81	Hybrid 32/21/87	Nada	Hybrid 34/41/87	Hybrid 22/17/87	
/Pollination variant ( )							
Self-pollination	21.90±6.39c	35.61±1.02b	1.08±0.34c	13.45±1.29b	48.72±1.34a	32.27±1.02b	
Open-pollination	26.76±1.31b	14.39±0.88c	9.27±0.36b	12.09±1.12c	33.65±0.35c	32.04±0.95b	
Cross-pollination	31.02±0.39a	49.18±1.23	32.94±1.23a	54.06±3.12a	47.11±0.50b	34.81±1.83a	
/Year ( )							
2010	22.84±3.84b	34.64±5.20	14.62±5.25a	32.26±5.11a	44.00±2.66a	34.35±1.28a	
2011	30.28±1.76a	31.49±4.99b	14.24±4.34a	20.80±3.68b	42.31±2.16b	31.73±0.72b	
x							
Self-pollination	2010	7.60±0.06d	36.42±1.73a	0.33±0.02d	16.33±0.25c	51.63±0.33a	34.39±0.15b
	2011	36.20±0.22a	34.80±1.26a	1.82±0.13d	10.56±0.25e	45.80±0.57c	30.15±0.80c
Open-pollination	2010	29.43±1.15b	15.95±0.83a	8.50±0.24c	14.51±0.59d	34.19±0.54d	29.92±0.23c
	2011	24.10±0.34c	12.84±0.89a	10.05±0.05c	9.68±0.49e	33.11±0.22d	34.16±0.07b
Cross-pollination	2010	31.49±0.54b	51.56±1.39a	35.02±0.66a	65.95±1.01a	46.19±0.08b	38.75±0.45a
	2011	30.55±0.49b	46.82±0.16a	30.86±1.44b	42.17±0.49b	48.02±0.66c	30.87±0.97c
NOVA							
	**	**	**	**	**	**	
	**	**	ns	**	**	**	
x	**	ns	**	**	**	**	

\* (F) P 0.05;

P 0.05 LSD

\*Indicates a factor difference (F test) at P 0.05; The different lower-case letters indicate differences at P 0.05 according to the LSD test.

( 1).

38/62/70.

IV/63/81.

(Furukawa and Bukovac, 1989),

32/21/87

Impact of year on initial fruit set was not significant only in hybrid 32/21/87 (Table 1). The other genotypes showed higher values in the first year of investigation, except hybrid 38/62/70.

Also, the interaction of pollination mode and year significantly impacted the initial fruit set of the investigated genotypes, except hybrid IV/63/81.

The obtained results can be explained by the impact of weather conditions on the fruit set (Furukawa and Bukovac, 1989), as well as by the specific response of each male and female genotype to their impact.

## CONCLUSIONS

38/62/70, IV / 63/87, 34/41/87 22/17/87  
"Nada"  
32/21/87  
"Nada"  
„ a anaska Lepotica“  
No. 451-03-68/2020-14/200215  
( 31064,  
”  
“).

- The results of the present study  
- indicate that pollen tubes growth rate is  
- conditioned by genotype, pollination mode  
- and year. The best pollen tubes growth  
- dynamics in the majority of studied  
- genotypes were obtained in the cross-  
- pollination variant.

- Accordingly, the best fructification of the  
- most examined genotypes was also  
- obtained in the variant of cross-pollination.  
- The values of fruit set in variant of open-  
- pollination indicate that hybrids 38/62/70,  
- IV/63/87, 34/41/87 and 22/17/87 and  
- cultivar Nada have good cropping  
- potential.

- The pollen tube growth rate and initial fruit  
- set in hybrids 32/21/87 and cultivar Nada  
- under self-pollination mode point to the  
- partial self-compatibility of those  
- genotypes, while the mentioned  
- parameters in variant of cross-pollination  
- show that ' a anaska Lepotica' can be  
- recommended as their pollinizer.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- This research was conducted  
- under the support of Ministry of  
- Education, Science and Technological  
- Development of the Republic of Serbia,  
- contract No. 451-03-68/2020-14/200215  
- (including project No. 31064, titled  
- 'Development and preservation of genetic  
- potential of temperate zone fruits').

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