

Original Research Article

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Influence of Date of Sowing and Foliar Application of Nutrients on Crop Growth and Seed Yield of Soybean

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

Soybean, Date of sowing, Nutrient spray, Crop growth, Seed yield

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In order to investigate the effect of planting date and foliar application of nutrients on crop growth and seed yield of soybean variety DSb 21. A field experiment was conducted by adopting split plot design with three replications at Main Agricultural Research Station, UAS, Dharwad during *khariif*, 2016 and 2017. The experiment consisted of three planting dates with fortnight interval (first fortnight of June, second fortnight of June and first fortnight of July) and foliar spray of eight treatments. Among the dates of sowing, first fortnight of June (D₁) recorded significantly highest values for plant height (65.54 cm), number of branches (12.42), leaf area (56.28 cm²), leaf area index (4.84), chlorophyll content (42.51) and seed yield per hectare (32.35 q). Foliar spray of KNO₃ @ 0.5% + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5% + Boron 0.50% (T₈) recorded highest plant height (64.28 cm), number of branches (10.22), leaf area (54.47 cm²), leaf area index (4.57), chlorophyll content (43.34) and seed yield per hectare (31.41 q). In general, the results of this study indicated that planting date of first fortnight of June sprayed with KNO₃ @ 0.5% + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5% + Boron 0.50% were suitable for soybean planting in Dharwad region of Karnataka.

Introduction

Soybean [*Glycine max* (L.) Merrill] crop is native of China and distributed to Asia, USA, Brazil, Argentina etc. It is synonymously called as 'Chinese pea' or 'Manchurian bean' or "Golden bean" and it is emerged as a miracle crop of 20th century because it is versatile and fascinating crop. Apart from high yielding potential (30-35 q/ha), soybean is very rich in protein (40 %) and edible oil (20%) contains a fairly high amount of unsaturated fatty acids and about 1.5 to 3.1 per

cent lecithin which is essential for building up of nerve tissue. Soybean is the single largest oilseed produced in the world. It alone contributes about 58 per cent of the global oil seed production. It ranks first in oil seed production followed by rapeseed (13 %), groundnut (8 %) and sunflower (7 %). Globally, soybean occupies an area of 126.6 m ha producing 346.3 mt with the productivity of 2735 kg per ha. In India soybean occupies an area of 10.60 m ha producing 12.22 m.t with productivity of 1153 kg per ha and Karnataka with an area of 0.27 m ha producing 0.17 mt

with productivity of 639 kg per ha (Anon., 2017). Climatic factors like temperature, precipitation or rain, snow fall, wind, wind storms, flooding etc., have crucial role in agricultural production.

In agriculture both temperature and precipitation are the dominant climatic factors to affect crop yields which vary widely throughout the year and place (Alexandrov and Hoogenboom, 2001). Planting prior to or later than the optimal planting date can greatly reduce soybean yield and quality since photoperiodism controls not only the number of days to flowering, but also the amount of time available for vegetative plant growth and development. Soybeans planted prior or late to optimum range often lose yield from poor emergence due to inadequate soil temperature or, when planted after the optimal range, from failure to fully develop (Bastidas *et al.*, 2008).

To increase the productivity of soybean, it is necessary to provide adequate nutrition to the plant for growth and development. Plant nutrition plays an important role for enhancing seed yield and quality in soybean. Foliar application of nutrients was more beneficial than soil application, since application rates are lesser as compared to soil application, same results were obtained and the crop reacts to nutrient application immediately (Zayed *et al.*, 2011).

Recently, new generation fertilizers have been introduced exclusively for foliar feeding and fertilization. These fertilizers are better source for foliar application (Vibhute, 1998). These fertilizers have different ratios of N, P and K which are highly water soluble and so amenable for foliar nutrition (Jayabal *et al.*, 1999). Quality seed production in soybean is holistic approach which involves the activities like standardization of appropriate season, time of planting and other several techniques to enhance the storability. Keeping all these

aspects in view, the present investigation was undertaken.

Materials and Methods

A Field experiment was conducted during *kharif* season of 2016 and 2017 at Main Agricultural Research Station, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad. The factors of the experiment was laid out in split plot design and comprised of three date of sowing (D₁: 1st fortnight of June, D₂: 2nd fortnight of June and D₃: 1st fortnight of July) as main plots and foliar spray were considered as subplot (T₁: Water spray, T₂: Urea spray @ 2 %, T₃: Diammonium phosphate (DAP) @ 2 %, T₄: Potassium phosphate (KH₂PO₄) @ 1 %, T₅: Boron @ 0.50 %, T₆: 19:19:19 @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 %, T₇: KNO₃ @ 1 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 % and T₈: KNO₃ @ 0.5 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 % + Boron 0.50 %) sprayed at 45 days after sowing for soybean *cv* DSb 21. Crop management factors like land preparation, fertilizer, and weed control were followed as recommended for local area. All the plant protection measures were adopted to make the crop free from insects. The data were recorded on five randomly selected plants of each replication for plant height, number of branches, leaf area, chlorophyll content and seed yield was also recorded. The fortnight meteorological observations during crop growth period are presented in Figure 1.

Results and Discussion

The plant height and number of branches at 30, 60 days after sowing and at harvest as influenced by date of sowing and foliar application of nutrients and their interaction effects during 2016, 2017 and pooled data are presented in Table 1.

The plant height differed significantly due to different date of sowing. Significantly maximum plant height was recorded in the D₁

(26.40, 24.17 and 25.28 cm) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 23.19, 22.16 and 22.68 cm). The lowest plant height (21.15, 19.85 and 20.50 cm) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively at 30 DAS. Significantly higher plant height (65.95, 65.14 and 65.54 cm) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 63.57, 61.37 and 62.47 cm), while lower plant height (59.43, 57.77 and 58.60 cm) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively at 60 DAS. Significantly higher plant height (87.48, 85.39 and 86.44 cm) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 83.80, 80.51 and 82.16 cm), while lower plant height (79.61, 76.70 and 78.15 cm) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively at harvest.

The number of branches per plant differed significantly due to different date of sowing. Significantly more number of branches (7.53, 6.45 and 6.99) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 7.33, 6.12 and 6.73) and lower number of branches per plant (7.01, 5.85 and 6.43) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively at 30 Days after Sowing. Significantly higher number of branches per plant (10.65, 10.20 and 10.42) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 9.91, 9.74 and 9.83), while lower number of branches per plant (9.55, 9.09 and 9.32) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively at 60 DAS. Significantly higher number of branches per plant (12.60, 12.24 and 12.42) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 2.26, 12.05 and 12.15), while lower number of

branches per plant (11.93, 11.66 and 11.79) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively at harvest. This may be due to the optimum environmental conditions like well distribution of rainfall and optimum mean temperature (25.5 °C) and relative humidity (79 %) prevailing in that period, also early and normal planting dates allow a longer growth period, plants are exposed to suitable temperature regimes during the vegetative and reproductive growth stages for the entire growing period. In contrast, plant growth was negatively affected by late planting date due to the decreased vegetative and reproductive growth duration which has been affected by (27 °C) high temperature (Frimpong, 2004). Banterng *et al.*, (2003) reported that both vegetative and reproductive stage in late planting was decreased, thus plant produces less biomass in delayed sowing, which results in shortened plant height. These results are in conformity with the findings of Mohankumar *et al.*, (2011) and Kumar *et al.*, (2015).

Among the foliar application of nutrients, T₈ (KNO₃ @ 0.5 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 % + Boron 0.50 %) noticed significantly higher plant height (65.16, 63.40 and 64.28 cm: at 60 DAS, 85.40, 82.87 and 84.13 cm: at harvest) which is on par (65.15, 63.39 and 64.27 cm: at 60 DAS, 85.39, 82.86 and 84.12 cm: at harvest) with T₆ (19:19:19 NPK @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 %) and T₇ (KNO₃ @ 1 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 %) The lowest plant height (59.50, 57.43 and 58.47 cm: at 60 DAS, 80.52, 77.56 and 79.04 cm: at harvest) was recorded in control during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively.

Among the foliar application of nutrients, T₈ (KNO₃ @ 0.5 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 % + Boron 0.50 %) noticed significantly higher number of branches per plant (10.41, 10.03 and 10.22: at 60 DAS, 12.60, 12.32 and 12.46: at harvest) which is on par (10.40, 10.02 and 10.21: at 60

DAS, 12.59, 12.31 and 12.45: at harvest) with T₆ (19:19:19 NPK @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 %) and T₇ (KNO₃ @ 1 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 %) and lower number of branches per plant (9.47, 9.06 and 9.27 at 60 DAS, 11.74, 11.46 and 11.60 at harvest) was recorded in control during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively at 60 DAS. This treatment composed of N, P, K and high boron plays role in various physiological and biochemical processes contributing to the growth of the meristematic regions. KH₂PO₄ induced growth was found to be associated with enhanced higher solute content, water use efficiency, relative water content and photosystem. The above results are in conformity with the observations of Mahmoud *et al.*, (2006) in fababean, Ali and Adel (2013) in mungbean. Beg *et al.*, (2013) reported that, nitrogen being an active participant of chlorophyll molecule and protein is an essential element for plant growth. Spray with potassium salts increased leaf potassium content which helps to maintain osmosis across the cells and tissues of leaves, thereby maintaining higher relative water content at higher rates, photosystem. Hence, there was considerable improvement in growth even under saline strata in present investigation.

Combined application of 19:19:19 NPK @ 3 % along with Boron @ 0.50 %) (T₆) also recorded highest plant height and branches compared to control. This might be due to six per cent more N in 19:19:19 NPK fertilizer compared to KNO₃, which might have enhanced plant height, because of its role in cell division and cell elongation at higher levels of nitrogen. This was due to the presence of phosphorus in 19:19:19 NPK fertilizer which helps in cell division and cell development leading to higher number of branches. Results obtained in the present investigation are in accordance with the findings of Prabhavathi *et al.*, (2009) in mungbean.

The leaf area and leaf area index at 30 and 60 days after sowing (DAS) as influenced by date of sowing and foliar application of nutrients and their interaction effects during 2016, 2017 and pooled data are presented in the Table 2.

The leaf area differed significantly due to different date of sowing. Significantly higher leaf area (36.87, 35.62 and 36.25 cm²) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 33.25, 32.30 and 32.78 cm²) and lowest leaf area (31.57, 30.59 and 31.08 cm²) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) at 30 DAS. Significantly highest (56.27, 56.28 and 56.28 cm²) leaf area was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 54.80, 53.75 and 54.28 cm²) while lowest leaf area (50.15, 49.99 and 50.07 cm²) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) at 60 DAS during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively.

The leaf area index differed significantly due to different date of sowing. Significantly higher leaf area index (2.61, 2.43 and 2.52) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 2.17, 1.91 and 2.04) and lowest leaf area index (1.78, 1.67 and 1.72) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) at 30 DAS. The leaf area index differed significantly due to different date of sowing. Significantly highest leaf area index (4.90, 4.78 and 4.87) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second fortnight of June: 4.57, 4.33 and 4.45) while lowest leaf area index (3.83, 3.77 and 3.80) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) at 60 DAS during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively.

Among the foliar application of nutrients, T₈ (KNO₃ @ 0.5 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 % + Boron 0.50 %) noticed significantly highest leaf area (54.71, 54.22 and 54.47 cm²) and leaf area index (4.64, 4.50 and 4.57) which is on par

leaf area (54.71, 54.21 and 54.46 cm²) and leaf area index (4.64, 4.49 and 4.57) with T₆ (19:19:19 NPK @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 %) and T₇ (KNO₃ @ 1 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 %) and lowest leaf area (52.26, 51.92 and 52.09 cm²) and leaf area index (4.08, 3.93 and 4.01) was recorded in control during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively at 60 DAS. This might be due to maintenance of higher leaf area, leaf dry matter and crop growth rate by utilizing the foliar applied nutrients. These results are in line with the findings of Pradeep and Elamathi (2007) and Zayed *et al.*, (2011). T₆ (19:19:19 NPK @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 %) also recorded significantly higher value of leaf area, this might be due to nitrogen being chief constituent of protein and protoplasm has enhanced the synthesis of chlorophyll content of the leaves and cell division thus resulted in more no of leaves attributed towards more leaf area. These results are in confirmation with the findings of Sarkar and Pal (2006) and Gupta *et al.*, (2011) (Table 3).

The SPAD reading at full bloom stage differed significantly due to different date of sowing. Significantly higher SPAD reading (43.19, 41.82 and 42.51) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (Second date of sowing: 40.80, 38.65 and 39.73) and lowest SPAD reading (39.83, 37.93 and 38.88) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively. Delayed sowing reduces SPAD meter readings, which might be due to drought stress reduced the total chlorophyll and per cent of seed storage protein. This is in line with the findings of Patel and Hemantaranjan (2013), they reported that increasing in the level of total phenolics content were observed under drought stress and thus reduced the total chlorophyll content. Singla *et al.*, (2016) revealed higher photosynthetic rate (Ps), transpiration rate (Tr), leaf area index (LAI), and SPAD values were observed in mid-June sowing than early-July and late-July sowing.

Gowthami *et al.*, (2018) stated that, higher total chlorophyll content due to foliar spray of potassium nitrate (2 %) + Boric acid (0.5 %) + zinc sulphate (1 %) at 30 and 60 DAS treatment might be due to increase in the photosynthetic pigments like chlorophylls and carotenoids by foliar application of boron and increase in the rate of photosynthesis. These results are in conformity with the findings of Thurzo *et al.*, (2010) in sweet cherry.

Among the different dates of sowing, D₁ (June first fortnight) significantly taken more number of days for beginning bloom (39.37, 38.60 and 38.99 days), full bloom (49.07, 48.08 and 48.57 days), beginning pod (46.93, 46.09 and 46.51 days), full pod (64.48, 63.94 and 64.21 days), beginning seed (57.02, 55.92 and 56.47 days), full seed (75.68, 74.30 and 74.99 days), beginning maturity (74.69, 71.49 and 73.09 days) and full maturity (98.15, 97.37 and 97.76 days) followed by D₂ beginning bloom (36.18, 36.17 and 36.17 days), full bloom (45.60, 46.16 and 45.88 days), beginning pod (44.41, 44.32 and 44.36 days), full pod (61.67, 61.71 and 61.69 days), beginning seed (54.15, 53.345 and 53.75 days), full seed (72.68, 72.39 and 72.54 days), beginning maturity (71.49, 72.26 and 71.87 days) and full maturity (95.25, 96.10 and 95.68 days). Significantly less number of days for beginning bloom (34.93, 33.93 and 34.43 days), full bloom (45.06, 44.06 and 44.56 days), beginning pod (44.05, 43.91 and 43.98 days), full pod (60.70, 59.70 and 60.20 days), beginning seed (51.83, 50.83 and 51.33 days), full seed (69.68, 68.68 and 69.18 days), beginning maturity (68.91, 74.69 and 71.80 days) and full maturity (94.66, 93.66 and 94.16 days) was recorded under D₃ (Third date of sowing) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data, respectively as presented in Figure 2. This might be due to more difference in maximum and minimum temperature (6.09 and 6.92 °C) during second fortnight of June and first fortnight of July, respectively).

Table.1 Effect of date of sowing and foliar application of nutrients on plant height and number of branches at different growth stages of soybean

Treatments	Plant height (cm)									Number of branches								
	30 DAS			60 DAS			At harvest			30 DAS			60 DAS			At harvest		
	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled
Main plot (D)																		
D ₁	26.40	24.17	25.28	65.95	65.14	65.54	87.48	85.39	86.44	7.53	6.45	6.99	10.65	10.20	10.42	12.60	12.24	12.42
D ₂	23.19	22.16	22.68	63.57	61.37	62.47	83.80	80.51	82.16	7.33	6.12	6.73	9.91	9.74	9.83	12.26	12.05	12.15
D ₃	21.15	19.85	20.50	59.43	57.77	58.60	79.61	76.70	78.15	7.01	5.85	6.43	9.55	9.09	9.32	11.93	11.66	11.79
S. Em. ±	0.10	0.09	0.05	0.19	0.19	0.10	0.29	0.30	0.15	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.01
C.D. @ 5 %	0.41	0.36	0.16	0.76	0.75	0.31	1.14	1.18	0.48	0.08	0.09	0.03	0.13	0.12	0.05	0.10	0.08	0.04
Sub Plot (T)																		
T ₁	23.41	22.04	22.73	59.50	57.43	58.47	80.52	77.56	79.04	7.28	6.13	6.71	9.47	9.06	9.27	11.74	11.46	11.60
T ₂	23.44	22.06	22.75	61.46	60.69	61.07	82.43	79.81	81.12	7.29	6.14	6.72	9.83	9.48	9.66	12.08	11.76	11.92
T ₃	24.66	22.06	23.36	62.82	61.39	62.11	83.80	80.75	82.27	7.29	6.14	6.71	10.00	9.70	9.85	12.22	11.93	12.08
T ₄	23.42	22.07	22.75	64.14	62.58	63.36	84.67	81.83	83.25	7.28	6.14	6.71	10.19	9.85	10.02	12.38	12.11	12.25
T ₅	23.43	22.06	22.75	60.47	59.15	59.81	81.44	78.42	79.93	7.29	6.14	6.71	9.61	9.25	9.43	11.90	11.63	11.76
T ₆	23.43	22.06	22.75	65.15	63.39	64.27	85.39	82.86	84.12	7.29	6.14	6.71	10.40	10.02	10.21	12.59	12.31	12.45
T ₇	23.43	22.07	22.75	65.15	63.39	64.27	85.39	82.86	84.12	7.28	6.14	6.71	10.40	10.02	10.21	12.59	12.31	12.45
T ₈	23.42	22.06	22.74	65.16	63.40	64.28	85.40	82.87	84.13	7.29	6.14	6.72	10.41	10.03	10.22	12.60	12.32	12.46
S. Em. ±	0.23	0.21	0.11	0.50	0.49	0.25	0.75	0.77	0.38	0.05	0.06	0.03	0.08	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.03
C.D. @ 5 %	NS	NS	NS	1.41	1.39	0.69	2.13	2.18	1.06	NS	NS	NS	0.23	0.20	0.11	0.21	0.15	0.09
Interactions (D x T)																		
D ₁ T ₁	25.91	24.14	25.03	62.15	61.28	61.71	84.16	81.64	82.90	7.52	6.44	6.98	10.09	9.69	9.89	12.06	11.62	11.84
D ₁ T ₂	25.93	24.16	25.04	64.28	64.72	64.50	86.21	84.25	85.23	7.53	6.45	6.99	10.48	10.02	10.25	12.39	11.91	12.15
D ₁ T ₃	29.63	24.16	26.90	65.32	65.41	65.37	87.46	85.63	86.55	7.53	6.45	6.99	10.69	10.20	10.45	12.52	12.17	12.35
D ₁ T ₄	25.94	24.17	25.06	67.56	66.28	66.92	88.65	86.34	87.50	7.53	6.45	6.99	10.81	10.32	10.57	12.68	12.38	12.53
D ₁ T ₅	25.96	24.19	25.08	63.58	62.38	62.98	85.63	82.46	84.05	7.52	6.44	6.98	10.25	9.82	10.04	12.22	11.78	12.00
D ₁ T ₆	25.96	24.18	25.07	68.24	67.00	67.62	89.24	87.60	88.42	7.53	6.45	6.99	10.95	10.51	10.73	12.97	12.68	12.83
D ₁ T ₇	25.95	24.18	25.07	68.24	67.00	67.62	89.24	87.60	88.42	7.52	6.44	6.98	10.95	10.51	10.73	12.97	12.68	12.83
D ₁ T ₈	25.93	24.15	25.04	68.25	67.01	67.63	89.25	87.61	88.43	7.52	6.44	6.98	10.96	10.52	10.74	12.98	12.69	12.84
D ₂ T ₁	23.17	22.14	22.66	60.89	56.79	58.84	80.79	77.62	79.21	7.33	6.11	6.72	9.24	9.07	9.16	11.68	11.52	11.60
D ₂ T ₂	23.23	22.15	22.69	62.39	60.89	61.64	82.46	79.64	81.05	7.34	6.13	6.74	9.70	9.58	9.64	12.07	11.87	11.97
D ₂ T ₃	23.18	22.17	22.68	63.51	61.38	62.45	83.98	80.09	82.04	7.33	6.11	6.72	9.83	9.79	9.81	12.22	12.02	12.12
D ₂ T ₄	23.18	22.17	22.68	64.28	62.82	63.55	84.62	81.28	82.95	7.32	6.12	6.72	10.12	9.95	10.03	12.41	12.19	12.30
D ₂ T ₅	23.17	22.15	22.66	61.46	59.27	60.37	81.63	78.46	80.05	7.32	6.12	6.72	9.39	9.28	9.34	11.86	11.73	11.80
D ₂ T ₆	23.20	22.16	22.68	65.33	63.27	64.30	85.63	82.33	83.98	7.32	6.12	6.72	10.33	10.08	10.21	12.60	12.34	12.47
D ₂ T ₇	23.20	22.18	22.69	65.33	63.27	64.30	85.63	82.33	83.98	7.32	6.12	6.72	10.33	10.08	10.21	12.60	12.34	12.47
D ₂ T ₈	23.21	22.16	22.69	65.34	63.28	64.31	85.64	82.34	83.99	7.34	6.13	6.74	10.34	10.09	10.22	12.61	12.35	12.48
D ₃ T ₁	21.16	19.83	20.50	55.47	54.22	54.85	76.62	73.41	75.02	7.00	5.84	6.42	9.08	8.42	8.75	11.48	11.25	11.37
D ₃ T ₂	21.15	19.86	20.51	57.69	56.46	57.08	78.61	75.53	77.07	7.00	5.84	6.42	9.31	8.85	9.08	11.78	11.50	11.64
D ₃ T ₃	21.18	19.84	20.51	59.64	57.37	58.51	79.96	76.52	78.24	7.01	5.85	6.43	9.48	9.11	9.30	11.92	11.61	11.77
D ₃ T ₄	21.15	19.87	20.51	60.58	58.64	59.61	80.73	77.86	79.30	7.00	5.84	6.42	9.64	9.28	9.46	12.06	11.77	11.91
D ₃ T ₅	21.17	19.84	20.51	56.37	55.79	56.08	77.06	74.34	75.70	7.02	5.86	6.44	9.19	8.66	8.92	11.61	11.37	11.49
D ₃ T ₆	21.14	19.85	20.50	61.88	59.90	60.89	81.30	78.64	79.97	7.01	5.85	6.43	9.90	9.47	9.69	12.19	11.91	12.05
D ₃ T ₇	21.13	19.85	20.49	61.88	59.90	60.89	81.30	78.64	79.97	7.01	5.85	6.43	9.90	9.47	9.69	12.19	11.91	12.05
D ₃ T ₈	21.13	19.86	20.50	61.89	59.91	60.90	81.31	78.65	79.98	7.02	5.86	6.44	9.91	9.48	9.70	12.20	11.92	12.06
S. Em. ±	0.68	0.63	0.33	1.49	1.47	0.74	2.24	2.30	1.14	0.16	0.18	0.09	0.24	0.21	0.11	0.22	0.16	0.10
C.D. @ 5 %	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Table.2 Effect of date of sowing and foliar application of nutrients on leaf area and leaf area index at different growth stages of soybean

Treatments	Leaf area (cm ²)						Leaf area index					
	30 DAS			60 DAS			30 DAS			60 DAS		
Main plot (D)	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled
D ₁	36.87	35.62	36.25	56.27	56.28	56.28	2.61	2.43	2.52	4.90	4.78	4.84
D ₂	33.25	32.30	32.78	54.80	53.75	54.28	2.17	1.91	2.04	4.57	4.33	4.45
D ₃	31.57	30.59	31.08	50.15	49.99	50.07	1.78	1.67	1.72	3.83	3.77	3.80
S. Em. ±	0.13	0.13	0.07	0.19	0.19	0.09	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01
C.D. @ 5 %	0.52	0.50	0.21	0.73	0.74	0.31	0.06	0.06	0.02	0.08	0.08	0.03
Sub Plot (T)												
T ₁	32.50	31.24	31.87	52.26	51.92	52.09	1.92	1.77	1.84	4.08	3.93	4.01
T ₂	33.08	31.84	32.46	53.10	52.84	52.97	2.07	1.87	1.97	4.31	4.17	4.24
T ₃	33.92	32.68	33.30	53.51	53.31	53.41	2.20	2.00	2.10	4.39	4.29	4.34
T ₄	33.30	31.94	32.62	54.29	53.73	54.01	2.05	1.86	1.96	4.55	4.39	4.47
T ₅	34.16	32.96	33.56	52.61	52.32	52.46	2.21	1.99	2.10	4.21	4.07	4.14
T ₆	34.98	34.46	34.72	54.71	54.21	54.46	2.40	2.24	2.32	4.64	4.49	4.57
T ₇	34.61	33.80	34.21	54.71	54.21	54.46	2.31	2.15	2.23	4.64	4.49	4.57
T ₈	34.60	33.80	34.20	54.71	54.22	54.47	2.31	2.15	2.23	4.64	4.50	4.57
S. Em. ±	0.41	0.39	0.20	0.30	0.31	0.09	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.05	0.02
C.D. @ 5 %	NS	NS	NS	0.90	0.93	0.27	NS	NS	NS	0.14	0.13	0.07
Interactions (D x T)												
D ₁ T ₁	35.25	33.21	34.23	54.89	55.01	54.95	2.24	2.06	2.15	4.55	4.46	4.51
D ₁ T ₂	36.23	34.39	35.31	55.67	55.92	55.80	2.47	2.28	2.37	4.79	4.71	4.75
D ₁ T ₃	37.20	35.53	36.37	56.02	56.17	56.10	2.65	2.42	2.53	4.87	4.78	4.83
D ₁ T ₄	36.35	34.62	35.49	56.85	56.68	56.77	2.44	2.28	2.36	5.04	4.87	4.96
D ₁ T ₅	37.21	35.82	36.52	55.01	55.38	55.20	2.65	2.42	2.53	4.67	4.59	4.63
D ₁ T ₆	38.00	37.95	37.98	57.24	57.03	57.14	2.92	2.75	2.84	5.09	4.94	5.02
D ₁ T ₇	37.35	36.73	37.04	57.24	57.03	57.14	2.76	2.60	2.68	5.09	4.94	5.02
D ₁ T ₈	37.35	36.73	37.04	57.23	57.04	57.14	2.76	2.60	2.68	5.10	4.94	5.02
D ₂ T ₁	31.52	30.72	31.12	53.68	52.19	52.94	1.93	1.71	1.82	4.25	3.97	4.11
D ₂ T ₂	32.16	31.26	31.71	54.38	53.28	53.83	2.05	1.77	1.91	4.46	4.16	4.31
D ₂ T ₃	33.22	32.36	32.79	54.85	53.92	54.39	2.19	1.93	2.06	4.54	4.33	4.43
D ₂ T ₄	32.46	31.46	31.96	55.03	54.12	54.57	2.04	1.76	1.90	4.64	4.42	4.53
D ₂ T ₅	33.64	32.52	33.08	54.08	52.64	53.36	2.21	1.91	2.06	4.38	4.05	4.22
D ₂ T ₆	34.56	33.62	34.09	55.46	54.62	55.04	2.35	2.12	2.24	4.75	4.57	4.66
D ₂ T ₇	34.21	33.25	33.73	55.46	54.62	55.04	2.28	2.04	2.16	4.75	4.57	4.66
D ₂ T ₈	34.21	33.25	33.73	55.47	54.63	55.05	2.28	2.04	2.16	4.76	4.58	4.67
D ₃ T ₁	30.72	29.78	30.25	48.21	48.55	48.38	1.59	1.53	1.56	3.44	3.38	3.41
D ₃ T ₂	30.86	29.86	30.36	49.25	49.31	49.28	1.68	1.57	1.63	3.69	3.65	3.67
D ₃ T ₃	31.34	30.16	30.75	49.67	49.83	49.75	1.77	1.64	1.71	3.77	3.76	3.77
D ₃ T ₄	31.10	29.73	30.42	51.00	50.38	50.69	1.68	1.54	1.61	3.96	3.88	3.92
D ₃ T ₅	31.63	30.53	31.08	48.73	48.93	48.83	1.78	1.64	1.71	3.59	3.58	3.58
D ₃ T ₆	32.38	31.82	32.10	51.43	50.97	51.20	1.94	1.86	1.90	4.07	3.97	4.02
D ₃ T ₇	32.28	31.43	31.86	51.43	50.97	51.20	1.88	1.79	1.84	4.07	3.97	4.02
D ₃ T ₈	32.23	31.43	31.83	51.44	50.98	51.21	1.88	1.79	1.84	4.08	3.97	4.03
S. Em. ±	1.22	1.17	0.60	1.42	1.43	0.71	0.11	0.12	0.06	0.14	0.14	0.07
C.D. @ 5 %	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Table.3 Effect of date of sowing and foliar application of nutrients on chlorophyll content and seed yield of soybean

Treatments	Chlorophyll content			Seed yield/Plot (Kg)			Seed yield (q/ha)		
	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled	2016	2017	Pooled
Main plot (D)									
D ₁	43.19	41.82	42.51	3.26	3.24	3.25	32.46	32.24	32.35
D ₂	40.80	38.65	39.73	3.13	3.11	3.12	31.13	30.96	31.05
D ₃	39.83	37.93	38.88	2.59	2.57	2.58	25.75	25.52	25.63
S. Em. ±	0.13	0.16	0.50	0.059	0.059	0.006	0.58	0.58	0.41
C.D. @ 5 %	0.51	0.61	1.62	0.230	0.230	0.020	2.27	2.27	1.34
Sub Plot (T)									
T ₁	36.85	34.93	35.89	2.73	2.70	2.72	27.13	26.86	27.00
T ₂	39.47	37.70	38.58	2.90	2.88	2.89	28.86	28.69	28.77
T ₃	40.89	39.05	39.97	2.99	2.97	2.98	29.72	29.52	29.62
T ₄	41.81	40.25	41.03	3.04	3.02	3.03	30.28	30.05	30.17
T ₅	38.39	36.55	37.47	2.81	2.79	2.80	27.93	27.73	27.83
T ₆	44.26	42.41	43.33	3.16	3.14	3.15	31.41	31.21	31.31
T ₇	44.26	42.41	43.33	3.16	3.14	3.15	31.41	31.21	31.31
T ₈	44.27	42.42	43.34	3.17	3.15	3.16	31.51	31.31	31.41
S. Em. ±	0.31	0.29	0.63	0.089	0.089	0.015	0.89	0.88	0.63
C.D. @ 5 %	NS	NS	NS	0.254	0.253	0.042	2.53	2.52	1.76
Interactions (D x T)									
D ₁ T ₁	38.70	36.98	37.84	3.02	3.01	3.02	30.05	29.95	30.00
D ₁ T ₂	41.41	40.35	40.88	3.19	3.18	3.19	31.75	31.64	31.70
D ₁ T ₃	43.40	42.51	42.96	3.26	3.23	3.25	32.44	32.14	32.29
D ₁ T ₄	43.74	42.86	43.30	3.31	3.29	3.30	32.94	32.74	32.84
D ₁ T ₅	40.62	39.21	39.92	3.11	3.09	3.10	30.95	30.75	30.85
D ₁ T ₆	45.89	44.20	45.05	3.40	3.37	3.38	33.83	33.53	33.68
D ₁ T ₇	45.89	44.20	45.05	3.40	3.37	3.38	33.83	33.53	33.68
D ₁ T ₈	45.90	44.21	45.06	3.41	3.38	3.40	33.93	33.63	33.78
D ₂ T ₁	36.46	34.61	35.54	2.87	2.84	2.86	28.56	28.25	28.41
D ₂ T ₂	38.70	36.43	37.57	3.04	3.01	3.02	30.25	29.95	30.10
D ₂ T ₃	39.98	37.61	38.80	3.12	3.11	3.11	31.05	30.95	31.00
D ₂ T ₄	41.22	39.69	40.45	3.19	3.17	3.18	31.75	31.54	31.65
D ₂ T ₅	37.68	34.82	36.25	2.96	2.94	2.95	29.45	29.25	29.35
D ₂ T ₆	44.12	42.00	43.06	3.28	3.27	3.28	32.64	32.54	32.59
D ₂ T ₇	44.12	42.00	43.06	3.28	3.27	3.28	32.64	32.54	32.59
D ₂ T ₈	44.13	42.01	43.07	3.29	3.28	3.29	32.74	32.64	32.69
D ₃ T ₁	35.38	33.21	34.30	2.29	2.25	2.27	22.78	22.39	22.59
D ₃ T ₂	38.30	36.32	37.31	2.47	2.46	2.47	24.58	24.48	24.53
D ₃ T ₃	39.28	37.02	38.15	2.58	2.56	2.57	25.67	25.47	25.57
D ₃ T ₄	40.46	38.21	39.33	2.63	2.60	2.62	26.17	25.87	26.02
D ₃ T ₅	36.86	35.61	36.23	2.35	2.33	2.34	23.39	23.19	23.29
D ₃ T ₆	42.77	41.01	41.89	2.79	2.77	2.78	27.76	27.56	27.66
D ₃ T ₇	42.77	41.01	41.89	2.79	2.77	2.78	27.76	27.56	27.66
D ₃ T ₈	42.78	41.02	41.90	2.80	2.78	2.79	27.86	27.66	27.76
S. Em. ±	0.94	0.86	1.10	0.15	0.15	0.04	1.54	1.53	1.09
C.D. @ 5 %	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS

Fig.1 Fortnight meteorological observations during crop growth period

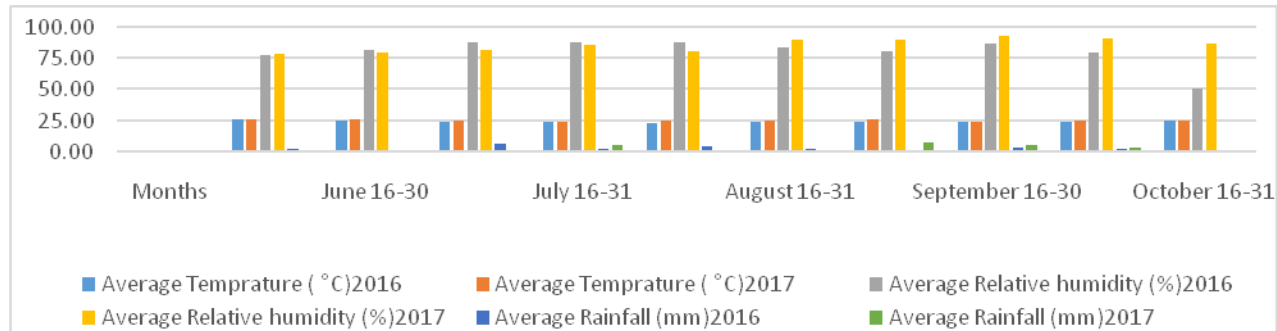
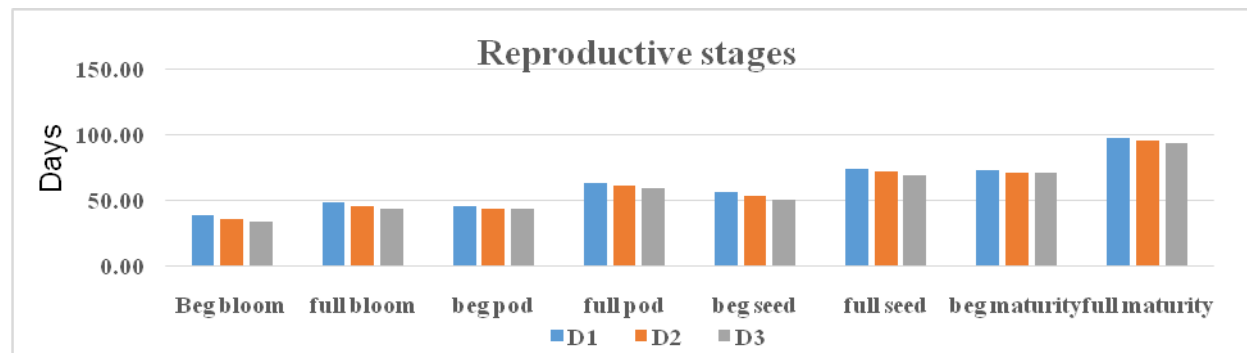


Fig.2 Effect of date of sowing and foliar application of nutrients on reproductive stages of soybean



During crop growth period, which accelerated development towards reproductive stage and hence less time was available for the plant for vegetative growth and leading to early maturity. These results are in accordance with the findings of Khan *et al.*, (2003) and Islami and Sugito (2012) who explained that the number of days to maturity of soybean declined with each successive sowing date due to high temperatures during vegetative development which might have shortened intervals between vegetative and reproductive growth stages. Muldon (2002) stated that the late planting had a shorter period for the production of pods and also a slightly low rate of pod production coupled with reduced growth due to exposure of plant to warmer weather and longer photoperiod. Hence, late planting attained maturity earlier than normal date of sowing. A steady decrease in number of days to maturity took place when planting was delayed. Minimum days to maturity with delay in planting may be due to quick changes in photoperiod and temperature as in case of plant height (Asim *et al.*, 2014).

In general, seed yield per plot recorded decreasing trend as date of sowing delayed. Among the date of sowings, significantly highest seed yield per plot (3.26, 3.24 and 3.25 kg) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (3.13, 3.11 and 3.12 kg) and significantly lower yield (2.59, 2.57 and 2.58 kg) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively.

Significantly highest seed yield per hectare (32.46, 32.24 and 32.35 q) was recorded in D₁ (First fortnight of June) followed by D₂ (31.13, 30.96 and 31.05 q). However significantly lower yield (25.75, 25.52 and 25.63 q) was recorded in D₃ (First fortnight of July) during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively.

This might be due to a shortened vegetative growth period. These results are in accordance with the findings of Khan *et al.*, (2004) who reported that early sowing of soybean produced significantly higher seed yield than delayed sowing. They further mentioned that higher yields of earlier sowings were ascribed to photoperiod response which lengthened both vegetative and reproductive stages, enabling crop to produce more dry matter which was efficiently utilized by prolonged pod filling period after flowering resulting in a higher seed yield. Sadegi and Niyaki (2013) observed a steady decrease in soybean seed yield when sowing was delayed due to lack of sufficient vegetative growth, lower number of pods per plant and reduced seed weight. Reduction in seed yield with delayed sowing was also confirmed and reported by Karaaslan *et al.*, (2012). Among the foliar application of nutrients, T₈ (KNO₃ @ 0.5 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 % + Boron 0.50 %) noticed significantly highest seed yield per plot (3.17, 3.15 and 3.16 kg) which is on par (3.16, 3.14 and 3.15 kg) with T₆ (19:19:19 NPK @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 %) and T₇ (KNO₃ @ 1 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 %) and lowest seed yield per plot (2.73, 2.70 and 2.71 kg) was recorded in control during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively.

Among the foliar application of nutrients, T₈ (KNO₃ @ 0.5 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 % + Boron 0.50 %) noticed significantly highest (31.51, 31.31 and 31.41 q) seed yield per hectare which is on par (31.41, 31.21 and 31.31 q) with T₆ (19:19:19 NPK @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 %) and T₇ (KNO₃ @ 1 % + KH₂PO₄ @ 0.5 %) and lowest (27.13, 26.86 and 27.00 q) seed yield per hectare was recorded in control during 2016, 2017 and pooled data respectively. higher seed yield recorded in T₈ might be due to the significant effect of nutrient sprays enhancing number of pods per plant and the role of boron in enhancing dry

matter and efficiency of translocation of assimilates to developing sink leading to increased pods and higher seed yield (Pradeep and Elamathi, 2007). Potassium might have improved pod filling and phytomass production due to beneficial functions of nitrogen, the prevalence of K^+ in KNO_3 , might have improved grain filling and phytomass production, increasing photosynthetic activity and effective translocation of assimilates to reproductive parts resulting in higher yield (Vaseghi *et al.*, 2013 in soybean) whereas, T_6 (19:19:19 NPK @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 %) also recorded on par values. This may be attributed to fulfillment of the demand of the crop by higher assimilation and translocation of photosynthates from leaves) to pods. Through supply of required nutrients by foliar spray of 19:19:19 NPK supply of balanced NPK with micronutrient enhance photosynthesis, metabolic activity, formation of organic constituents and their translocation from source to sink results in highest grain yield. Similar results were also reported by Kalpana (2001) and Dixit and Elamathi (2007).

Thus from the experiment it could be concluded that with delayed sowing, crop growth and seed yield of soybean were adversely affected. Small fluctuations in the weather (temperature) showed higher variations in plant growth and development, which finally influenced on the crop growth and yield of soybean. Considering the changes in plant growth and yield, first fortnight of June sowing sprayed with KNO_3 @ 0.5 % + KH_2PO_4 @ 0.5 % + Boron 0.50 % and also 19:19:19 @ 3 % + Boron @ 0.50 % maintained better crop growth, chlorophyll content and seed yield of soybean.

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