

Impact of moisture conservation practices, seed inoculation and zinc level on growth and yield of chickpea (*Cicerarietinum L.*)

Abstract

A field experiment was conducted during the *Rabi* season of 2020-21 and 2021-22, to study the impact of moisture conservation practices, seed inoculation and zinc level on growth and yield of chickpea in central plain zone of U.P. the experiment was laid out in split-split plot design with 27 treatment combination comprising of three moisture conservation practices *viz.* flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue, narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue and broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue in main plot and three seed inoculation *viz.* control, rhizobium and PSB in sub plot with three zinc level *viz.* control, 2.5 kg Zn ha⁻¹ and 5.0 kg Zn ha⁻¹ in sub-sub plot. Result shows that the broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue produced significantly all growth parameters and yields attributes as compare to flat bed with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue, respectively. The all growth parameters and yields attributes were significantly recorded higher under seed inoculation with rhizobium over PSB and control. The application of different dose of zinc produced marked significant variation in growth parameter and yield attributes when it increased upto 5.0 kg Zn ha⁻¹. The highest yields were significantly receive in broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue over narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue and flat bed with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue, respectively with percent increment 16.33, 24.65, 11.47 and 7.16 in respect of biological yield, grain yield, stover yield and harvest index, respectively over control in pooled data. Seed inoculation with rhizobium produced significantly higher yields parameter over control and PSB with percent increment 5.37, 7.72, 3.84 and 2.34 in biological yield, grain yield, stover yield and harvest index, respectively over control. Application of 5.0 kg Zn ha⁻¹ were produced significantly higher yields with percent increment 6.24, 7.25, 5.56 and 1.01 over control in respect of biological yield, grain yield, stover yield and harvest index, respectively. Therefore, broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t ha⁻¹ crop residue and rhizobium inoculation with dose of 5.0 kg Zn ha⁻¹ were significantly superior in respect to growth and yield attributes and yields of chickpea in present investigation.

Keywords: Chickpea, broad bed and furrow, flat bed, narrow bed and furrow, rhizobium, PSB, zinc, yield.

Introduction

Chickpea (*Cicerarietinum L.*) occupies prominent position among the various pulse crop grown in India. India ranks first in the world in respect of production as well as acreage and produces 11.23 million tons chickpea grains from 10.56 million hectare area with an average productivity of 1063 Kg ha⁻¹ during 2017-18. India contributes 71 per cent of chickpea production of the world (Anonymous, 2020). It is commonly used for human consumption as

well as for feeding animals. Chickpea is considered to have medicinal effects and it is used for blood purification. Chickpea mostly grown on stored or residual soil moisture after harvest of *khari* crops faces moisture stress throughout the life cycle. In rainfed areas, not all the rainfall received is available for the crops, but a significant part is lost as runoff and evaporation. Hence, concentrated efforts are needed to develop soil and moisture conservation practices to mitigate the water stress to maximize food production with minimum environmental degradation. *In-situ* application of crop residues and division of field into beds and furrows could be used as low-cost input technology, which helps to conserve more rainwater in soil by minimizing runoff of water from soil surface under water scarcity situations (Singh *et al.*, 2012). Land configuration plays a major role in minimizing soil erosion and improving water and nutrient use efficiency of field crops. Most of the crops normally grow on poor, marginal soils with imbalanced nutrient application (Ramesh *et al.* 2020).

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Seed inoculation with *Rhizobium* increase the nodulation through better root development and improves nutrient availability which is beneficial in improving the grain yield. Phosphorus solubilizing bacteria is a cheapest source of phosphorus availability particularly in legume crops, which increase the productivity. PSB possess the ability to bring sparingly insoluble organic and inorganic phosphate into soluble forms by secreting organic acid.

Zinc is essential for the synthesis of chlorophyll and carbohydrates. This element plays an important role in the metabolism of nitrogen, synthesis of amino acid tryptophan, metabolism of starch, plants flowering and fruit set, increasing plant resistance to fungal disease and expanding plant roots (Bahureet *al.*, 2016). It improves grain yield, grain quality regulate the photosynthesis and govern other physio- biochemical processes besides helping root enlargement it increasing nitrogen fixation. Thus, in the present investigation an efforts was made to evaluate the effect of seed inoculation on soil fertility with asses the suitable moisture conservation practices and zinc dose for achieving yield production of chickpea.

2. Material and methods

The experiment was conducted during the *Rabi* season of 2020-21 and 2021-22. The experiment was laid out in spit-split plot design with three replication. The experiment was conducted with 27 treatment combination comprising three moisture conservation practices namely, flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue, narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue, broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue in main plot and three seed inoculation (control,

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rhizobium and PSB) in sub-plots and three zinc level (control, 2.5 kg zinc/ha and 5.0 kg zinc/ha) in sub-sub plot. The chickpea variety RVG 202 was used for field experiment during both the year 2020-21 and 2021-22. The experimental field was prepared after pre-sowing irrigation at proper moisture condition. The crop was fertilized as per the treatment. The recommended dose of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium @ Recommended dose of fertilizers were applied to the crops during both the years in all plots. 20 kg N, 40 kg P₂O₅ and 40 kg K₂O/ha were applied in all the plots as basal dose at the time of sowing. Urea, DAP, murate of potash were used as the source of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium. After field preparation and before sowing of crop, the narrow beds of 70 cm wide with furrows of 30 cm width and broad beds of 90 cm wide with furrow of 30 cm width were prepared manually in respective plots. Paddy straw residue was applied in chickpea crop as per treatments just after sowing as moisture management treatments during both the years of study. Zinc was applied as per treatments through zinc sulphate (ZnSO₄.7H₂O) containing 21% Zn and 10% S at the time of sowing as basal dose. seeds of chickpea are inoculated with Rhizobium and PSB as per treatments one day before sowing treated seeds are spread in shades for 8-10 hours then after used for sowing. The soil of the experimental field was alluvial in origin, sandy loam in texture and slightly alkaline in reaction having pH 7.65 and 7.64, electrical conductivity 0.25 and 0.27 dSm⁻¹, Organic carbon percentage in soil is 0.10 and 0.12 per cent with available nitrogen 183.50 and 184.81 kg ha⁻¹, available phosphorus as sodium bicarbonate-extractable P was 12.20 and 12.42 kg ha⁻¹, available potassium was 173.00 and 177.50 kg ha⁻¹ and DTPA extractable zinc 0.66 and 0.67 mg kg⁻¹ crop was done in both the seasons. Data obtained on grain yield were analyzed statistically.

Result and discussion

A. Growth parameters

Plant height

It is visualized from the data given in Table-1 Significantly highest plant height (39.52, 40.50 and 40.02 cm) was observed with broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue while, the minimum plant height (34.72, 35.69 and 35.21 cm) was obtained under flat bed method in 2020-21, 2021-22 and pooled data study. The data revealed that the broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue while produced significantly maximum plant height with percent increment 13.82,

13.47 and 13.66 over flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue. Similar result was reported by Mishra *et al.* (2012b), Lalet *et al.* (2014), Kumar *et al.* (2015), Chavanet *et al.* (2016) and Gupta *et al.* (2020).

The data extracted from the Table 1 it can be resulted that the tallest plant height (37.50, 38.48 cm) was recorded under rhizobium which was significantly superior over PSB and control, the lowest plant height (36.70, 37.66 and 37.19 cm) was obtained in control during 2020-21 and 2021-22 and pooled data, respectively. The percent improvement in rhizobium 2.22, 2.17 and 2.15 over control. The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings of Gyandevet *et al.* (2015), Chauhan *et al.* (2017) and Singhet *et al.* (2019).

Significantly highest plant height (37.51, 38.50 and 38.01cm) was observed with 5.0 kg zinc/ ha during both the year and pooled data, respectively. While, the minimum plant height (36.56, 37.53 and 37.04 cm) was obtained under control (Table-1). The percent improvement was 2.59, 2.58 and 2.61 with application of zinc level 5.0 kg/ha over control. The consequences of the current investigation are additionally in concurrence with the investigation of Yadav *et al.* (2012), Singh and Bhati (2013), Chaudhary *et al.* (2014), Yadav *et al.* (2022) and Yadav *et al.* (2022).

Number of branches

Broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue planted chickpea show significantly superior to narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue during both the year of experiment with percentage increment in primary branches and secondary branches over flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue of 40.57, 30.98 and narrow bed and furrow of 17.02, 12.08 in pooled analyzed data of both the year of experimentation, respectively (Table-1). The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings of Mishra *et al.* (2012b), Chavanet *et al.* (2016) and Gupta *et al.* (2020)

It is visualized from the data given in Table-1 the data clearly indicate that response of seed inoculation to number of branches (primary and secondary) was increased in rhizobium compare to PSB and control. Chickpea sown under rhizobium at harvest stage performed maximum (3.99, 6.18) number of primary and secondary branches over PSB and control. The minimum (3.50, 5.57) number of primary and secondary branches is found in control. The percentage increment in primary and secondary branches over control of 14.0, 10.95 and PSB of

5.0, 3.0 in pooled analyzed data of experimentation, respectively. The consequences of the current investigation are additionally in concurrence with the investigation of Gyandevet *et al.* (2015), Chauhan *et al.* (2017), Singh *et al.* (2019), Katiyaret *et al.* (2020), and Yadav *et al.* (2022).

The data extracted from the Table 1 it can be resulted that the level of zinc directly applied to chickpea also bring significant effect on number of primary and secondary branches per plant during both the years. Application of 5.0 kg Zn/ha significantly enhanced the number of primary branches and remained at par with 2.5 kg/ha zinc with percentage increment by 2.09 and 5.40 per cent over 2.5 kg/ha zinc and control. In case of secondary branches Application of 5.0 kg Zn/ha significantly increases the number of secondary branches by percentage increment by 1.52 and 3.44 per cent over 2.5 kg/ha zinc and control respectively. The similar result also confirms the findings of Yadav *et al.* (2010) and Singh *et al.* (2011b)

Dry matter accumulation

Dry matter accumulation per plant during both the years of experimentation varied significantly with different moisture management practices. Chickpea sown under broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue performed maximum (20.35, 21.20 and 20.77g) dry matter accumulation over narrow bed and furrow 2.5 t/ha crop residue and flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue during both the year and pooled analysis (Table-1). The minimum (16.64, 17.49 and 17.06g) dry matter accumulation in flatbed 2.5 t/ha method. The result revealed that the dry matter accumulation significantly increased with the age of crop in broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue which was more than flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue. with percentage increment over flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue 21.74 and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue of 14.62 in pooled analyzed data of experimentation, respectively. The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings of Lalet *et al.* (2014), Chavanet *et al.* (2016) and Gupta *et al.* (2020).

The data extracted from the Table 1 it can be resulted that the response of seed inoculation to dry matter accumulation was increased in rhizobium compare to control and PSB. Chickpea sown under rhizobium performed maximum (19.18g) dry matter accumulation over PSB and control. The minimum (18.20g) dry matter accumulation is found in control. The percentage increment over control of 5.38 and PSB of 3.22 in pooled analyzed data of experimentation,

respectively. These results also confirm the findings of Singh *et al.* (2019), Katiyaret *al.* (2020) and Benjellounet *al.* (2021).

It is visualized from the data given in Table-1, Zinc application exerted a positive effect on grain yield where the significantly response noted up to 5.0 kg Zinc/ha in both the years of study, the maximum (18.83g) dry matter accumulation in 5.0 kg Zinc/ha which was at par with 2.5kg/ha Zn and the minimum (18.39) in control. The percentage increment over control of 2.33% and 2.5kg/ha Zn of 0.53 % in pooled analyzed data of experimentation, respectively. Similar result was reported by Singh and Bhati (2013), Chaudhary *et al.* (2014) Thenuaet *al.* (2014) and Yadavet *al.* (2022)

B. Yield attributes

Significantly higher number of pods per plant (35.54, 36.00 and 35.77) were observed under broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and proved significantly superior over narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue during both the years and pooled analysis with percent improvement 33.81 over control on pooled basis. The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings of Paliwalet *al.* (2011), Mishra *et al.* (2012a). The result revealed that number of grains per pod of chickpea did not influence significantly due to different moisture conservation practices during both the years and also in pooled. Maximum number of grain per pod (1.41, 1.44 and 1.43) are obtained with broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and minimum (1.38, 1.39 and 1.39) with flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue in 2020-21 and 2021-22 and pooled data (Table-2), respectively. The consequences of the current investigation are additionally in concurrence with the investigation of Kumar *et al.* (2015). Data revealed that the 1,000 grain weight of chickpea are significantly influenced by moisture conservation practices. broad bed and furrow with 2.5t/ha crop residue show significantly higher grain weight (192.29, 194.50 and 193.40 g) which were 8.45 per cent higher over flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue in pooled data. Similar result was reported by Chavanet *al.* (2016) and Gupta *et al.* (2020).

Seed inoculated with rhizobium produced significantly higher no. of pod per plant (32.20, 32.59 and 32.39) which were (6.65, 3.00, 6.61 and 6.57, 2.61, 2.79) per cent higher over control and PSB, respectively, during both the years of study and pooled data (Table-2). Result clearly

show that number of grains per pod of chickpea also found not significant due to different seed inoculation during both the years of experimentation. Maximum number of grain per pod (1.44 and 1.46) are obtained with rhizobium and minimum (1.35 and 1.38) with control during both the years of investigation. The percent improvement in rhizobium 6.61 over control in pooled analysis. 1000 seed weight of chickpea significantly influenced by seed inoculation. Seed inoculated with rhizobium produced significantly higher 1000 grain weight (187.06 and 189.53) in 2020-21 and 2021-22, rhizobium show 2.45 per cent increment over control on pooled basis. The consequences of the current investigation are additionally in concurrence with the investigation of Singh and Singh (2018), Singh *et al.* (2018), Singh *et al.* (2019), Katiyaret *al.* (2020) and Benjellounet *al.* (2021).

Number of pods per plant were also influenced significantly with zinc level treatments. Significantly higher number of pods per plant of chickpea 31.82 and 32.34 were recorded with direct application of 5.0 kg Zn/ha as compared to lower levels during both the years of investigation. The per cent improvement in number of pods per plant with 5.0 kg Zn/ha was 4.19 and 1.72 during 2020-21 and 4.72 and 2.01 during 2021-22, respectively, over control and 2.5 kg Zn/ha. However, the effect of direct applied zinc to chickpea was found non-significant on number of grains per pod during both the years and in pooled analysis. The maximum number of grain per pod (1.41 and 1.44) are obtained with 5.0 kg zinc/ha and minimum (1.38 and 1.39) with 2.5 kg/ha zinc in 2020-21 and 2021-22, respectively (Table-2). Application zinc in chickpea with increasing levels of zinc up to 2.5 kg/ha significantly improved the 1,000 grain weight, further increase in levels of zinc to 5.0 kg/ha increased the 1,000 grain weight but the response was not to the level of significance. Wherein, application of 5.0 kg Zn/ha resulted in maximum weight of 1,000 grain (187.12 and 189.80 g) during 2020-21 and 2021-22. The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings of Shivayetal. (2014), Pal *et al.* (2019), Parmaret *al.* (2021) and Yadav *et al.* (2022).

C. Yields

Biological yield

Planting of chickpea under broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue produced significantly higher biological yield (42.23 and 43.93 q/ha) as compared to flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue during both the years of

experimentation (Table-3). This treatment registered an improvement in biological yield by 15.38 and 7.10 per cent during 2020-21 and 17.30 and 7.67 per cent during 2021-22 over flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue, respectively. The consequences of the current investigation are additionally in concurrence with the investigation of Kumar *et al.* (2015), Chavanet *et al.* (2016) and Gupta *et al.* (2020).

Result clearly show that biological yield of chickpea inoculated with rhizobium produced significantly higher biological yield (40.46 and 41.87 q/ha) as compared to control and PSB during both the years of study (Table-3). This treatment registered an improvement in biological yield by 5.20 and 2.82 per cent during 2020-21 and 5.51 and 3.05 per cent during 2021-22 over control and PSB, respectively. These results also confirms of the findings of Chauhan *et al.* (2017), Singh *et al.* (2017), Singh and Singh (2018), Singh *et al.* (2018), Katiyaret *et al.* (2020) and Benjellounet *et al.* (2021).

Increasing levels of zinc significantly increased biological yield of chickpea during both the years of study. Application of 5.0 kg Zn/ha to chickpea resulted into significantly higher biological yield (40.50 and 41.87 q/ha) over lower levels during both the years (Table-3). This treatment of direct applied zinc level increased the biological yield by 6.18 and 2.19 per cent during 2020-21 and 6.26 and 2.32 per cent during 2021-22 over control and 2.5 kg Zn/ha, respectively. The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings of Singh and Bhati (2013), Shivayetal. (2014), Parmaret *et al.* (2021) and Yadav *et al.* (2022).

Grain yield

The result revealed that grain yield was significantly increased at broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue which was more than flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue in first year and second year with percentage increment over flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue of 24.65% and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue of 11.15% in pooled analyzed data of experimentation, respectively (Table-3). The consequences of the current investigation are additionally in concurrence with the investigation of Kumar *et al.* (2015), Chavanet *et al.* (2016) and Gupta *et al.* (2020).

The data clearly indicate that response of grain yield to used seed inoculation was increased in rhizobium compared to control and PSB during both year of study. The percentage increment over control of 7.72% and PSB of 4.29% in pooled analyzed data of experimentation, respectively (Table-3). The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings

of Chauhan *et al.* (2017), Singh *et al.* (2017), Singh and Singh (2018), Singh *et al.* (2018), Katiyaret *al.* (2020) and Benjellounet *al.* (2021).

It is clear from the result that zinc application exerted a positive effect on grain yield where the significantly response noted up to 5.0 kg Zinc/ha in both the years with percentage increment over control of 7.25% in pooled analyzed data(Table-3). These results also confirms of the findings ofSingh *et al.* (2013), Shivayetal. (2014), Parmaret *al.* (2021) and Yadavet *al* (2022).

Stover yield

The result revealed that stover yield was significantly increased at broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue which was more than flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue in first year and second year with percentage increment over flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue of 11.47% and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue of 5.02% In pooled analyzed data of experimentation, respectively(Table-3). The consequences of the current investigation are additionally in concurrence with the investigation ofKumar *et al.* (2015), Chavanet *al.* (2016) and Gupta *et al.* (2020).

The data clearly indicate that response of stover yield to used seed inoculation was increased in rhizobium compare to control and PSB during both year of study(Table-3). The percentage increment over control of 3.84% and PSB of 2.07% in pooled analyzed data of experimentation, respectively. These results also confirms of the findings ofSingh and Singh (2018), Singh *et al.* (2018), Katiyaret *al.* (2020) and Benjellounet *al.* (2021).

It is clear from the result that zinc application exerted a positive effect on stover yield where the significantly response noted up to 5.0 kg Zinc/ha in both the years with percentage increment over control of 5.56% and 2.5 kg/ha zinc of 1.57% in pooled analyzed data(Table-3). The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings ofJyothiet *al.* (2013),Shivayetal. (2014), Parmaret *al.* (2021) and Yadavet *al* (2022).

Harvest index

Sowing of chickpea under broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue produced significantly higher harvest index (39.64 and 39.90%) as compared to flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue during both the years of experimentation. This treatment registered an increment in harvest index by 6.64 and 3.39 per

cent during 2020-21 and 7.60 and 3.63 per cent during 2021-22 over flat bed with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and narrow bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue, respectively (Table-3). The results of present investigation are also in agreement with the findings of Kumar *et al.* (2015), Chavan *et al.* (2016) and Gupta *et al.* (2020).

Seed inoculated with rhizobium produced significantly higher harvest index (38.86 and 38.95%) as compared to control and PSB during both the years of study (Table-3). This treatment registered an increment in harvest index by 2.39 and 1.35 per cent during 2020-21 over control and PSB and 2.25 per cent during 2021-22 over control, respectively. Where as in second year PSB show similar result with rhizobium. The consequences of the current investigation are additionally in concurrence with the investigation of Chauhan *et al.* (2017), Katiyaret *et al.* (2020) and Benjelloun *et al.* (2021).

Zinc level was remained non-significant on harvest index of chickpea during both the years of experimentation. Maximum harvest index (38.64 and 38.68) obtained with 5.0 kg zinc/ha during both the years of study (Table-3). These results also confirms of the findings of Jyothiet *et al.* (2013), Parmaret *et al.* (2021) and Yadav *et al.* (2022).

Conclusion

Based on the above result, it can be concluded that the broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue is superior over the remaining moisture conservation practices with use of seed inoculation of rhizobium and dose of 5.0 kg zinc/ha in respect to growth parameter, yield attributing characters and yields. Thus broad bed and furrow with 2.5 t/ha crop residue and rhizobium with 5.0 kg zinc/ha may be recommended to realize higher yields of chickpea for farmers.

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UNDER PEER REVIEW

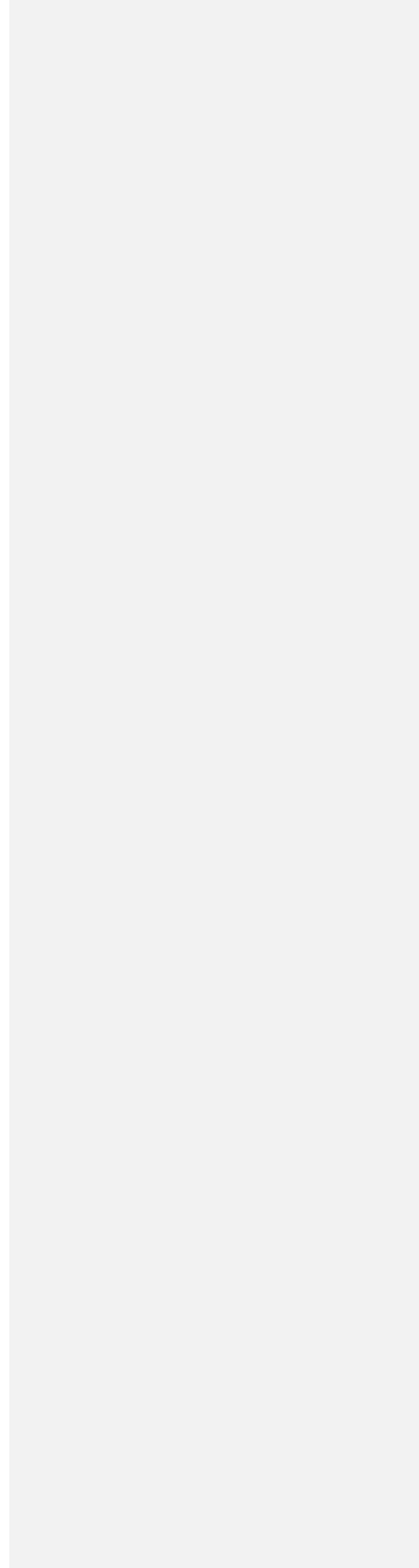


Table 1. Plant height, primary and secondary branches and dry matter accumulation as influenced by moisture conservation practices, seed inoculation and zinc level

| Treatment | Plant height (cm) | | | Primary branches | | | Secondary branches | | | Dry matter accumulation g/plant | | |
|---|-------------------|---------|--------|------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|---------|--------|---------------------------------|---------|--------|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | pooled | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | pooled | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | pooled | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | pooled |
| A. Moisture conservation practices | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Flat bed + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 34.72 | 35.69 | 35.21 | 3.08 | 3.18 | 3.13 | 4.93 | 5.27 | 5.10 | 16.64 | 17.49 | 17.06 |
| NBF + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 37.12 | 38.11 | 37.62 | 3.71 | 3.80 | 3.76 | 5.80 | 6.13 | 5.96 | 17.69 | 18.54 | 18.12 |
| BBF + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 39.52 | 40.50 | 40.02 | 4.35 | 4.44 | 4.40 | 6.51 | 6.85 | 6.68 | 20.35 | 21.20 | 20.77 |
| S.Em. ± | 0.157 | 0.093 | 0.097 | 0.014 | 0.009 | 0.013 | 0.018 | 0.006 | 0.012 | 0.070 | 0.116 | 0.101 |
| CD at 5% | 0.612 | 0.362 | 0.378 | 0.056 | 0.034 | 0.051 | 0.070 | 0.025 | 0.047 | 0.274 | 0.455 | 0.392 |
| B. Seed inoculation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Control | 36.70 | 37.66 | 37.19 | 3.45 | 3.54 | 3.50 | 5.40 | 5.73 | 5.57 | 17.77 | 18.62 | 18.20 |
| Rhizobium | 37.50 | 38.48 | 37.99 | 3.94 | 4.02 | 3.99 | 6.01 | 6.36 | 6.18 | 18.75 | 19.60 | 19.18 |
| PSB | 37.16 | 38.16 | 37.66 | 3.75 | 3.85 | 3.80 | 5.83 | 6.16 | 6.00 | 18.15 | 19.00 | 18.58 |
| S.Em. ± | 0.191 | 0.128 | 0.121 | 0.012 | 0.007 | 0.012 | 0.022 | 0.017 | 0.026 | 0.086 | 0.104 | 0.085 |
| CD at 5% | 0.587 | 0.394 | 0.373 | 0.037 | 0.020 | 0.036 | 0.067 | 0.053 | 0.079 | 0.263 | 0.321 | 0.260 |
| C. Zinc level | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Control | 36.56 | 37.53 | 37.04 | 3.62 | 3.70 | 3.66 | 5.67 | 5.95 | 5.81 | 17.96 | 18.81 | 18.39 |
| 2.5 kg Zn/ha | 37.30 | 38.28 | 37.79 | 3.73 | 3.82 | 3.78 | 5.77 | 6.11 | 5.92 | 18.31 | 19.16 | 18.73 |
| 5.0 kg Zn/ha | 37.51 | 38.50 | 38.01 | 3.79 | 3.90 | 3.84 | 5.80 | 6.19 | 6.01 | 18.40 | 19.25 | 18.83 |
| S.Em. ± | 0.186 | 0.155 | 0.142 | 0.021 | 0.019 | 0.024 | 0.033 | 0.032 | 0.026 | 0.061 | 0.089 | 0.097 |
| CD at 5% | 0.535 | 0.444 | 0.407 | 0.061 | 0.056 | 0.069 | 0.093 | 0.091 | 0.075 | 0.174 | 0.254 | 0.278 |

Table 2. Yield attributes as influenced by moisture conservation practices, seed inoculation and zinc level

| Treatments | No. of pod/plant | | | No. of grain/pod | | | 1000 seed weight | | |
|---|------------------|---------|--------|------------------|---------|--------|------------------|---------|--------|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Pooled | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Pooled | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Pooled |
| A. Moisture conservation practices | | | | | | | | | |
| Flat bed + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 26.56 | 26.91 | 26.73 | 1.38 | 1.39 | 1.39 | 177.08 | 179.58 | 178.33 |
| NBF + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 31.54 | 32.01 | 31.78 | 1.39 | 1.41 | 1.40 | 185.15 | 187.48 | 186.32 |
| BBF + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 35.54 | 36.00 | 35.77 | 1.41 | 1.44 | 1.43 | 192.29 | 194.50 | 193.40 |
| S.Em. \pm | 0.079 | 0.057 | 0.108 | 0.014 | 0.015 | 0.014 | 0.520 | 0.729 | 0.638 |
| CD at 5% | 0.307 | 0.224 | 0.423 | NS | NS | NS | 2.030 | 2.848 | 2.493 |
| B. Seed inoculation | | | | | | | | | |
| Control | 30.19 | 30.58 | 30.38 | 1.35 | 1.38 | 1.36 | 182.63 | 184.94 | 183.79 |
| Rhizobium | 32.20 | 32.59 | 32.39 | 1.44 | 1.46 | 1.45 | 187.06 | 189.53 | 188.30 |
| PSB | 31.26 | 31.76 | 31.51 | 1.39 | 1.42 | 1.40 | 184.83 | 187.09 | 185.96 |
| S.Em. \pm | 0.052 | 0.069 | 0.150 | 0.017 | 0.012 | 0.012 | 0.493 | 0.608 | 0.547 |
| CD at 5% | 0.160 | 0.212 | 0.462 | NS | NS | NS | 1.520 | 1.872 | 1.685 |
| C. Zinc level | | | | | | | | | |
| Control | 30.54 | 30.88 | 30.71 | 1.38 | 1.39 | 1.38 | 181.99 | 184.00 | 183.00 |
| 2.5 kg Zn/ha | 31.28 | 31.70 | 31.52 | 1.40 | 1.42 | 1.41 | 185.40 | 187.75 | 186.58 |
| 5.0 kg Zn/ha | 31.82 | 32.34 | 32.06 | 1.41 | 1.44 | 1.42 | 187.12 | 189.80 | 188.46 |
| S.Em. \pm | 0.108 | 0.110 | 0.133 | 0.013 | 0.014 | 0.014 | 0.676 | 0.705 | 0.591 |
| CD at 5% | 0.310 | 0.317 | 0.382 | NS | NS | NS | 1.939 | 2.023 | 1.695 |

Table 3. Yields as influenced by moisture conservation practices, seed inoculation and zinc level

| Treatments | Biological yield(q/ha) | | | Grain yield (q/ha) | | | Stover yield(q/ha) | | | HI (%) | | |
|---|------------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|---------|--------|--------------------|---------|--------|---------|---------|--------|
| | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Pooled | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Pooled | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Pooled | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | Pooled |
| A. Moisture conservation practices | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Flat bed + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 36.60 | 37.45 | 37.03 | 13.61 | 13.89 | 13.75 | 22.99 | 23.56 | 23.27 | 37.17 | 37.08 | 37.12 |
| NBF + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 39.43 | 40.80 | 40.12 | 15.12 | 15.71 | 15.42 | 24.31 | 25.09 | 24.70 | 38.34 | 38.50 | 38.42 |
| BBF + 2.5 t/ha crop residue | 42.23 | 43.93 | 43.08 | 16.75 | 17.53 | 17.14 | 25.49 | 26.40 | 25.94 | 39.64 | 39.90 | 39.78 |
| S.Em. ± | 0.156 | 0.247 | 0.210 | 0.087 | 0.047 | 0.075 | 0.100 | 0.063 | 0.065 | 0.141 | 0.159 | 0.073 |
| CD at 5% | 0.608 | 0.965 | 0.819 | 0.338 | 0.184 | 0.291 | 0.389 | 0.248 | 0.255 | 0.551 | 0.619 | 0.285 |
| B. Seed inoculation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Control | 38.46 | 39.68 | 39.07 | 14.62 | 15.15 | 14.89 | 23.84 | 24.53 | 24.19 | 37.95 | 38.09 | 38.02 |
| Rhizobium | 40.46 | 41.87 | 41.17 | 15.74 | 16.34 | 16.04 | 24.72 | 25.53 | 25.12 | 38.86 | 38.95 | 38.91 |
| PSB | 39.35 | 40.63 | 39.99 | 15.11 | 15.65 | 15.38 | 24.24 | 24.98 | 24.61 | 38.34 | 38.44 | 38.39 |
| S.Em. ± | 0.188 | 0.225 | 0.179 | 0.064 | 0.059 | 0.047 | 0.123 | 0.084 | 0.080 | 0.139 | 0.175 | 0.094 |
| CD at 5% | 0.580 | 0.693 | 0.551 | 0.198 | 0.181 | 0.146 | 0.380 | 0.260 | 0.246 | 0.428 | 0.538 | 0.291 |
| C. Zinc level | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Control | 38.14 | 39.40 | 38.77 | 14.63 | 15.15 | 14.89 | 23.51 | 24.25 | 23.88 | 38.28 | 38.36 | 38.32 |
| 2.5 kg Zn/ha | 39.63 | 40.92 | 40.28 | 15.18 | 15.73 | 15.45 | 24.45 | 25.19 | 24.82 | 38.23 | 38.35 | 38.29 |
| 5.0 kg Zn/ha | 40.50 | 41.87 | 41.19 | 15.68 | 16.27 | 15.97 | 24.83 | 25.60 | 25.21 | 38.64 | 38.78 | 38.71 |
| S.Em. ± | 0.132 | 0.189 | 0.208 | 0.070 | 0.082 | 0.074 | 0.121 | 0.102 | 0.093 | 0.212 | 0.206 | 0.154 |
| CD at 5% | 0.379 | 0.541 | 0.597 | 0.200 | 0.234 | 0.212 | 0.347 | 0.292 | 0.266 | NS | NS | NS |