

Analytical Methods

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3 **Simultaneous Quantification of seventeen Bioactive Components in Rhizome and**
4 **Aerial Parts of *Alpinia officinarum* Hance Sampled at Different Growing Periods**
5 **Using Liquid Chromatography/Quadrupole Tandem Mass Spectrometry**
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4 **ABSTRACT**

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6 The rhizomes of *Alpinia officinarum* Hance (Zingiberaceae family) have been used as
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9 antiemetics, stomachics and analgesics in Asia for centuries. Unfortunately, the aerial
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11 parts were thrown away as wastes whilst harvesting the rhizomes of *A. officinarum*.
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13 Recently, scientists reported that the ethanol extract of aerial parts displayed
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15 anti-proliferation activity through mitochondrial pathway-induced cell apoptosis.
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17 However, the chemical composition information of this extract remained largely
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19 unknown. We have identified sixteen chemicals including twelve flavonoids and four
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21 diarylheptanoids from the methanol extraction of *A. officinarum* leaves using liquid
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23 chromatography/tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS). In order to better explore
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25 the potential value of the aerial parts, we need to know what the main constituents
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27 occurring in the aerial parts and how the contents of these chemicals are influenced by
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29 the growing periods. In the present study, a LC-MS/MS method was developed and
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31 validated for determination of seventeen compounds both occurring in the aerial parts
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33 and rhizomes sampled at different growing periods. Validation indices evaluated were
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35 satisfactory and the method was successfully employed to analyze the
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37 above-mentioned plant samples. Notably, we found that the contents of these
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39 compounds except for quercetin were higher in rhizomes than those of compounds in
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41 aerial parts. The six major constituents both in aerial parts and rhizomes were
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43 galangin, kaempferide, hexahydrocurcumin, pinocembrin, chrysin and isorhamnetin.
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45 Moreover, the content changes' trends of most of the monitored phytochemicals along
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47 with sampled periods were almost similar between the aerial parts and the rhizomes.
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4 23 Our study should be of value in arousing everyone's interest to make the best use of
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6 24 aerial parts of *A. officinarum* in the future.
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9 25 Keywords: *Alpinia officinarum* Hance; rhizomes and aerial parts; harvest times;
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11 26 LC-MS/MS
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27 Introduction

28 Plant secondary metabolites are critical for not only the function and value of the
29 compounds within the plants themselves, but also the relationship involves biological
30 interaction of plants with other organisms and with their environment ¹. A plant that is
31 able to synthesize some compounds that can disturb the physiological functions of an
32 herbivore may have a selective advantage over one that does not. The secondary
33 metabolites may be utilized to establish interlocking relationship within the contexts
34 of pollination, seed dispersal or protection of the plant by another organism. Generally
35 speaking, the secondary chemicals are biosynthesized, accumulated under certain
36 conditions and then transported within the plant to a site of storage or are deposited on
37 the surface ². From an evolving point of view, it appears that these products are often
38 concentrated in the most vulnerable tissues.

39 *Alpinia officinarum* Hance (Zingiberaceae family), known as lesser galangal, is a
40 famous traditional herb and mainly distributed in the Southern China such as
41 Guangdong province and Hainan Island. *A. officinarum* rhizomes that used as
42 medicinal parts have been used as antiemetics, stomachics and analgesics in Asia for
43 centuries ³. Recently, a review article of our group has summarized the advances in
44 studies on chemical constituents in *A. officinarum* rhizomes and their pharmacological
45 activities ⁴. Some bioactive components of rhizomes have been listed as essential oil,
46 flavonoids, diarylheptanoids, phenylpropanoids, glycosides and other constituents in
47 this article. Especially, the flavonoids such as galangin and diarylheptanoids are the
48 main constituents and have exhibited various pharmacological activities including

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4 49 antimicrobial, antiviral, antitumor, antioxidant roles, gastric ulcer protective activities
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6 50 and usually used as a hemostat for treating gastrointestinal hemorrhages. Therefore,
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9 51 flavonoids and diarylheptanoids are always used as marker compounds for quality
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11 52 control of *A. officinarum* rhizomes and its extracts and some Chinese traditional
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14 53 patent medicine.

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16 54 Unlike the rhizome, the aerial parts of *A. officinarum* are not widely concerned.
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19 55 Zhang *et al.* identified five flavonoids including galangin, 3-O-methylgalangin,
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21 56 pinocembrin, pinobaksin and kaempferide from the ethanol extract of the aerial parts⁵.
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24 57 A Chinese patent (CN104138368A) provided a process for producing a purified
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26 58 extract (AO-95) from the aerial parts by ethanol extraction and subsequent
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29 59 purification via macro-porous adsorptive resins. This AO-95 extract displayed
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31 60 anti-proliferation activity through mitochondrial pathway-induced cell apoptosis.
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34 61 However, the chemical composition information of this extract was not provided in
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36 62 this patent. Liquid chromatography/tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS)
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39 63 technique has been used to biological molecules structure determination⁶⁻⁹. Recently,
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41 64 we identified sixteen chemicals including twelve flavonoids and four diarylheptanoids
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44 65 from the methanol extraction of *A. officinarum* leaves using LC-MS/MS with
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46 66 selected reaction monitoring mode¹⁰. Twelve flavonoids included chrysin,
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49 67 pinocembrin, tectochrysin, apigenin, galangin, 3-O-methylgalangin, acacetin,
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51 68 kaempferol, kaempferide, quercetin, isorhamnetin and rutin. Four diarylheptanoids
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54 69 were yakuchinone A, oxyphyllacinol, hexahydrocurcumin and hannokinol. These
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56 70 secondary metabolites may contribute to the above-mentioned anti-cancer activity.
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4 71 Therefore, the aerial part of *A. officinarum* has potential to be used as the medicinal
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6 72 part in the future.
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9 73 In order to better explore the potential value of the aerial parts, we need to know
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11 74 what the main constituents occurring in the aerial parts and how the contents of these
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13 75 chemicals are influenced by the growing periods. Furthermore, as time goes on, the
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15 76 transportation of these secondary metabolites from aerial parts to rhizomes is also
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17 77 need to be characterized. In the present study, seventeen compounds both occurring in
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19 78 the aerial parts and rhizomes sampled at different growing periods were monitored
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21 79 and quantified using LC-MS/MS. Notably, we found that the content changes' trends
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23 80 of most of the target phytochemicals along with sampled periods were almost similar
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25 81 between aerial parts and rhizomes.
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82 **Material and Methods**

83 **Chemical and Reagents**

84 Reference standard of nootkatone was obtained from Sigma-Aldrich (St Louis, MO,
85 USA). Yakuchinone A was purchased from Chenfun Medical Technology (Shanghai)
86 Co., Ltd. (Shanghai, China). Hexahydrocurcumin and Hannokinol were purchased
87 from BioBioPha Co., Ltd (Kunming, China). Apigenin and pinocembrin were
88 obtained from Shanghai YuanYe Bio-Technology Co., Ltd (Shanghai, China).
89 Acacetin was bought from Nanjing Zelang Pha Co. Ltd (Nanjing, China). Galangin,
90 rutin, quercetin, kaempferol, luteolin and isorhamnetin were purchased from National
91 Institutes for Food and Drug Control (Beijing, China). Tectochrysin, izalpinin, chrysin
92 and kaempferide were separated from *A. oxyphylla* fruits. Diarylheptanoid was
93 separated and prepared from the rhizomes of *A. officinarum*. The purities of these
94 reference standards were over 98.0%. HPLC-grade methanol and acetonitrile were
95 products of Merck (Darmstadt, Germany). HPLC-grade formic acid was purchased
96 from Aladdin Industrial Inc. (Shanghai, China). HPLC-grade water was prepared with
97 a Millipore Milli-Q Integral 3 cabinet water purifying system (Bedford, MA, USA).
98 The other chemical reagents, analytical grade or better, were obtained from Hainan
99 YiGao Instrument Co., Ltd (Haikou, China). The chemical structures of 18 plant
100 secondary metabolites are shown in [Figure 1](#).

101 **(Insert Figure 1 here)**

102 The aerial parts and rhizomes of 3-year-old *A. officinarum* were collected from

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4 103 the planting base of Hainan Lin-Feng-Yuan Industrial Co., Ltd. The sampling periods
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6 104 and corresponding serial numbers are shown in [Figure 2](#).
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12 **Sample Preparation for Analysis**

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15 107 In order to perform the determinations on these plant secondary metabolites, we
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17 108 developed an extraction protocol specific for these plant samples. All the rhizomes
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19 109 and aerial parts of *A. officinarum* were dried in an electric drying oven (6CH-18,
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21 110 Xingmin Tea Machinery Co., Ltd., Anxi, China) at 40°C until dry. The freshly dried
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23 111 plant samples were manually shucked into little segments, which were smashed using
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25 112 a smashing machine (FW100, Taisite Instrument, Tianjin, China) and then sieved
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27 113 manually by a 60 mesh. The resulting fine powders and residue were mixed evenly.
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29 114 An aliquot (0.5 g) was weighed precisely and macerated with 50-fold methanol and
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31 115 then ultrasonicated three times for 30 min each. For each extraction, the resulting
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33 116 extract solutions were centrifuged at 13000 rpm for 10 min (Kubota 5922, Kubota
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35 117 Corporation, Tokyo, Japan). 1 mL of supernatant was sampled and the remaining was
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37 118 discarded. The residue was extracted with methanol for another 2 times. The sampled
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39 119 methanol extracts (3 mL) were combined and centrifuged at 13000 rpm for 10 min to
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41 120 obtain the supernatant fractions that were frozen at -20°C until analysis. The extract
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43 121 solution was appropriately diluted with methanol before analysis. Finally, a 10 µL
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45 122 aliquot was injected into the LC-MS/MS system for quantitative analysis.
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55 **Instrumentation and LC-MS/MS Conditions**

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4 124 A component LC-MS/MS system consisted of an API 4000 plus mass spectrometer
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6 125 (AB-SCIEX, Toronto, Canada) interfaced via a Turbo V ion source with a Shimadzu
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8 126 Prominence UFLC chromatographic system (Shimadzu Corporation, Kyoto, Japan)
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11 127 and operated with AB-SCIEX Analyst software. The UFLC system is equipped with
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13 128 two LC-20AD pumps, a model DGU-20A_{3R} degasser unit, a SIL-20A HT
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16 129 auto-sampler and a CTO-20A column oven.

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19 130 Chromatographic separation was achieved using a Phenomenex Kinetex 2.6 μ
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21 131 XB-C18 (2.10 mm i.d. \times 50 mm)¹¹. The LC mobile phase at a flow-rate of 0.3
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23 132 mL \cdot min⁻¹ consisted of 0.1% formic acid in water (A) and methanol (B) using a
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26 133 gradient elution as follows: from 0% B to 2% B in 0.01 min, hold for 1 min; from 2%
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28 134 B to 35% B in 0.01 min, hold for 3 min; from 35% B to 90% B in 11 min; back to 2%
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31 135 B in 0.01 min; maintain 4.99 min. The temperature of the column was controlled at
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33 136 40°C. A 0.5- μ m biocompatible inline filter (Upchurch Scientific, Oak Harbor, WA,
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36 137 USA) was used before the chromatographic column.

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39 138 The parameters of the electrospray ionization (ESI) source operating in positive
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41 139 ionization mode were as follows: collision gas flow (N₂): level 4; curtain gas (N₂): 25
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43 140 psi; nebulizer gas (N₂, Gas I): 55 psi; heated dry gas (N₂, Gas II): 55 psi; IonSpray
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46 141 voltage (v): +5,500 v and dry temperature (TEM): 550 °C. MS/MS operating
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48 142 conditions were optimized by infusion of the standard solution (1 μ g \cdot mL⁻¹) of each
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51 143 analytes into the ESI source via a syringe pump (11plus, Harvard Apparatus, Holliston,
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54 144 MA, USA). Quantification was performed using multiple reaction-monitoring (MRM)
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57 145 modes for the following transitions. The MRMs of nootkatone, yakuchinone A,
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4 146 tectochrysin, izalpinin, chrysin, kaempferide, apigenin-4',7-dimethylther, kaempferol,
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6 147 galangin, hannokinol, hexahydrocurcumin, pinocembrin, isorhamnetin, luteolin, rutin,
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9 148 apigenin, acacetin and quercetin were m/z 219.2→163.0 (the optimal collision energy,
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11 149 22 V), 313.2→136.9 (13 V), 269.1→226.0 (43.5 V), 285.0→242.0 (43 V),
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13 150 255.1→152.9 (42 V), 301.1→286.0 (37 V), 299.2→256.0 (45 V), 287.2→153.0 (45
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15 151 V), 271.2→153.0 (43.8 V), 313.8→256.3 (31.5 V), 375.2→357.2 (9 V),
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18 152 257.1→153.0 (30.5 V), 317.2→302.2 (35.2 V), 287.1→153.0 (45.1 V), 611.2→303.0
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21 153 (25.4 V), 271.1→153.0 (42.8 V), 285.1→242.0 (46.5 V) and 303.1→153.0 (47 V),
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24 154 respectively, with a scan time of 20 ms for each ion pair. The product ion spectra of
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26 155 protonated molecules are shown in [Figure 3](#).

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(Insert Figure 3 here)

157 **Validation of Analytical Method**

158 The quantitative LC-MS/MS method was validated with respect to linearity, recovery,
159 precision and sensitivity. Twelve stock solutions containing about 1 mg·mL⁻¹ of
160 nootkatone, yakuchinone A, chrysin, kaempferol, galangin, hannokinol,
161 hexahydrocurcumin, pinocembrin, luteolin, rutin, quercetin and diarylheptanoid were
162 prepared independently in methanol excluding hexahydrocurcumin, which was
163 dissolved in acetonitrile. Kaempferide, tectochrysin, izalpinin, apigenin, isorhamnetin
164 and acacetin were prepared in methanol and the concentration of standards was 1.41,
165 1.035, 0.5, 0.5, 0.3 and 0.332 mg·mL⁻¹, respectively.

166 For calibration aims, working solutions were freshly prepared via diluting each
167 stock solution with methanol or acetonitrile. Calibration curves were established on

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4 168 six data points covering the designed concentration such as 2-2000 ng·mL⁻¹. Each
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6 169 calibration curve was obtained by plotting the peak area vs the concentration of the
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9 170 standard. The linearity was assessed by calculation of a regression line using the least
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11 171 squares method. The limits of detection (LOD) and quantification (LOQ) were
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14 172 evaluated by analysis of the peak height vs the baseline noise at a signal-to-noise ratio
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16 173 of 3:1 and 10:1, respectively. Reliabilities of the extraction method were evaluated by
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19 174 adding reference standards (25 ng for *C-02*, *C-12* and 50 ng for the other compounds)
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21 175 into the powdered plant material of the two selected rhizomes and aerial parts samples,
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24 176 and the recovery of the added standards was measured. Precision was assessed by the
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26 177 evaluation of the repeatability (intra-day precision) and by intermediate precision
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29 178 (inter-day precision). The intra-day precision was determined by analyzing six
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31 179 replicate plant samples in a day, which was performed by the same technician. The
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34 180 inter-day precision was obtained through measuring the above mentioned six plant
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36 181 samples in three consecutive days and by two different analysts.
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182 **Results and Discussion**

183 **Selection of the Extraction Method**

184 Plant samples were extracted using published method ¹¹⁻¹³ by our group with a slight
185 modification. In this study, we chose methanol as the extraction solvent and
186 sonication procedure for the extraction of the target constituents. Sonication combined
187 with methanol extraction provides mechanical disruption and thereby aiding in
188 extraction. In order to control the uniformity of sonication procedure, fresh running
189 water was added into the bath of the ultrasonic extraction device (40 KHz, 80 W,
190 Kunshan Ultrasonic Instruments, Kunshan, China) for each extraction. After having
191 completed the third sonication extraction, the ultrasonic device was kept on standby
192 for 1 hour in case of overheats. Our results revealed that the recoveries of the 17 plant
193 secondary metabolites were more than 85% by single extraction and almost 100%
194 through triple extraction for aerial parts and rhizomes samples. Therefore, the sample
195 was macerated with 50-fold methanol and then ultrasonicated three times for 30 min
196 each.

197 **Method Validation**

198 Representative chromatograms for 17 reference standards and aerial parts samples, as
199 well as rhizomes samples of *A. officinarum*, are shown in [Figure 4](#). No interfering
200 peaks were noted and good resolution was achieved among the monitored chemicals,
201 which were mainly eluted within 7.5-14 min except for hannokinol (retention time
202 7.07 min, data not shown) during our 20-min gradient program. Exogenous chemical
203 coming from plastic consumables such as inserts tubes, pipette tips interfered with

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4 204 hannokinol analysis. We failed to overcome this interference because we had to apply
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6 205 various plastic products during our assay procedure.
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12 207 Standard curves were linear over the dynamic ranges with correlation
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14 208 coefficients greater than 0.99 (see [Table 1](#)). The LODs and LOQs were in the range of
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16 209 0.0141–2 ng·mL⁻¹ and 0.1–10 ng·mL⁻¹, respectively. Mean recovery (standard
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18 210 addition approach) of each target compound from aerial parts samples and rhizomes
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20 211 samples exceeded 85.5% (range = 85.5-112%, [Table 1](#)), indicating that various plant
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22 212 background matrices had little effect on the quantification analysis. For this standard
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24 213 addition approach, the accurate amounts of the standards are added to real samples, in
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26 214 which the concentration of target analyte has been determined, and then extracted and
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28 215 analyzed. The average percentage recoveries are evaluated by calculating the ratio of
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30 216 detected amount versus added amount. Actually, standard addition approach was used
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32 217 to analyze pharmaceutical residues in environmental samples ¹⁴, diarrheic shellfish
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34 218 poisoning toxins ¹⁵ and pharmaceutical residues in drinking water ¹⁶.
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43 219 As shown in [Table 1](#), the RSD values of intra- and inter-day variations of the
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45 220 seventeen secondary metabolites occurring in aerial parts and rhizomes were almost
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47 221 less than 10%. Overall, these results indicated that the established method was
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49 222 accurate and reliable.
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53 223 **(Insert Table 1 here)**

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56 224 **Quantitative Assay of 17 Constituents occurring in the Aerial parts and**
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4 225 **Rhizomes of *A. officinarum***

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6 226 The content levels of the 17 constituents are summarized in [Figure 5a](#) and [5b](#). Besides
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9 227 quercetin (**C-12**), the content levels of the sixteen monitored compounds in rhizomes
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11 228 were 1.26 – 14.0 times higher than those of in aerial parts. The rank order of the best
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14 229 six compound for their content differences was as follows: kaempferide (**C-18**, 14
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16 230 times) > izalpinin (**C-16**, 10.9 times) > diarylheptanoid (**C-03**, 7.47 times) >
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19 231 hexahydrocurcumin (**C-05**, 7.17 times) > nootkatone (**C-01**, 6.57 times) > galangin
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21 232 (**C-06**, 6.08 times). For quercetin, its concentration in aerial parts was 1.42 fold higher
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24 233 than that of in rhizomes. The six major constituents both in aerial parts and rhizomes
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26 234 were the same, *i.e.*, galangin (**C-06**) > kaempferide (**C-18**) > hexahydrocurcumin
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29 235 (**C-05**) > pinocembrin (**C-07**) > chrysin (**C-14**) > isorhamnetin (**C-08**). Their highest
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31 236 content levels were larger than 100 $\mu\text{g}\cdot\text{g}^{-1}$. Of particular, the highest content levels of
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34 237 galangin (**C-06**) were 17.7 $\text{mg}\cdot\text{g}^{-1}$ (1.77%) in rhizomes and 2.92 $\text{mg}\cdot\text{g}^{-1}$ (0.29%) in
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36 238 aerial parts, respectively. Similarly, kaempferide and hexahydrocurcumin in rhizomes
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39 239 were 5.11 $\text{mg}\cdot\text{g}^{-1}$ (0.51%) and 1.29 $\text{mg}\cdot\text{g}^{-1}$ (0.13%), respectively. [Zhai et al.](#) measured
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41 240 the active flavonoids including galangin, kaempferide, quercetin and isorhamnetin of
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44 241 *A. officinarum* rhizomes from 19 different localities of Hainan province ¹⁷. The
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46 242 content of galangin and kaempferide was at 0.07-1.56% and 0.06-0.64%, respectively.
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49 243 Therefore, galangin was the predominant constituent both in aerial parts and rhizomes
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51 244 of *A. officinarum*.

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55 245 **(Insert Figure 5a and 5b here)**

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58 246 As shown in [Figure 5a](#) and [5b](#), the contents of the seventeen constituents

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6 248 periods (from 19 February to 31 August). The differences of these phytochemicals
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9 249 covered 1.96-61.5 and 1.93-116 times for rhizomes and aerial parts, respectively. The
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11 250 content of apigenin (*C-II*) in rhizomes sampled at 19 February (*S-01*) was 61.5 times
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14 251 higher than that at 30 May (*S-07*). Similarly, the content of chrysin (*C-14*) in aerial
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16 252 parts sampled at August 16 (*S-11*) was 116 fold higher than that at 15 June (*S-08*).
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19 253 The content variability of the best six phytochemicals along with different growth
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21 254 time both in rhizomes and aerial parts samples was as follows: galangin (*C-06*,
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23 255 6.84/3.74), kaempferide (*C-18*, 3.37/2.71), hexahydrocurcumin (*C-05*, 14.2/37.4),
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26 256 pinocembrin (*C-07*, 5.01/2.45), chrysin (*C-14*, 58.9/166) and isorhamnetin (*C-08*,
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29 257 3.22/2.43). Of particular, the contents of these five major flavonoids except for
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31 258 chrysin in rhizomes maintained at a relatively higher level during the period of 15
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34 259 June –15 July and amounted to highest levels at 31 August. As for galangin, [Deng et](#)
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36 260 [al.](#) determined its content in rhizomes of *A. officinarum* harvested in different months
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39 261 using a reversed-phase HPLC method ¹⁸. The content levels ranged from 0.74% (May)
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41 262 to 1.39% (October). During the period of July to October, the content was relatively
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44 263 stable ranging from 1.06% to 1.39%. Our results revealed that the content variability
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46 264 of galangin in rhizomes covered 0.26-1.77%. On the other hand, the content levels of
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49 265 galangin in aerial parts changed from 0.08% to 0.29%. Therefore, one must fully
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51 266 consider the impact of harvest time on the contents of phytochemicals. The Chinese
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54 267 Pharmacopeia recommends that the best harvest period for rhizomes is in late summer
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56 268 and early autumn (*i.e.*, August and September) ¹⁹. This recommendation looks like
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4 269 reasonable based on our results.
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6 270 As shown in [Figure 5a](#) and [5b](#), the content changes of the seventeen
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8 271 phytochemicals with growth time were almost similar between aerial parts and
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10 272 rhizomes. The content-time curves presented two types, “dumbbell” or “parallel bars”.
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12 273 For the “dumbbell” type curves, such as yakuchinone a (*C-02*), hexahydrocurcumin
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14 274 (*C-05*), luteolin (*C-09*), apigenin (*C-11*), acacetin (*C-13*), chrysin (*C-14*) and
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16 275 kaempferol (*C-17*), the contents during the period of 14 April -15 July retained at
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18 276 relatively low levels. This period looked like a handle of the dumbbell and the handle
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20 277 thickness was different for this type phytochemicals indicating the content variability
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22 278 among aerial parts or rhizomes samples. On the other hand, for the “parallel bars”
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24 279 type chemicals, including nootkatone (*C-01*), diarylheptanoid (*C-03*), galangin (*C-06*),
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26 280 pinocembrin (*C-07*), isorhamnetin (*C-08*), and so on, the contents both in aerial parts
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28 281 and rhizomes had smaller fluctuation from 19 February (*S-01*) to 31 August (*S-12*).
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30 282 Currently, it is still unclear how to explain the content variations.
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39 283 The rhizomes of *A. officinarum* are utilized as medical parts for traditional
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41 284 medicine, such as stimulant and carminative. It is especially useful in flatulence,
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43 285 dyspepsia, vomiting and sickness at stomach, being recommended as a remedy for
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45 286 sea-sickness, sometimes for fever or as a stimulant. In addition, galangal is used in
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47 287 cattle medicine²⁰. Unfortunately, the aerial parts were thrown away as wastes whilst
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49 288 harvesting the rhizomes of *A. officinarum*. Like rhizome, the aerial parts contain
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51 289 multiple phytochemicals such as flavonoids (*e.g.* galangin), diarylheptanoids (*e.g.*
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53 290 hexahydrocurcumin) and sesquiterpenes (*e.g.* nootkatone) although their contents are
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4 291 relatively lower than those of rhizomes based on our results. In addition, the yield of
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6 292 aerial parts of *A. officinarum* was comparable or less than that of rhizomes. Therefore,
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9 293 additional work is required to assess the bioactive properties of the aerial parts and
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11 294 make the best use of these valuable medicinal plant resources.

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14 295 In summary, in this study we reported the development and validation of a
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16 296 LC-MS/MS and successfully employed this method to analyze the seventeen
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19 297 phytochemicals present in aerial parts and rhizomes of *A. officinarum*. Our results
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21 298 revealed that (1) validation indices evaluated were satisfactory; (2) the target
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24 299 seventeen phytochemicals were measurable in aerial parts and rhizomes sample; (3)
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26 300 the contents of these compounds except for quercetin were higher in rhizomes than
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29 301 those of compounds in aerial parts; (4) the six major constituents both in aerial parts
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31 302 and rhizomes were galangin, kaempferide, hexahydrocurcumin, pinocembrin, chrysin
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34 303 and isorhamnetin; (5) the content changes' trends of most of the monitored
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36 304 phytochemicals along with sampled periods were almost similar between aerial parts
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39 305 and rhizomes; and (6) the amplitude of variation along with growth period for each
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41 306 phytochemical was different. Our study should be of value in arousing everyone's
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44 307 interest in the future to make the best use of the aerial parts, rather than just rhizomes,
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46 308 of *A. officinarum*, valuable medicinal plant resources.
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317

318 **Conflicts of Interest**

319 There are no competing interests to declare.

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4 349 **Figure legends**

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6 350 **Figure 1** Chemical structures of interest occurring in *A. officinarum* aerial parts and
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9 351 rhizomes. These chemicals are given ID numbers in parentheses.

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11 352 **Figure 2** Cartoon for different sampling periods for *A. officinarum* aerial parts and
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14 353 rhizomes.

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17 354 **Figure 3** Product ion spectra of protonated phytochemicals of interest.

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20 355 **Figure 4** Representative chromatograms for seventeen reference standards (upper
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23 356 panel, the concentration level was 2000 ng/mL) and aerial parts samples (bottom
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26 357 panel, harvested at August 16, 2014 with sample no. *S_11*), as well as rhizomes
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28 358 samples (middle panel, harvested at March 29, 2014 with sample no. *S_03*) of *A.*
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31 359 *officinarum*.

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34 360 **Figure 5** Content-sampling period curves for seventeen phytochemicals.
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Figure 1

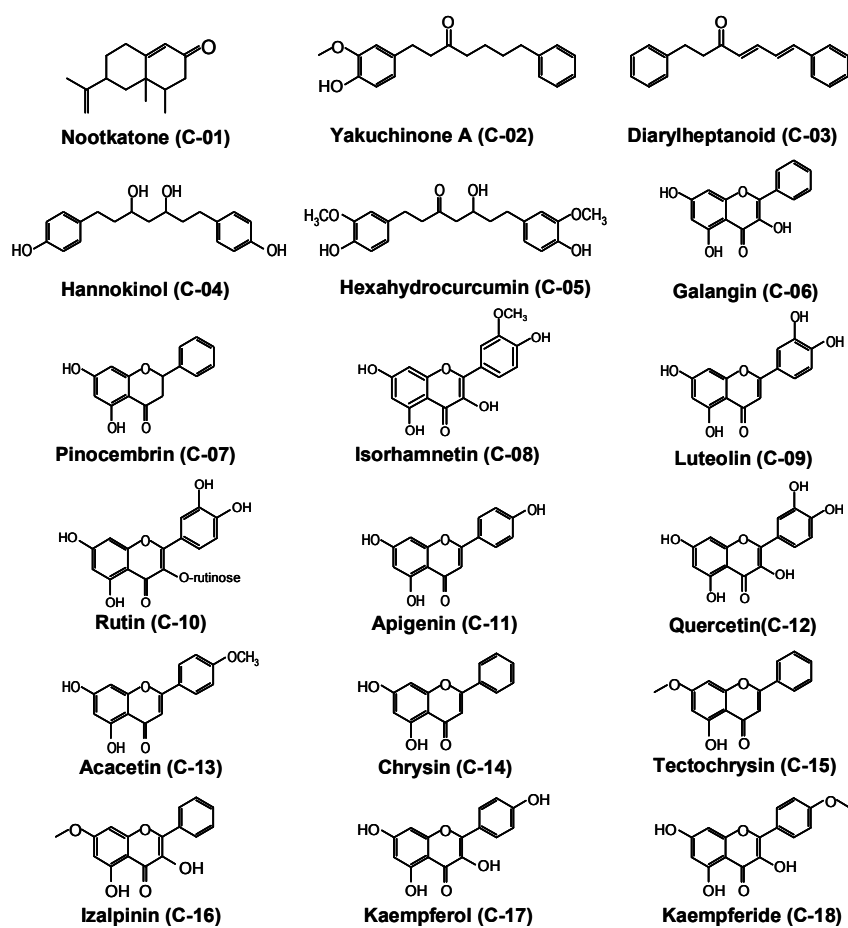


Figure 2

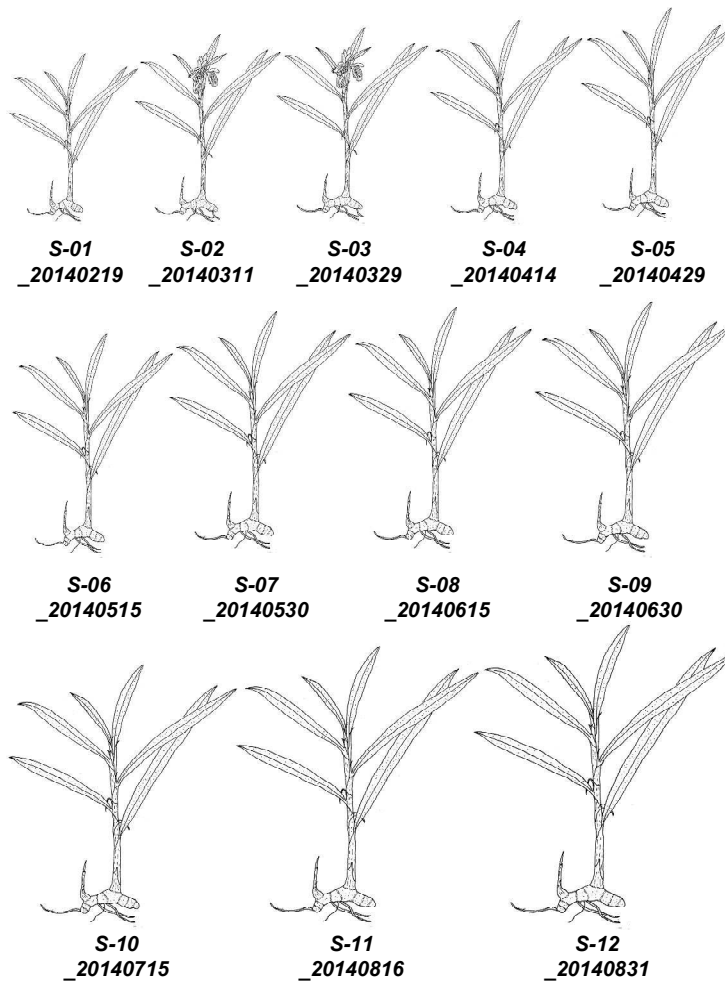


Figure 3

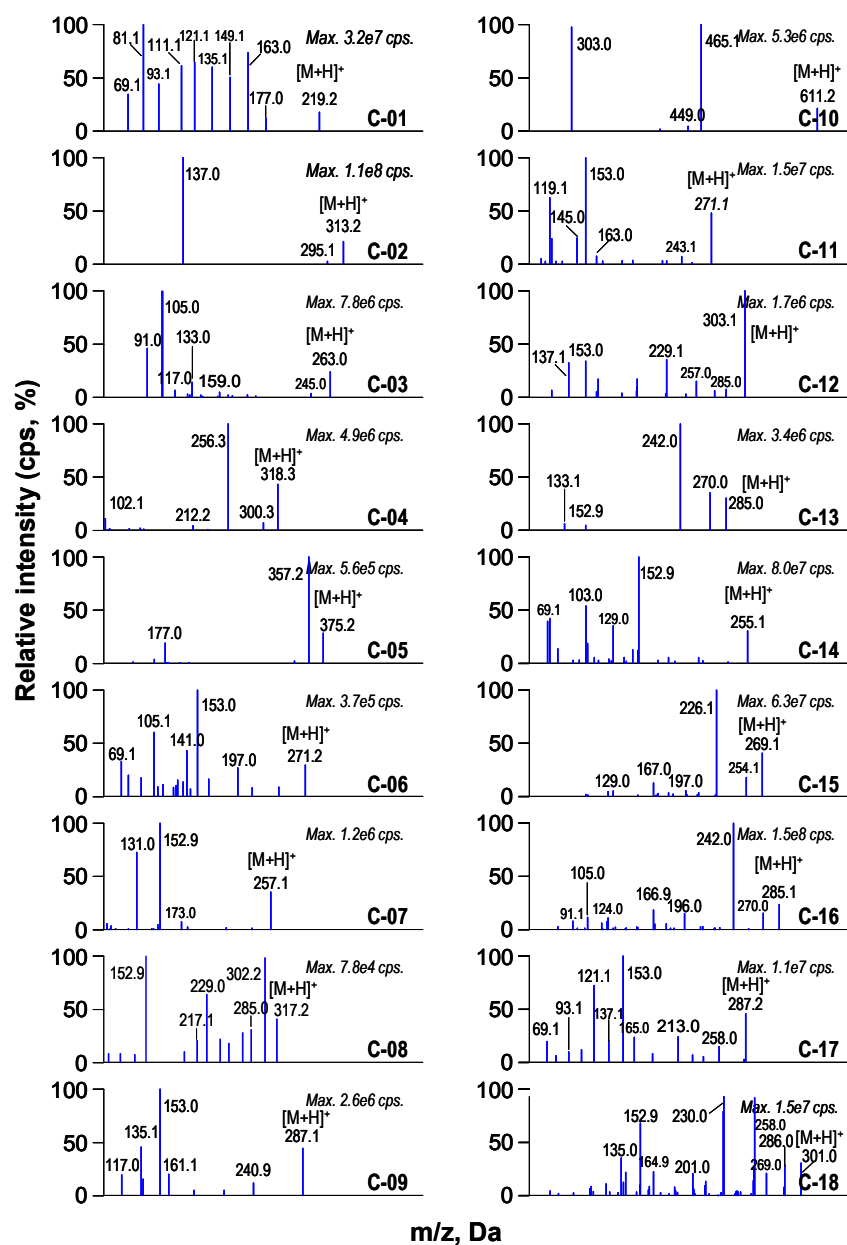


Figure 4

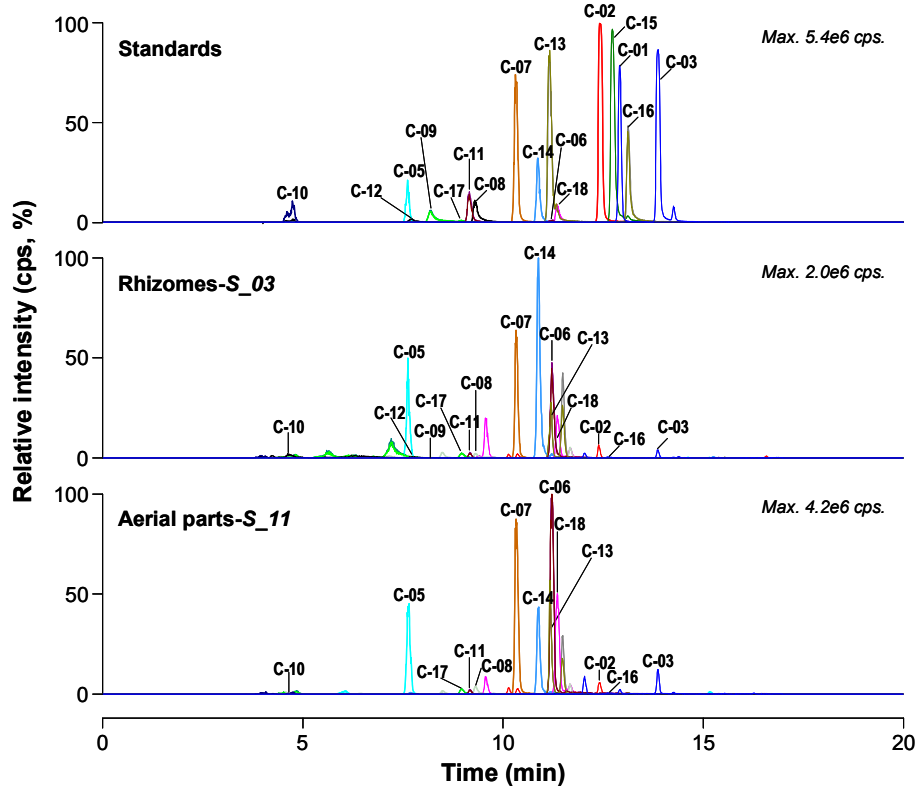
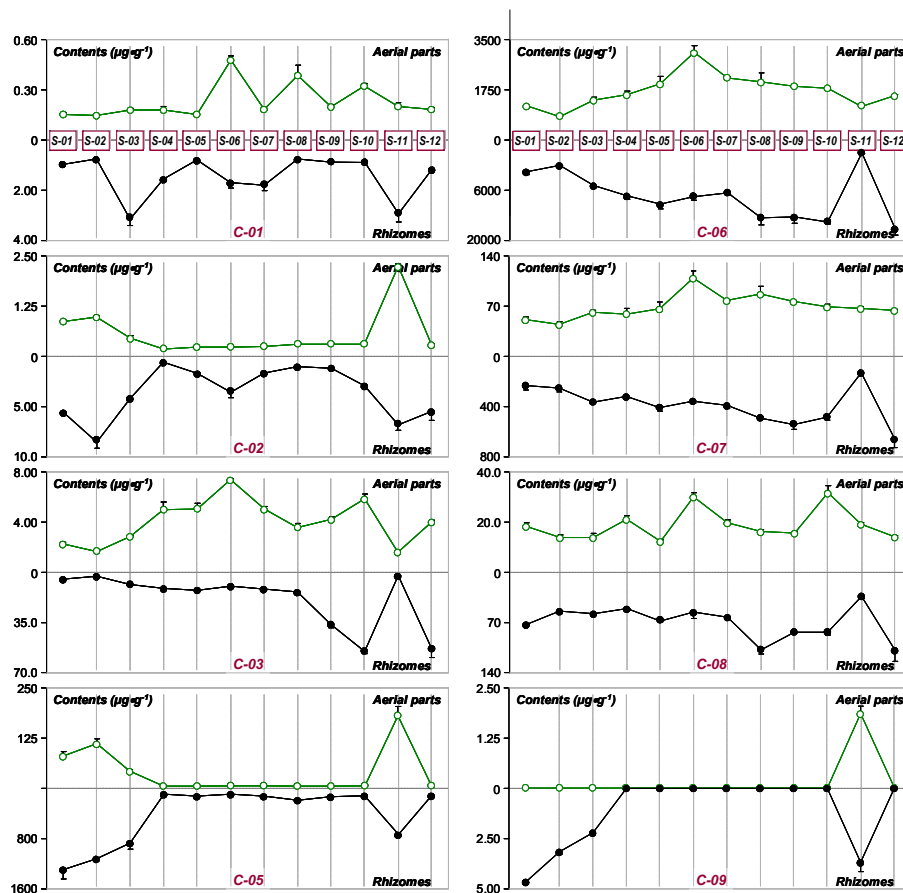


Figure 5a



Analytical Methods Accepted Manuscript

Figure 5b

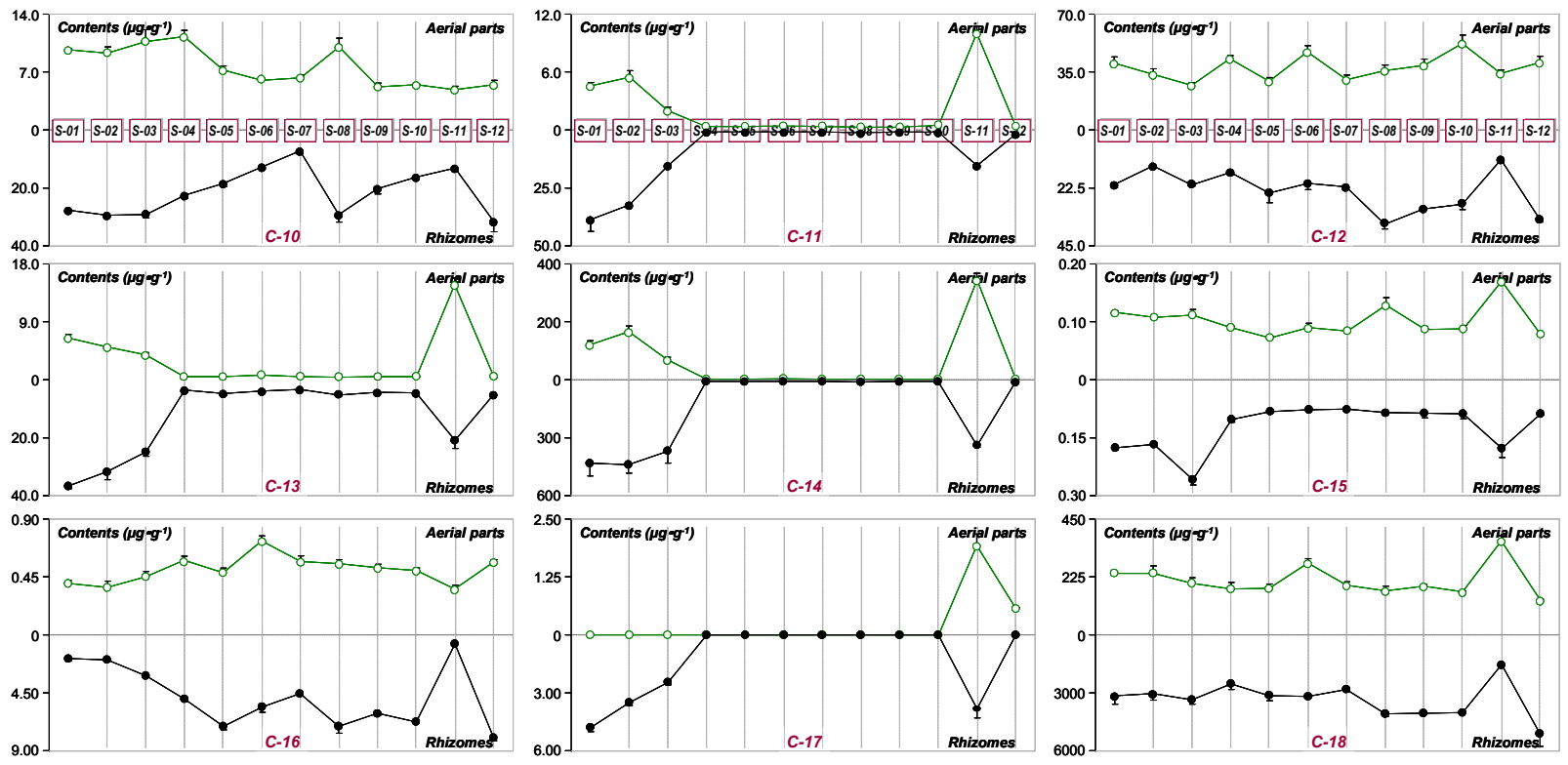


Table 1 Validation parameters

Analytes	LOD (ng·mL ⁻¹)	LOQ (ng·mL ⁻¹)	Linearity (range, <i>r</i> , weighting factor)	Precision (Intra-/inter-day; RSD, %)		Recovery (mean %; RSD %)	
				Aerial parts	Rhizomes	Aerial parts	Rhizomes
C-01	0.05	1	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9963, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	2.37%; 9.96%	2.28%; 3.41%	105 (2.61%)	102 (2.90%)
C-02	0.05	1	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9933, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	4.53%; 7.51%	4.81%; 5.57%	85.9 (0.46%)	91.5 (1.15%)
C-03	0.01	0.1	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9943, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	4.83%; 4.45%	5.04%; 4.08%	86.7 (2.54%)	85.9 (4.28%)
C-05	1	2	2-2000, <i>r</i> =0.9975, 1/ <i>x</i>	5.21%; 6.20%	9.28%; 8.76%	91.6 (1.98%)	88.1 (9.66%)
C-06	0.01	2	2-1000, <i>r</i> =0.9991, 1/ <i>x</i>	8.38%; 8.01%	8.40%; 5.42%	98.1 (5.77%)	90.8 (9.32%)
C-07	0.05	0.5	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9936, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	3.27%; 4.04%	3.24%; 4.38%	88.9 (1.88%)	87.6 (2.32%)
C-08	1	2	2-1000, <i>r</i> =0.9993, 1/ <i>x</i>	2.44%; 3.22%	7.86%; 6.21%	102 (3.68%)	94.2 (5.03%)
C-09	1	2	2-2000, <i>r</i> =0.9985, 1/ <i>x</i>	7.11%; 5.89%	5.64%; 5.80%	110 (4.31%)	109 (2.98%)
C-10	1	2	2-2000, <i>r</i> =0.9992, 1/ <i>x</i>	3.85%; 4.12%	4.04%; 4.32%	106 (6.56%)	103 (10.6%)
C-11	0.5	1	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9971, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	4.36%; 3.36%	2.07%; 2.90%	112 (1.98%)	95.2 (4.58%)
C-12	5	10	10-2000, <i>r</i> =0.9989, 1/ <i>x</i>	7.23%; 8.12%	5.03%; 6.63%	97.6 (7.85%)	93.4 (5.48%)
C-13	0.05	0.1	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9939, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	4.15%; 2.94%	7.78%; 2.27%	111 (3.19%)	95.2 (3.96%)
C-14	0.5	1	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9947, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	2.76%; 4.44%	6.30%; 14.8%	94.5 (2.98%)	91.6 (2.78%)
C-15	0.05	0.1	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9904, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	2.02%; 2.31%	3.98%; 3.29%	86.0 (0.84%)	85.5 (2.67%)
C-16	0.05	0.1	1-100, <i>r</i> =0.9943, 1/ <i>x</i> ²	6.98%; 6.38%	5.28%; 5.13%	89.0 (3.86%)	87.0 (1.18%)
C-17	2	5	2-2000, <i>r</i> =0.9980, 1/ <i>x</i>	5.39%; 6.82%	8.41%; 6.82%	106 (7.57%)	102 (4.47%)
C-18	0.0141	1.41	1.41-1410, <i>r</i> =0.9987, 1/ <i>x</i>	2.30%; 9.30%	7.27%; 7.55%	103 (5.47%)	112 (3.57%)