

RESPONSE OF NANO DAP ON YIELD AND NUTRIENT CONTENT OF WHEAT GROWN IN LOAMY SAND SOIL

Abstract

A field experiment was conducted at Agronomy Farm, B. A. College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, Anand to study the “Response of Nano DAP on Yield and Nutrient Content of Wheat Grown in Loamy Sand Soil” in *rabi* season during the year 2023-24. The experiment consisted of ten treatments and was arranged in a randomized block design with three replications. The results proved that the combined application of conventional and nano DAP had a positive impact on most of the growth parameters. The application of 100% RDF N and P (T₁), (75% RDF N and P + foliar spray with nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS) (T₆) and 50% RDF N and P + Seed treatment with nano DAP @ 5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS (T₁₀) obtained significantly higher plant height, root length, root biomass, effective numbers of tillers, spike length, test weight, grain yield, straw yield. Similarly, nutrient content and uptake of N and P by grain and straw under T₂ and T₆ were significantly higher than rest of the treatments. Therefore, we may suggest for 75% RDF N and P + foliar spray with nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS and 50% RDF N and P + Seed treatment with nano DAP @ 5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS for better realization of applied nutrients in terms yield responses.

Key words: Nano DAP, foliar application

Introduction

Wheat scientifically known as *Triticum aestivum* L., belongs to the Poaceae family and serves as a fundamental crop globally, holding particular significance in India as a primary winter crop. Wheat cultivation covered approximately 31.40 million hectares, resulting in a total production of around 110.55 million tonnes with average wheat productivity was recorded at 3248 kg/ha in 2022-23 (Anon., 2023). Nano fertilizers are synthesized or modified forms of traditional fertilizers, bulk materials or extracts from various vegetative or reproductive parts of plants. Nano fertilizers play a crucial role in enhancing nutrient uptake and nutrient use efficiency, reducing losses through leaching and gaseous emissions and minimizing the risk of nutrient toxicity. This contributes to ensuring food security achieved through higher

productivity and economic returns by practicing sustainable farming practices (Ahmadian *et al.*, 2021).

Nano DAP is a highly efficient source of nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P₂O₅) for all types of crops, effectively addressing deficiencies in these nutrients in standing crops. The nano DAP formulation contains 8% nitrogen and 16% phosphorus (P₂O₅) by weight/volume. Its liquid form benefits from a high surface-area-to-volume ratio, as its particle size is under 100 nanometers (nm). The nitrogen and phosphorus nano clusters in nano DAP are functionalized with biopolymers and other excipients, enhancing their spreadability and assimilation within the plant system. This results in higher seed vigor, increased chlorophyll and photosynthetic efficiency, improved crop quality, and higher yields. (Anon., 2022).

Materials and Methods

The experiment was carried at Agronomy Farm, B. A. College of Agriculture, Anand Agricultural University, Anand, India during *rabi* season of the year 2023-24 to examine the response of nano dap on yield and nutrient content of wheat. The experimental site had a smooth terrain with slight slopes and effective drainage. The soil type known as “Goradu” soil, is a true depiction of soils found in the middle Gujarat region. It is characterized by a loamy sand texture, good moisture retention and belongs to the Inceptisols soil order. wheat (variety-GW 496) was used as test crop in the experiment. The trial was laid down in a randomized block design (RBD) corresponding to 10 treatments and three replications. The details of treatments are as follows, T₁ (Absolute control), T₂ (100% RDF N and P), T₃ (75% RDF N and P), T₄ (50% RDF N and P), T₅ (T₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP @ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS), T₆ (T₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS), T₇ (T₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP @ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS), T₈ (T₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS), T₉ (T₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 2.5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP @ 2 ml/L 25 DAS) and T₁₀ (T₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP @ 4 ml/L 25 DAS). Recommended basal dose of phosphorus (60 kg/ha) and nitrogen (120 kg/ha) was applied as per treatment *i.e.*, 100%, 75% and 50% RDF. Half dose of 100%, 75% and 50% RDF was supplied through diammonium phosphate (DAP) and urea before sowing of seeds as basal application and the remaining half dose of nitrogen through urea was applied as top dressing at CRI stage. while, nano DAP was given at 25 DAS through foliar application, as per the treatments.

The Statistical analysis of various parameters such as growth, yield, and quality were conducted using computer-based methods. The statistical assessment followed the Randomized Block Design and conducted at the Department of Agricultural Statistics, B. A. College of Agriculture, AAU, Anand in accordance with the procedures specified by Cochran and Cox (1967). The variances originating from different sources in the analysis of variance (ANOVA) were examined using the "F-test" and compared with the value of Table F at 5% level of significance. The calculations for standard error of the mean (S. Em±), Critical Differences (CD), and Coefficient of Variation (CV %) were also determined.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Plant height

The applications of both conventional DAP and its combination with foliar spray of nano DAP had significant results on the plant height at 30 DAS and harvest. The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher plant height (44.09 cm) at 30 DAS and it was remained at par with treatment T₆ (75% RDF N and P + foliar spray with nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS). While significantly higher plant height (105.51 cm) at harvest observed with T₂ (100% RDF N and P) and it was remained at par with treatments T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. Significantly lower plant height of 34.12 cm and 80.75 cm were recorded in treatment T₁ (Absolute control) at 30 DAS and harvest, respectively. The increase in plant height at 30 DAS and at harvest of wheat with the application of nano DAP might be due to the smaller size of nano DAP particles compared to regular fertilizer, allowing for better absorption by plants. This provides a readily available source of phosphorus (P) and nitrogen (N), which are essential for stem growth. This result is consistent with the findings of Sahithi *et al.* (2023), Chinnappa *et al.* (2023) and Prakash *et al.* (2023).

3.2 Root length and root biomass

The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher root length (11.58 cm) at 30-35 DAS and it was remained at par with treatment T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. In contrast, the lower root length (8.71 cm) was recorded with treatment T₁ (Absolute control). The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher root biomass (4.19 g/plant) at 30-35 DAS and it was remained at par with treatment T₅ and T₆. While the lower root biomass (2.41 g/plant) was recorded with treatment T₁ (Absolute control). These results were in close agreement with those found by Abdel-Aziz *et al.* (2016), Amira *et al.* (2016) and Maloth *et al.* (2024).

3.3 Number of Effective Tillers/m Row Length

Number of effective tillers per meter row length (108.25) at harvest was found significantly higher with treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) as compared to other treatments and was found to be at par with the treatments T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. In contrast, the lower number of effective tillers (89.49) per meter row length was recorded with treatment T₁ (Absolute control). The increase in the total number of tillers and effective tillers with nano DAP might be attributed to its smaller particle size enhances nutrient uptake, facilitating more efficient absorption of essential nutrients such as phosphorus (P) and nitrogen (N). This efficient uptake supports better root development, providing a robust foundation for multiple tillers, and stimulates growth hormones that encourage tiller formation. Additionally, Nano DAP allows for more uniform nutrient distribution and enhances the plant's stress tolerance. Collectively, these factors lead to a significant increase in the number of effective tillers per plant. These results are in close accordance with those reported by Meena *et al.* (2021) and Sahu *et al.* (2023).

3.4 Spike Length

Significantly higher spike length (10.34 cm) with treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) compared to other treatments. This treatment was found to be statistically at par with treatments T₅, T₆, T₈ and T₁₀. The lower spike length (8.64 cm) was observed in treatment T₁ (Absolute control). These results closely align with those reported by Gomaa *et al.* (2018).

3.5 Test weight

The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher test weight of wheat grain (42.52 g) than other treatments but was found statistically at par with the treatments T₃, T₅, T₆, T₈, T₉ and T₁₀. While treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded the lower test weight (36.29 g) as compared to other treatments.

3.6 Grain yield

The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher grain yield of wheat (6315kg/ha) than other treatments and it was at par with treatment T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. In contrast lower grain yield of wheat (4425 kg/ha) was recorded with the treatment T₁ (Absolute control). The rise in wheat grain yield is mainly attributed to the improved growth of plant parts and metabolic activities like photosynthesis, resulting in increased accumulation and translocation of photosynthates to the plant's economic parts. Nano fertilizers raised broad bean production and yield components as a result of increased growth hormone activity and

improved metabolic processes, which tend to increase flowering and grain formation (El-Azizy *et al.*, 2021). Similar results were also reported by Rajput *et al.* (2022) and Sahu *et al.* (2023).

3.7 Straw yield

The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher straw yield of wheat (8114kg/ha) than other treatments and it was at par with treatment T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. In contrast lower straw yield of wheat (5503 kg/ha) was recorded with the treatment T₁ (Absolute control). The increased grain and straw yield of wheat after the application of nano fertilizers may be attributed to increased growth hormone levels, enhanced metabolic processes and improved photosynthetic activities due to the application of nano fertilizers (Meena *et al.* 2020). Similar results were found by Reddy *et al.* (2022) and Prakash *et al.* (2023).

3.8 Protein content (%)

The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher protein content of wheat grain (11.94%) than other treatments but was found statistically at par with the treatments T₅, T₆, T₈ and T₁₀. Treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded the lower protein content of wheat grain (10.54%) as compared to other treatments. Nano DAP increases the protein content of wheat by enhancing nitrogen and phosphorus availability, which are crucial for protein synthesis and energy transfer. Its smaller particle size allows for more efficient nutrient absorption, boosting photosynthesis and overall plant health. This leads to better protein synthesis and accumulation in the wheat grains. These results are in conformity to those reported by Gomaa *et al.* (2018) and Dhansil *et al.* (2018).

3.9 Nitrogen content

The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher N content of wheat grain (1.91%) than other treatments but was found statistically at par with the treatments T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. Treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded the lower N content of wheat grain (1.69%) as compared to other treatments while treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher N content of wheat straw (0.76%) than other treatments but was found statistically at par with the treatments T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. In contrast treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded lower N content in wheat straw (0.66%) compared to other treatments.

3.10 Phosphorus Content

The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded significantly higher P content of wheat grain (0.390%) than other treatments but was found statistically at par with the treatments T₅, T₆, T₈, T₉ and T₁₀. Treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded the lower P content of wheat grain (0.327%) as compared to other treatments while treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded

significantly maximum P content of wheat straw (0.187%) than other treatments but was found statistically at par with the treatments T₃, T₅, T₆, T₈, T₉ and T₁₀. Treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded lower P content in wheat grain (0.163%) compared to other treatments.

3.11 Nitrogen uptake by grain and straw

Nitrogen uptake by grain and straw of wheat was found to be significant under different nano DAP treatments. Significantly higher nitrogen uptake by grain and straw (122.49 kg/ha and 70.92 kg/ha respectively) was recorded with the treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) and was found to be at par with the treatments T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. Treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded the lower N uptake of wheat grain and straw (76.48 kg/ha and 45.46 kg/ha respectively) as compared to other treatments.

3.12 Phosphorus uptake by grain and straw

Phosphorus uptake by grain and straw of wheat was found to be significant under different nano DAP treatments. Significantly higher phosphorus uptake by grain and straw (25.01 kg/ha and 17.69 kg/ha respectively) was recorded with the treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) and was found to be at par with the treatments T₅, T₆ and T₁₀. Treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded the lower P uptake of wheat grain and straw (14.76 kg/ha and 11.10 kg/ha respectively) as compared to other treatments.

3.13 Available N and P content in soil

The treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded the higher available N (211 kg/ha) compared to other treatments but was statistically at par with treatments T₃, T₅ and T₆. whereas treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded significantly lower available nitrogen (178.3 kg/ha) as compared to other treatments. similarly, treatment T₂ (100% RDF N and P) recorded the higher available P₂O₅ (55.31 kg/ha) compared to other treatments but was statistically at par with treatments T₃, T₅ and T₆. In contrast treatment T₁ (Absolute control) recorded significantly lower available P₂O₅ (40.87 kg/ha) as compared to other treatments.

CONCLUSION

In light of the findings of the present investigation. It can be concluded that, the foliar application of nano DAP fertilizer in combination with conventional phosphatic fertilizer showed potential in reducing the soil application of phosphorus. It was observed that application of 100% RDF of N and P was superior. However, using 75% RDF N and P + foliar spray with nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS and 50% RDF N and P + Seed treatment with nano DAP @ 5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with nano DAP @ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS seems to be more effective for achieving higher growth and yield attributing characters of wheat.

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Table 1. Effect of different treatments on plant height, root length, root biomass and no. of effective tillers

| Tr No. | Treatments | Plant height(cm) | | Root length(cm) | Root biomass (g/plant) | No. of effective tillers/m row length |
|-----------------|---|------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | 30 DAS | Harvest | | | |
| T ₁ | Absolute Control | 34.12 | 80.75 | 8.71 | 2.41 | 89.49 |
| T ₂ | 100% RDF N and P | 44.09 | 105.51 | 11.58 | 4.19 | 108.25 |
| T ₃ | 75% RDF N and P | 36.37 | 84.38 | 9.36 | 2.75 | 94.07 |
| T ₄ | 50% RDF N and P | 35.15 | 82.85 | 9.63 | 2.49 | 92.80 |
| T ₅ | T ₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS | 38.06 | 98.31 | 11.03 | 3.95 | 104.69 |
| T ₆ | T ₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS | 39.17 | 98.80 | 11.21 | 3.97 | 106.97 |
| T ₇ | T ₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS | 35.30 | 82.91 | 9.33 | 2.73 | 93.87 |
| T ₈ | T ₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS | 37.37 | 87.86 | 10.68 | 3.57 | 95.28 |
| T ₉ | T ₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 2.5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L 25 DAS. | 37.11 | 86.05 | 9.80 | 3.36 | 95.26 |
| T ₁₀ | T ₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L 25 DAS | 37.42 | 96.54 | 10.85 | 3.57 | 104.03 |
| | S. Em. ± | 1.72 | 4.31 | 0.43 | 0.14 | 4.20 |
| | C.D. at 5% | 5.10 | 12.82 | 1.29 | 0.42 | 12.47 |
| | C.V. (%) | 7.95 | 8.27 | 7.34 | 7.39 | 7.38 |

Table 2. Effect of different treatments on spike length, grain yield, straw yield, test weight and protein content

| Tr No. | Treatments | Spike length (cm) | Grain yield (kg/ha) | Straw yield (kg/ha) | Test weight(g) | Protein content (%) |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| T₁ | Absolute Control | 8.64 | 4425 | 5503 | 36.29 | 10.54 |
| T₂ | 100% RDF N and P | 10.34 | 6315 | 8114 | 42.85 | 11.94 |
| T₃ | 75% RDF N and P | 9.09 | 5290 | 6471 | 38.03 | 11.02 |
| T₄ | 50% RDF N and P | 8.74 | 4708 | 5783 | 36.33 | 10.75 |
| T₅ | T ₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS | 9.97 | 5810 | 7268 | 41.51 | 11.54 |
| T₆ | T ₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS | 10.18 | 6064 | 7869 | 42.12 | 11.79 |
| T₇ | T ₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS | 8.88 | 5221 | 6270 | 37.80 | 10.96 |
| T₈ | T ₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS | 9.22 | 5299 | 6536 | 37.84 | 11.19 |
| T₉ | T ₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 2.5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L 25 DAS. | 9.16 | 5291 | 6518 | 38.42 | 11.10 |
| T₁₀ | T ₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L 25 DAS | 9.95 | 5664 | 6971 | 41.14 | 11.48 |
| | S. Em. ± | 0.40 | 333 | 524 | 1.46 | 0.27 |
| | C.D. at 5% | 1.18 | 988 | 1557 | 4.34 | 0.79 |
| | C.V. (%) | 7.32 | 10.65 | 13.49 | 6.45 | 4.09 |

Table 3. Effect of different treatments on nitrogen and phosphorus content in grain and straw as well as N and P uptake by grain and straw

| Tr No. | Treatments | N content (%) | | P content (%) | | N uptake (kg/ha) | | P uptake (kg/ha) | |
|-----------------|--|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| | | Grain | Straw | Grain | Straw | Grain | Straw | Grain | Straw |
| T ₁ | Absolute Control | 1.69 | 0.66 | 0.327 | 0.163 | 76.48 | 45.46 | 14.76 | 11.10 |
| T ₂ | 100% RDF N and P | 1.91 | 0.76 | 0.390 | 0.187 | 122.49 | 70.92 | 25.01 | 17.69 |
| T ₃ | 75% RDF N and P | 1.76 | 0.69 | 0.347 | 0.169 | 94.81 | 54.99 | 18.74 | 13.10 |
| T ₄ | 50% RDF N and P | 1.72 | 0.68 | 0.330 | 0.163 | 82.51 | 48.61 | 15.94 | 11.63 |
| T ₅ | T ₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS | 1.85 | 0.74 | 0.377 | 0.180 | 109.36 | 64.02 | 22.27 | 15.48 |
| T ₆ | T ₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS | 1.89 | 0.75 | 0.387 | 0.186 | 116.47 | 68.85 | 23.85 | 17.13 |
| T ₇ | T ₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS | 1.75 | 0.67 | 0.340 | 0.167 | 93.20 | 53.82 | 18.21 | 12.65 |
| T ₈ | T ₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS | 1.80 | 0.68 | 0.367 | 0.171 | 96.70 | 56.34 | 19.80 | 13.37 |
| T ₉ | T ₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 2.5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L 25 DAS | 1.78 | 0.69 | 0.367 | 0.170 | 95.75 | 56.19 | 19.75 | 13.38 |
| T ₁₀ | T ₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L 25 DAS | 1.84 | 0.73 | 0.370 | 0.177 | 107.12 | 61.46 | 21.31 | 14.68 |
| | S. Em. ± | 0.04 | 0.02 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 6.63 | 3.55 | 1.43 | 0.99 |
| | C.D. at 5% | 0.11 | 0.05 | 0.03 | 0.02 | 19.69 | 10.54 | 4.25 | 2.93 |
| | C.V. (%) | 4.09 | 4.11 | 4.54 | 5.04 | 11.54 | 10.58 | 12.40 | 12.20 |

Table 4. Effect of different treatments on available nitrogen and phosphorus of soil after harvest of wheat

| Tr No. | Treatments | Available nutrient status(kg/ha) | |
|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | N | P ₂ O ₅ |
| T ₁ | Absolute Control | 178.3 | 40.87 |
| T ₂ | 100% RDF N and P | 211.0 | 55.31 |
| T ₃ | 75% RDF N and P | 195.7 | 51.74 |
| T ₄ | 50% RDF N and P | 183.2 | 48.47 |
| T ₅ | T ₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS | 200.0 | 52.23 |
| T ₆ | T ₃ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS | 203.7 | 53.93 |
| T ₇ | T ₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L at 25 DAS | 184.7 | 46.31 |
| T ₈ | T ₄ + Foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L at 25 DAS | 188.0 | 48.83 |
| T ₉ | T ₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 2.5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 2 ml/L 25 DAS | 189.9 | 51.27 |
| T ₁₀ | T ₄ + Seed treatment with Nano DAP @ 5 ml/kg seed + First foliar spray with Nano DAP@ 4 ml/L 25 DAS | 192.3 | 52.85 |
| | S. Em. ± | 5.32 | 1.39 |
| | C.D. at 5% | 15.81 | 4.12 |
| | C.V. (%) | 4.78 | 4.79 |

UNDER PEER REVIEW