

Original Research Article

Impact of foliar application of Urea and Nano urea levels on quality, physiological and leaf nutrient content attributes of Acid lime (*Citrus aurantifolia* Swingle) cv. Kagzi in Vertisols of Jhalawar district in Rajasthan.

ABSTRACT

This study attempted the efficacy of various Urea and Nano urea treatments on Kagzi lime fruit characteristics, such as weight, length, breadth of juice recovery, total soluble solids (TSS), acidity, TSS/Acidity ratio ascorbic acid content, and pH value of juices. There were some significant differences in the reaction of Kagzi lime to these treatments. The Urea treatment at 2% (T4) always gave the top values for the fruit weight, length, breadth; juice recovery, TSS content, TSS/Acidity ratio; ascorbic acid content, and juice pH. While the Nano urea treatments showed positive effects, Urea treatment at 2% had the overall better performance. This implies that Urea at this level was superior in improving the fruit quality factors, which may be used to optimize Kagzi lime cultivation methods. In particular, the variables such as fruit characteristics, juice properties and nutritional content, chlorophyll content; relative water contents in leaves of leaf nutrient contents were positively influenced by 2.0% treatment Urea application. These protocols led to significant improvements in fruit weight, length, and width being greater as well good juice contented and TSS which increased considerably the levels of Ascorbic acid were improved, chlorophyll content enhanced while there was were reduced affects-effects, despite that resulted from this prophylactic treatment. Moreover, it resulted in the maximum level of leaf nitrogen and phosphorous. These results show that Urea makes-has significant influences on the quality of acid lime cv. The highest favourable-favorable results were noticed in the 2.0% Urea treatment administered by Kagzi lime.

Keywords: - Citrus, Acid Lime, Kagzi, Quality, Urea, Nano urea, Leaf N, P, K

1. INTRODUCTION

Acid lime, scientifically referred to as *Citrus aurantifolia* Swingle, is an evergreen fruit tree belonging to the Rutaceae family. It is characterized by its small size and bears fruits known as acid limes. This fruit is well known for its distinctive tangy flavour-flavor and is highly valued for its versatile applications in both culinary and medicinal uses. The acid lime tree is native to Southeast Asia, particularly India, and is commonly cultivated in tropical and subtropical regions around the world. Globally, India holds first rank in the production of acid lime (*Citrus aurantifolia* Swingle) with production of 35.86 lakh metric tons and an area of 3.06 lakh hectares as per third advance estimate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare data of the year 2021-22 (Anon., 2021-22). Acid lime is gaining popularity among citrus growers due to its versatility in adapting to diverse agro-climatic and soil conditions, cost-effective-cost-effective cultivation, year-round-year-round fruit-bearing-fruit-bearing capability, improved fruit storage properties, and steady demand in the domestic market (Ladaniya *et al.* 2020). The increasing interest in foliar fertilizers is driven by the numerous advantages of foliar application methods. These include the rapid and efficient response to plant needs, reduced product quantities required, and the independence from soil conditions. The application of supplementary foliar fertilization during crop growth has been acknowledged for its ability to enhance the mineral status of plants and ultimately boost crop yield (Kolota and Osinska 2001). Most plants absorb foliar-applied-foliar-applied urea rapidly and hydrolyse-hydrolyze the urea in the cytosol (Witte *et al.* 2002). Urea and Nano urea can

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be applied to plants through the foliage, enabling efficient nitrogen management, that reduces nitrogen losses to the environment. (Yildirim *et al.* 2007). Acid lime crop is economically important for farmers as it provides ~~year-round~~ year-round harvest, ensuring a steady return. With the growing concern for sustainable agriculture and environmental protection, there was a need felt to explore alternate nutrient management ~~practice~~ practices. Traditional urea application may lead to nutrient losses through leaching and volatilization. Evaluating the efficacy of Nano urea in comparison can provide insight into its potential to enhance nutrient use efficiency, thereby conserving nutrient resources. By comparing the effect of Urea and Nano urea on acid lime, ~~which~~ foliar treatment results in better productivity and improved fruit quality.

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2. MATERIALS AND METHODS:

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The investigation titled “Comparative assessment of Urea and Nano urea foliar applications on quality, physiological and leaf nutrient content attributes of Acid lime (*Citrus aurantifolia* Swingle) cv. Kagzi, was carried out from June to December 2022 at the well-established Kagzi lime orchard of ~~the~~ College of Horticulture and Forestry, Jhalawar, a constituent College of Agriculture University, Kota. The study involved 14-year-old acid lime plants, ~~totalling~~ totaling fifty-four in number, spaced at regular intervals of 6 m x 6 m. The experiment included nine treatments, incorporating different concentrations of Urea (0.5%, 1.0%, 1.5%, and 2.0%) and Nano Urea (500 ppm, 1000 ppm, 1500 ppm, and 2000 ppm). Two rounds of foliar spraying were administered for each treatment, commencing on 7th July 2022, followed by the second spray 30 days later. The soil composition predominantly had a clay loam texture with traces of heavy clay. The primary objective of this study was to assess the influence of Urea and Nano Urea foliar applications on the quality attributes of Kagzi Acid Lime, yielding significant insights for the improvement of agricultural practices:

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1. “Quality parameters were recorded at horticultural maturity of fruits during ~~the~~ second fortnight of December 2022”.
2. “Leaf nutrient analysis and physiological parameters were initially measured and then again ~~at the completion of~~ after the experiment as per standard analytical procedures”.

Keeping all these facts in mind, the present investigations were conducted to provide valuable information to farmers and the agriculture industry to optimize their nutrient management practices.

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2.1 TREATMENT DETAILS

The area of the experimental block was 2160 m² accommodating 54 acid lime cv. Kagzi plants. Treatment comprises two factors, first four levels of Urea and second, four levels of Nano Urea and control. Thus a total of nine treatments having a unit replication of two plants with a total of 54 plants were tested applying these treatments. The details of treatments evaluated under study are given in ~~table~~ Table 1.

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Table 1. Details of various treatments including Urea and Nano Urea

T ₀ : (water spray),
T ₁ : (Urea @ 0.5%),
T ₂ : (Urea @ 1.0%),
T ₃ : (Urea @ 1.5 %),
T ₄ : (Urea @ 2 %),
T ₅ : (Nano urea @ 500 ppm),
T ₆ : (Nano urea @ 1000 ppm),
T ₇ : (Nano urea @ 1500ppm)
T ₈ : (Nano urea 2000ppm) as applied foliar treatments.

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Leaf chlorophyll content was quantified following the method suggested by Sadasivam and Manickam (1997). Leaf N content was determined using the alkaline potassium permanganate method (Thakur *et al.* 2012). The leaf P and K content in leaf samples was assessed using the methodology outlined by Thakur *et al.* (2012).

The data collected during the experiment was subjected to statistical analysis using the Analysis of variance (ANOVA) technique. The significance of the treatment was tested through F-test at a 5% level of significance. To evaluate the significance of the differences, the critical difference (CD) was calculated among the different treatments.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Below are the comprehensive results of the experiment, supported by relevant tables:

3.1 Fruit Weight: Significant variations were observed in the fruit weight of Kagzi lime in response to various Urea and Nano urea treatments. Table 2 presents the results, revealing that the maximum fruit weight (67.90 g) was recorded in cv. Kagzi lime with the T₄ treatment (Urea @ 2%), while the minimum fruit weight (40.89 g) was recorded in the T₀ treatment. Although there was an increase in the fruit weight of acid lime with Nano urea, the T₈ treatment with Nano urea application @ 2000 ppm showed a value of 52.68 g. Despite this, the overall highest fruit weight was recorded with the T₄ treatment. The increase in fruit weight observed with the T₄ treatment (Urea @ 2%) can be attributed to the enhanced nitrogen availability provided by urea, which is a vital nutrient required for protein, enzyme, and chlorophyll synthesis involved in various biochemical processes within the plant. The foliar application of urea through the T₄ treatment likely stimulated the photosynthetic rate, leading to higher carbohydrate production and ultimately resulting in increased fruit weight.

3.2 Fruit length (mm): Various urea and Nano urea treatments led to significant variations in the fruit length of acid lime. The findings presented in table-Table 2 demonstrate that the highest fruit length (52.72 mm) in acid lime cv. Kagzi was observed in the T₄ treatment (Urea @ 2%), while the lowest fruit length (41.76 mm) was recorded in the T₀ treatment. Similarly, the application of different levels of Nano urea also increased the fruit length in acid lime cv. Kagzi, with the maximum fruit length (45.70 mm) recorded in the T₈ treatment using Nano urea @ 2000 ppm. The overall results indicate that the fruit length was highest in the T₄ treatment (Urea @ 2%) compared to the Nano urea treatments. The role of nitrogen in enhancing cell wall strength and flexibility might have influenced fruit shape and breadth. Additionally, nitrogen is closely associated with the absorption and assimilation of other essential nutrients like potassium (K) and calcium (Ca), crucial for cell expansion and fruit development. The increase in fruit length can be attributed to enhanced water uptake and turgor pressure within the fruit, facilitating the expansion and elongation of fruit tissues. The results of this study are in agreement with previous findings reported by various researchers in different fruit crops. Debaje *et al.* (2011) observed similar trends in acid lime, while Jat and Laxmidas (2014) reported comparable results in guava.

3.3 Fruit breadth (mm): The findings presented in table-Table 2 indicate that the highest fruit breadth in acid lime cv. Kagzi (47.36 mm) was observed in the T₄ treatment (Urea @ 2%), while the minimum length (40.87 mm) was recorded in the T₀ (Control) treatment. The application of different levels of Nano urea resulted in an increase in fruit length, with the maximum value (46.35 mm) measured in the T₈ treatment (Nano urea@ 2000ppm). However, the overall maximum enhancement in fruit length (47.36 mm) was recorded in the T₄ treatment (Urea @ 2%) when compared to the Nano urea treatments. Nitrogen's role in cell wall strengthening and increasing its flexibility may have contributed to the shaping and broadening of that fruit. Additionally, nitrogen is intimately associated with the uptake and

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accumulation of vital nutrients like potassium (K) and calcium Ca; which are required for cell elongation as well as fruit development. Elongation in fruit tissues of acid lime and the consequent increase in length can be due to enhanced water uptake that causes elevated pressure within fruits, which then leads to expansion and elongation. Likewise, Prasad *et al.* (2015) and Al-Obeed *et al.* (2017) found analogous outcomes in Kinnow mandarin.

3.4 Juice (%): The results presented in table 2 demonstrate that the maximum juice recovery in Kagzi lime (51.19%) was achieved in response to the T₄ treatment (Urea @ 2%), while the minimum (38.34%) was observed in the T₀ (Control) treatment. Additionally, the application of Nano urea treatments resulted in an increase in juice recovery percentage, and the highest juice recovery (49.21%) was obtained through the T₈ treatment (Nano urea @ 2000 ppm). Overall, upon comparative evaluation of Urea and Nano urea treatments, it was found that the highest juice recovery (51.19%) was estimated in the T₄ treatment, which included Urea @ 2.0%. These findings are further supported by Rathore and Chandra (2003), Prasad *et al.* (2015), and Sawale *et al.* (2021) in Sai Sharbati. Moreover, El-Tanany *et al.* (2009), Debaje *et al.* (2011), Prasad *et al.* (2015), Al-Obeed *et al.* (2017), and Yadav *et al.* (2020) also reported consistent results in their studies on acid lime and Kinnow mandarin. The higher juice recovery obtained in the T₄ treatment can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the application of T₄ might have stimulated increased carbohydrate production, leading to an enhancement in cell number and size in various fruit tissues, including the juice sac in acid lime. Additionally, urea, present in the T₄ treatment, plays a role as a source of nitrogen. It increases the osmotic pressure within the fruit cells, causing water to move from the surrounding tissue into the fruit cells, thereby increasing the juice percentage. The present findings are consistent with the results reported by Lakshmi pathi *et al.* (2015), Prasad *et al.* (2015), Rokaya *et al.* (2019) in Kinnow mandarin, Yadav *et al.* (2020) in acid lime, and Senjam and Singh (2021) in Assam lemon. The convergence of these results reinforces the understanding of the impact of the T₄ treatment on juice recovery and supports the effectiveness of urea as a nutrient in enhancing juice yield in acid lime

3.5 TSS (^obrix): The data presented in table 2 illustrates the variations in the total soluble solids (TSS) content of acid lime cv. Kagzi under different Urea and Nano urea treatments. The highest TSS value (10.46^obrix) was recorded in the T₄ treatment, where Urea was applied at a rate of 2%. The application of Nano urea at different doses resulted in inconsistent variations in TSS levels, with the highest values (10.28^obrix) observed in both the T⁵ treatment (Nano urea @ 500 ppm) and the T₇ treatment (Nano urea @ 1500 ppm), which were higher than the control group (9.30^obrix). However, upon overall evaluation, the maximum TSS content (10.46^obrix) was measured in the T₄ treatment with Urea at 2.0%. The increase in TSS observed under various treatments can be attributed to the influence of Urea and Nano urea on metabolic pathways, resulting in the accumulation of sugar in the fruit juice and an increase in enzymatic activity, contributing to higher TSS levels.

3.6 Acidity (%): Upon examining the data presented in table 2, it becomes evident that the acidity of the lime juice samples displayed significant variations in response to the different foliar treatments. The lowest acidity of 6.47% was recorded in the T₄ treatment (Urea @ 2%), and this value was notably lower compared to the other treatments. In contrast, the highest acidity content of 7.25% was observed in the T₀ treatment, which served as the control. Moreover, the various doses of Nano urea treatments revealed a reduction in acidity content across all the Nano urea treatments. The minimum acidity content (6.53%) was estimated in the T₈ treatment, where Nano urea was applied at a rate of 2000 ppm during the horticultural maturity of acid lime fruits. Acidity in acid lime fruits is influenced by various physiological factors, including organic acid synthesis, respiration rates, sugar content, and nitrogen availability, which can potentially affect acidity levels. This is supported by the research conducted by Chouhan *et al.* (2018) and Yadav *et al.* (2020) in acid lime, Abdallah (2020) in

Minneola Tangelo, and Senjam and Singh (2021) in Assam lemon, which corroborate the present findings and further emphasize the factors influencing TSS and acidity in acid lime fruits. The high TSS: acid ratio recorded in the T₄ treatment can be attributed to enhanced sugar accumulation in the acid lime fruits.

3.7 TSS/Acidity ratio: The TSS/Acidity ratio is a crucial parameter used to assess fruit quality in acid lime and other citrus fruits, indicating the balance between sweetness and acidity, which are essential aspects of fruit taste. The T₄ treatment, with Urea applied at 2%, resulted in the highest TSS/Acidity ratio (1.65), indicating a better balance between sweetness and acidity in the fruit and favourable fruit quality. In contrast, the T₀ treatment (Control) exhibited the lowest TSS/Acidity ratio (1.27), suggesting an imbalanced combination of sweetness and acidity in the fruit. Nano urea treatments showed varying trends in the TSS/Acidity ratio at different doses, implying inconsistent effects on fruit quality. Among the Nano urea treatments, the T₈ treatment with Nano urea applied at 2000 ppm recorded the highest TSS/Acidity ratio (1.56), indicating a relatively better balance of sweetness and acidity compared to other Nano urea treatments. Overall, the comparative evaluation of urea and Nano urea treatments revealed that the best TSS/Acidity ratio (1.65) was obtained in the T₄ treatment, where Urea was applied at 2.0%. This suggests that the Urea treatment at this concentration was more effective in achieving the desired fruit quality with the right balance of sweetness and acidity. The convergence of these results reinforces the understanding of the impact of the T₄ treatment on juice recovery and supports the effectiveness of urea as a nutrient in enhancing juice yield in acid lime. These findings align with the results reported by Prasad *et al.* (2015), Chouhan *et al.* (2018) in acid lime, Yadav *et al.* (2020) in acid lime, and Senjam and Singh (2021) in Assam lemon. With an increased supply of nitrogen, the acid lime plant might produce and accumulate more sugars, leading to higher TSS levels in the fruit juice. These findings are in line with the results reported by Saleem *et al.* (2008) in sweet orange. The research also indicates that the availability of nitrogen contributes to a rise in N₂ content within the acid lime cv. Kagzi fruits. This increase can be attributed to higher availability of ammonia, which enhances the presence of glutathione. Glutathione indirectly leads to an increase in the levels of ascorbic acid and has the ability to regenerate ascorbic acid from its oxidized form (dehydroascorbic acid), thereby maintaining an active pool of ascorbic acid within the fruit tissue. These results are further supported by previous research by Carpenter *et al.* (2018), Chouhan *et al.* (2018) conducted on acid lime under Malwa plateau region, as well as the findings of Rokaya *et al.* (2019). The consistency of these supporting studies strengthens the validity and relevance of the present investigations.

3.8 Ascorbic acid (mg/100 ml of juice): The level of ascorbic acid in acid lime fruits displayed significant variation when exposed to different treatments involving Urea and Nano urea. Among these treatments, the highest concentration of ascorbic acid, measuring 61.89 mg/100ml, was observed in T₄ treatment, which involved the application of Urea at a concentration of 2%. On the other hand, the control group (T₀ treatment) exhibited the lowest ascorbic acid content, measuring 44.56 mg/100ml. The ascorbic acid content increased with varying doses of Nano urea, and the maximum ascorbic acid content (57.75 mg/100ml) was achieved in T₈ treatment (Nano urea @ 2000ppm). However, the overall comparative assessment revealed that the highest ascorbic acid content (61.89 mg/100ml) was recorded in T₄ treatment, where Urea was applied at a concentration of 2.0%.

3.9 Juice pH: The current research on foliar applications of Urea and Nano urea treatments in acid lime cv. Kagzi fruits revealed variations in juice pH. The highest juice pH value (2.40) was observed in T₄ treatment, which showed similar performance to T₃ and T₂ treatments with pH values of 2.38 and 2.35, respectively. On the other hand, the lowest juice pH (2.22) was recorded in the control group, T₀. Moreover, the application of Nano urea treatments at

different levels resulted in lower juice pH values (ranging from 2.22 to 2.28) compared to various Urea levels. The higher juice pH could be attributed to the fact that urea application might influence the uptake and utilization of other essential nutrients such as potassium (K^+) and calcium (Ca^{2+}) which play a role in maintaining the pH balance in plant cells. The results of present findings are in accordance with those reported by Lasa *et al.* (2012).

Physiological Attributes

3.9 Chlorophyll content ($mg\ g^{-1}$)

The application of foliar treatments comprising Urea and Nano urea on acid lime cv. Kagzi led to a noticeable increase in total chlorophyll content across various treatments. The changes in chlorophyll accumulation of Kagzi lime leaves in response to foliar application of Urea and Nano Urea treatments are depicted in Fig.1. The T_4 treatment, which involved Urea at a 2.0% concentration, exhibited the highest chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, and total chlorophyll content, with values of $1.217\ mg\ g^{-1}$, $0.717\ mg\ g^{-1}$, and $1.933\ mg\ g^{-1}$, respectively. Conversely, the lowest accumulation of chlorophyll a ($1.140\ mg\ g^{-1}$), chlorophyll b ($0.463\ mg\ g^{-1}$), and total chlorophyll ($1.603\ mg\ g^{-1}$) was observed in the T_0 (control) treatment, which did not receive any foliar treatment. The significant increase in chlorophyll a, chlorophyll b, and total chlorophyll content in the T_4 treatment can be attributed to the positive response of acid lime plants to the foliar application of Urea at a concentration of 2.0%. This response likely led to enhanced chlorophyll synthesis and improved photosynthetic efficiency in the plants. Additionally, the increased activities of Rubisco (Ribulose-1,5-biphosphate carboxylase/oxygenase), a key enzyme involved in carbon fixation during photosynthesis, may have contributed to the heightened chlorophyll content. These findings align with the work of Dhaliwal and Rohela (2016) in rough lemon and Abdallah (2020) in their studies, further validating the positive impacts of foliar Urea treatments on chlorophyll content in citrus plants. The present results highlight the potential of Urea foliar application as an effective method to enhance photosynthetic activity and overall health in acid lime cv. Kagzi.

3.10 Relative water content (%)

The graphical representation of data in fig.2 illustrates the changes in RWC (Relative water content) of acid lime cv. Kagzi leaves. The overall maximum relative water content (75.86%) in Kagzi lime leaves was estimated in T_4 treatment (Urea @ 2.0%) during December 2022 and minimum relative water content (68.05%) was measured in T_0 (Control) treatment. The relatively better Relative Water Content (RWC) measured in the T_4 treatment could be attributed to multiple factors. Firstly, there might be an increase in osmotic adjustment, leading to a higher osmotic potential in the leaf cells. This allows the cells to retain more water and maintain higher RWC (%). Secondly, Urea might influence stomatal behaviour, leading to better stomatal regulation and improved water retention in the leaves. Additionally, nitrogen stimulates cell expansion, allowing the leaf cells to accommodate more water and maintain higher RWC (%). These results are consistent with the findings reported by Mohammadi and Khejri (2018) in date palm, providing further support for the positive impact of Urea treatment on the relative water content in acid lime plants

Leaf nutrient analysis

3.11 Effect of N (%) of acid lime cv. Kagzi leaves:

The experiment was conducted on acid lime cv. Kagzi trees involved the application of different treatments, including Urea and Nano urea, through foliar application. The

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researchers measured the effect of these treatments on the final leaf nitrogen status of the acid lime trees after harvesting the fruits in December 2022.

The results, as depicted in Figure 3, showed that the treatment T₄, which involved the application of Urea at a concentration of 2%, resulted in the highest leaf nitrogen content, with a value of 2.05%. Following closely behind was the T₃ treatment, which used Urea at a concentration of 1.5%, and it exhibited a leaf nitrogen status of 2.01%. The third most effective treatment was T₈, which utilized Nano urea at a concentration of 2000 ppm, and it yielded a leaf nitrogen content of 2.01%. The increase in leaf nitrogen content of acid lime cv. Kagzi can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the rapid uptake of nitrogen from the applied foliar Urea and Nano urea treatments contributed to higher nitrogen levels in the leaves. Secondly, the improved mobility of nutrients in the plants facilitated the efficient movement of nitrogen within the leaf tissues. Thirdly, enhanced urea hydrolysis and nitrogen release further enriched the nitrogen content in the leaves. Lastly, better nitrogen assimilation processes in the plants led to the synthesis of nitrogen-rich organic compounds. These findings are in line with previous studies by Bondada *et al.* (2001), El-Otmani *et al.* (2004) [on clementine mandarin](#), Abdallah (2020), and Deparpanah (2017) [in pomegranate](#), which [support-supports](#) the positive impact of foliar Urea and Nano urea treatments on leaf nitrogen content in citrus plants.

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From these findings, it can be inferred that the application of Urea, particularly at a higher concentration of 2%, had a more significant impact on increasing the leaf nitrogen status of the acid lime cv. Kagzi trees compared to the application of Nano urea at the given concentration. This suggests that Urea, when applied via foliar application, might be a more efficient nitrogen source for enhancing the nitrogen content in the leaves of the acid lime trees.

3.12 Effect on P (%) of acid lime cv. Kagzi leaves:

The paragraph discusses the effects of foliar application of Urea and Nano urea treatments on acid lime cv. Kagzi trees, specifically focusing on their impact on leaf phosphorous (P) content. According to the results presented in Figure 4, it was observed that both Urea and Nano urea treatments led to an increase in leaf phosphorous content in the acid lime cv. Kagzi trees. The highest leaf phosphorous content (0.153%) was recorded in the T₄ treatment group, which involved the application of Urea at a concentration of 2.0%. Interestingly, the T₈ treatment group, using Nano urea at a concentration of 2000 ppm, showed an equivalent leaf phosphorous content of 0.153% to that of the T₄ treatment. The data displayed in Figure 5 provides evidence that both Urea and Nano urea treatments are effective in augmenting the leaf phosphorous content in the acid lime cv. Kagzi trees. It suggests that the foliar application of these treatments can be beneficial in enhancing the phosphorous uptake and assimilation in the leaves, which can potentially contribute to improved plant growth, health, and fruit production. The increase in leaf phosphorus (P) content of acid lime cv. Kagzi can be attributed to indirect biochemical and physiological processes in the plants. The application of foliar Urea and Nano urea likely stimulated root growth and activity due to increased nitrogen availability. Healthy and active roots play a crucial role in nutrient uptake, including phosphorus. Additionally, the metabolism of urea in plants and the subsequent production of ammonia (NH₃) may raise the pH in the vicinity of the urea-treated leaves, creating a slightly alkaline environment. This alkaline environment stimulates the activity of certain phosphatase enzymes responsible for breaking down organic phosphorus in the soil, making inorganic phosphorus more available for uptake by the roots and subsequent transportation to the leaves. These results are consistent with the findings reported by Abdallah (2020).

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Effect on K (%) of acid lime cv. Kagzi leaves:

The results presented in Figure 5 indicate that the application of foliar spray treatments containing both Urea and Nano urea on Kagzi lime trees led to a consistent decrease in leaf potassium content across all the treatments. This reduction in leaf potassium content was observed when comparing the values after the application of the treatments to the initial values before the treatments were administered. The significant reduction in leaf potassium content in both the Urea and Nano urea treatments implies that these foliar spray treatments had an impact on the uptake, translocation, or utilization of potassium within the Kagzi lime trees. The decrease in leaf potassium levels suggests that either the applied nutrients (Urea and Nano urea) directly influenced the potassium levels or induced physiological responses in the trees that affected potassium uptake and distribution. The finding of a consistent decrease in leaf potassium content across all treatments suggests that both Urea and Nano urea treatments might have similar effects on the potassium status of the Kagzi lime trees. The reduction in leaf potassium (K) status of acid lime cv. Kagzi may be a result of nutrient allocation changes after fruit harvest. The trees may reallocate nutrients that were previously allocated to fruit development and growth towards other parts of the trees, including leaves. This redirection of nutrients leads to a decrease in overall nutrient content in the leaves, including potassium. Additionally, the increased nitrogen levels from the foliar Urea and Nano urea treatments may interfere with the uptake of potassium, contributing to the relative reduction in leaf potassium content. These findings are supported by the research conducted by Kumar *et al.* (1994) and Nava *et al.* (2010).

The candidate manuscript does not have a robust scientific discussion, I suggest the authors incorporate the suggested paragraphs, in this way, it would improve the scientific quality of the manuscript:

The agricultural significance of optimizing nutrient management strategies in tropical regions, particularly Latin America, has garnered substantial attention due to its implications for soil quality and productivity. Acid lime (*Citrus aurantifolia* Swingle) cultivation, a key component of tropical agriculture (Rodriguez *et al.* 2015), requires meticulous attention to enhance fruit quality (Olivares and Franco, 2015) and overall productivity (Hernandez *et al.* 2018a). This study focuses on the impact of foliar application of Urea and Nano urea levels on Kagzi lime, providing insights into the physiological and nutritional aspects of the crop.

The observed variations in Kagzi lime responses to Urea and Nano urea treatments underscore the scientific relevance of this study. Notably, Urea at a concentration of 2% consistently outperformed Nano urea across a spectrum of fruit attributes, including weight, dimensions, juice recovery, total soluble solids (TSS), acidity, TSS/acidity ratio, ascorbic acid content, and juice pH. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on nutrient management in tropical fruit agriculture (Campos, 2023), emphasizing the superiority of Urea at specific concentrations (Araya-Alman *et al.* 2020; Olivares *et al.* 2022a).

In the context of tropical agricultural areas in Latin America, where soil quality and productivity are pivotal concerns, the current research aligns with the need for tailored nutrient application strategies (Olivares *et al.* 2022b; Calero *et al.* 2022). Comparative

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Table 2. Physico-chemical characteristics of acid lime cv. Kagzi fruits in response to foliar application of Urea and Nano urea treatments

Treatments	Fruit wt.(g.)	Fruit length(mm)	Fruit breadth (mm)	Juice (%)	TSS(°brix)	Acidity (%)	TSS/Acidity ratio	Ascorbic Acid (mg/100ml)	Juice pH
T ₀	40.89	41.76	40.87	38.34	9.30	7.25	1.27	44.56	2.22
T ₁	44.73	43.53	42.09	47.55	9.93	6.98	1.45	53.21	2.32
T ₂	48.09	43.63	43.06	46.25	10.26	7.05	1.41	54.38	2.35
T ₃	51.46	44.48	44.68	49.66	10.28	6.88	1.46	60.31	2.38
T ₄	67.90	52.72	47.36	51.19	10.46	6.47	1.65	61.89	2.40
T ₅	40.56	41.24	40.53	46.05	10.28	6.56	1.47	48.54	2.22
T ₆	45.85	43.29	42.43	47.36	10.07	6.66	1.46	51.36	2.22
T ₇	48.42	43.52	43.13	46.90	10.28	6.68	1.55	55.65	2.24

T ₈	52.68	45.70	46.35	49.21	10.15	6.53	1.56	57.75	2.28
SEm(±)	1.41	0.97	0.78	0.68	0.15	0.05	0.02	0.45	0.02
CD 5%	4.25	2.92	2.36	2.06	0.47	0.17	0.06	1.35	0.06

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Where: T₀ (water spray), T₁ (Urea @ 0.5%), T₂ (Urea @ 1.0%), T₃ (Urea @ 1.5 %), T₄ (Urea @ 2 %), T₅ (Nano urea @ 500 ppm), T₆ (Nano urea @ 1000 ppm), T₇ (Nano urea @ 1500ppm) and T₈ (Nano urea 2000ppm) are applied foliar treatments.

FIG.1 Effect of foliar Urea and Nano urea treatments on chlorophyll content of acid lime cv. kagzi leaves

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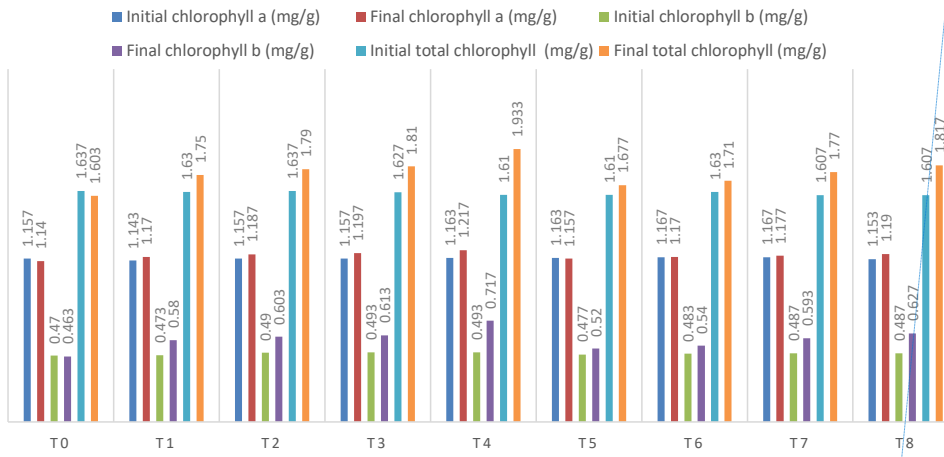


Fig.3 Effect of Foliar urea and Nano urea on leaf nitrogen content of acid lime cv.Kagzi

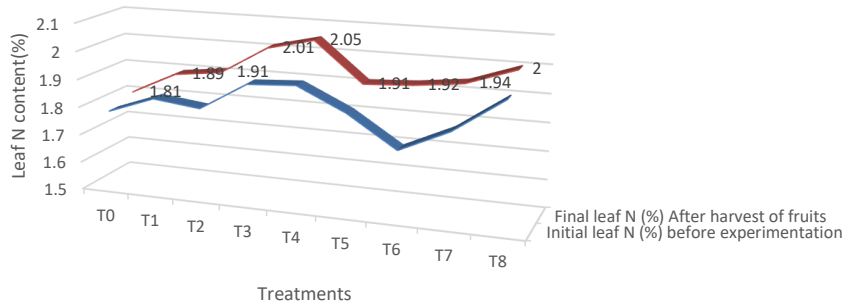
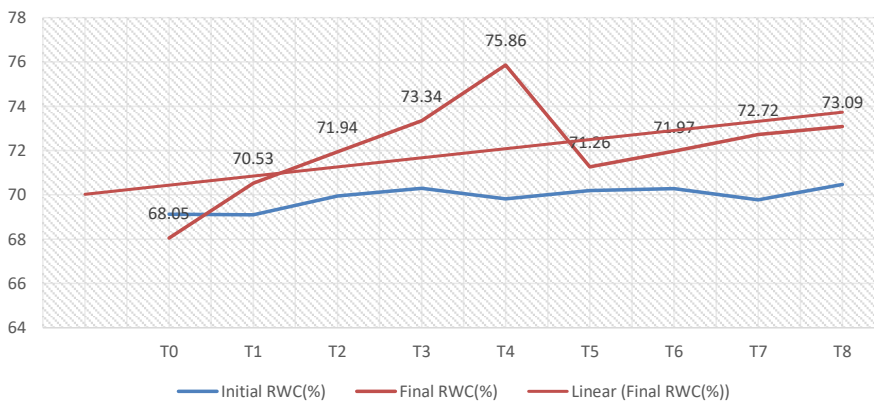


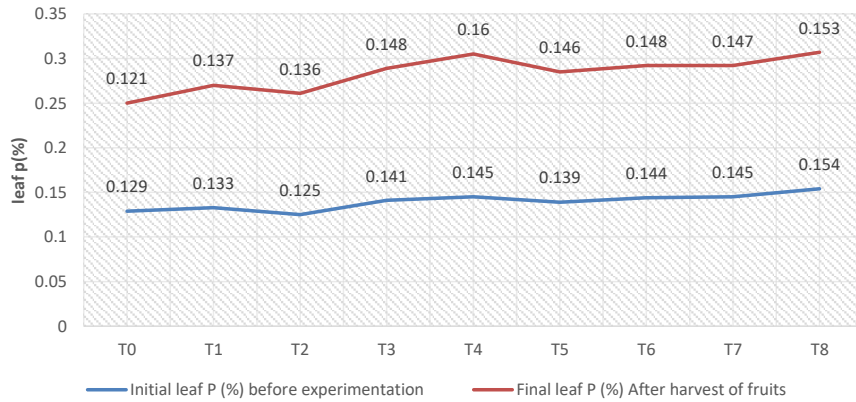
Fig.2 Effect of foliar Urea and Nano Urea treatments on Relative water content(%) of acid lime cv.Kagzi leaves



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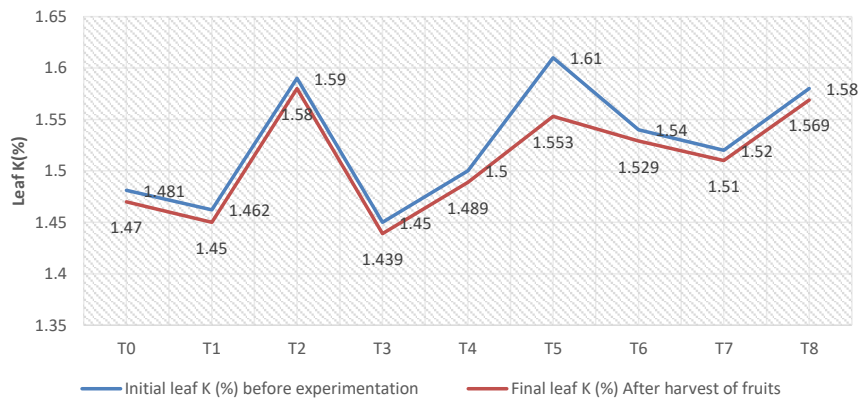
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Fig.4 Effect of foliar urea and Nano Urea treatments on leaf phosphorous content of acid lime cv.kagzi



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Fig.5 Effect of foliar urea and nano urea treatments on leaf potassium content



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