

Original Research Article
Performance evaluation of *Coccinia*
(*Coccinia grandis* L.Voigt) under different training
systems and growing environments.

ABSTRACT

The present investigation was conducted during 2021-2022 in the Department of Vegetable Science, Horticultural College and Research institute, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University to examine the performance of coccinia in different growing environments and training systems. The experiment was laid out in Factorial randomized block design (FRBD) with three replications. The treatment combinations comprises of two growing environments viz, open field (G_1) and polyhouse (G_2) with four training systems viz., Trellis system (T_1), Vertical system (T_2), Fish net (T_3) and Pandal system (T_4). Among these treatments, vertical training system and polyhouse cultivation was found to be superior for growth and yield attributing traits. In the vertical system of training the fruit yield was superior in polyhouse with the yield of 154.76 t/ha/year and 80.49 t/ha/year in open field. The interaction effect of polyhouse environment and vertical training (G_2T_2) was revealed by the highest number of fruits per vine (17.92), fruit yield/plant (5.15/kg), annual fruit yield (61.90 kg/plant) recorded in plants trained by vertical system. From the results it is concluded that, highest productivity in coccinia can be obtained from Polyhouse condition (G_2) with the adoption of vertical system of training (T_2).

Keywords: Coccinia; growing environments; training systems; yield traits.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coccinia (*Coccinia grandis* L.Voigt) is a tropical, dioecious perennial herbaceous vine [1]. It is an underutilized cucurbitaceous crop with ample nutritive value. It has its origin in India and most popular in southern and central India. It is cultivated throughout the year in south India. The temperature range of 20 – 32 °C is ideal for the growth and yield of coccinia. The fruits are dark green with white streaks in younger stages and become

red or deep orange at maturity. These fruits are used for salad purpose in tender stages and the immature fruits are consumed for culinary purposes and are harvested 7-10 days after fruit setting [2].

In polyhouses the provision of optimum microclimate especially with respect to temperature and humidity will result in congenial environment and aid in the production of fruits with increased moisture content, superior quality and tenderness. In the current scenario, only the vegetables with high market value are grown under polyhouse condition. Coccinia is gaining popularity in the recent days as salad and culinary vegetable. This growing demand makes the production of coccinia inevitable. As of now, it is grown in pandal system under open condition.

Coccinia has aggressive climbing properties and spread easily in training systems [3]. Regulation of plant framework by appropriate training system is main key factor to get high yield in polyhouse [4]. The vertical supports was found to be effective for increasing the plant height, fruit quality and yield in watermelon [5]. Therefore, keeping in view of exploiting all the prospects of training systems and growing environment, the present investigation was framed to study the performance of coccinia in different growing environments and training systems to ensure high productivity.

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS :

The present investigation was carried out during 2021 – 2022 at the Department of Vegetable Science; Horticultural College and Research institute, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University which is located at latitude of N 11°0'34.9596" and longitude E 76°55'22.122". The experimental material consists of coccinia variety CO-1 which was clonal selection from Anaikatti type. The experiment was laid out in factorial randomized block design (FRBD) with three replications. The treatment combinations comprises of two growing environments viz., open field (G₁) and polyhouse (G₂) with four training systems viz., Trellis system (T₁), Vertical system (T₂), Fish net (T₃) and Pandal system (T₄). Semi hard wood cuttings of 20 to 30 cm length and 2 cm thick were prepared and planted in polybags of size 25 x 15 cm and filled with sand, soil and farmyard manure in 1:1:1 ratio. The cuttings were placed in shade nets for well establishment. After four to six true leaf stage rooted cuttings were

transplanted to open field and polyhouse. The cuttings were planted at the spacing of 2 x 2 m in pits of size of 30 cm³.

Based on Soil Test Crop Response studies (STCR), the fertilizer doses were applied to polyhouse and open field to ensure the uniformity in nutrients at the experimental plots.

Chart 1 : Soil test values

Initial soil test values (Kg/ha)

	SN	SP	SK
Open field	179(L)	21.5(M)	656(H)
Polyhouse	224(L)	23(H)	771(H)

SN- Soil available Nitrogen ; SP- Soil available phosphorus; SK – Soil available potassium in (Kg /ha)

Recommendation as per TNAU CPG, 2020	N	P	K
	75	40	75
Nutrients applied to open field	75	40	60
Nutrients applied to Polyhouse	75	32	60

2.1 TRAINING SYSTEMS ADOPTED:

Trellis system (T₁)

The vertical posts of 2.0 m height were fixed on the ground by burial of 50 cm depth underground. These posts were spaced at a distance of 5 m apart. G.I wires of 15 gauge thickness were extended and coated to these vertical post. Two rows of wires were tied in parallel rows of 30 cm apart and strongly tied to vertical posts. The main stem is allowed to reach the upper wire head. The lateral branches were trained horizontally on both sides from the lowest horizontal wire.

Vertical system (T₂)

The primary branches of the vine were trained vertically to reach the over head wire. Excess lateral branches were thinned periodically.

Fish net system (T₃)

Two supporting pillars of 1.8 m height were set on the ground with 30 cm below ground and the interspaced supporting pillars are netted by nylon wires.

Pandal system (T₄)

Pandal was erected and the vines were spread over the pandal. The height of the pandal is 1.5 m from the ground.

Observations were recorded for vegetative, flowering and yield attributes viz., vine length (cm), number of Primary branches, internodal length, node at which first female flower appears, days to first flowering, days

to 50 % flowering, days to first picking, number of fruits/vine, fruit length (cm), fruit diameter (cm), fruit yield/vine (kg), fruit yield/plant/year (kg) and estimated fruit yield (t/ha). The data recorded were subjected to statistical analysis as per Panse and Sukhatme [6].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The vegetative, flowering and fruit yield attributing traits were evaluated in different growing environments and training systems and the data obtained were analyzed and their level of significance were presented in table 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5. It is clearly evident from the results that the effect due to training system and growing environments on growth, flowering and yield parameters were highly significant and their interaction effect was also found to be significant for most of the important yield attributing parameters.

3.1 GROWTH PARAMETERS:

It is revealed that the highest vine length (433.98 cm) and number of primary branches (5.42) was observed in coccinia plants grown under polyhouse condition (G₂) and trained in vertical system (T₂). The increase in vine length and number of primary branches under polyhouse condition is due to the positive response of coccinia to favourable micro climate that prevailed under polyhouse condition which helps in better assimilation of carbohydrates. The food accumulation in the presence of high temperature led to increased plant height. Similar findings were reported by Sharma *et al.* [7] in cucumber and Panigarhi *et al.* [8] in capsicum. The highest vine length in vertical system of training is due to the restriction of flow of nutrients to the lateral branches which results in the diversification of plant nutrients to the flow towards the apical region there by increasing the vine length. This results were in line with the findings of Dhillon *et al.* [9] and Kumar *et al.* [10]

Internodal length was found to be higher (7.43 cm) in trellis system under polyhouse condition and least (3.98 cm) was found in the vertical system of training under open field condition. The interaction effect of internodal length under different growing environments and training systems was statistically non-significant. The internodal length of the plants was found to be increased under shaded condition, so that the plants under polyhouse condition showed longest internodal length compared to open field. The similar findings were also recorded by Díaz-Pérez [11] in bell pepper.

Table-1. Effect of growing environments and training systems on vine length of coccinia.

Treatment combinations	Vine length (cm)					
	30 DAYS		90 DAYS		180 DAYS	
	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2

T1	37.58	79.08	139.83	248.09	291.02	408.92
T2	54.83	87.38	173.52	273.6	337.80	433.98
T3	44.08	81.79	158.91	253.89	308.33	414.60
T4	47.37	83.32	163.32	267.81	324.08	424.27
S.Ed	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T
	0.65	0.93	1.31	2.10	2.97	4.20
CD (0.05) - G x T	2.82			9.02		
				9.06		

G1 -Open field , G2-Polyhouse; T1-Trellis system, T2- Vertical system,T3-Fishnet system, T4-Pandal system

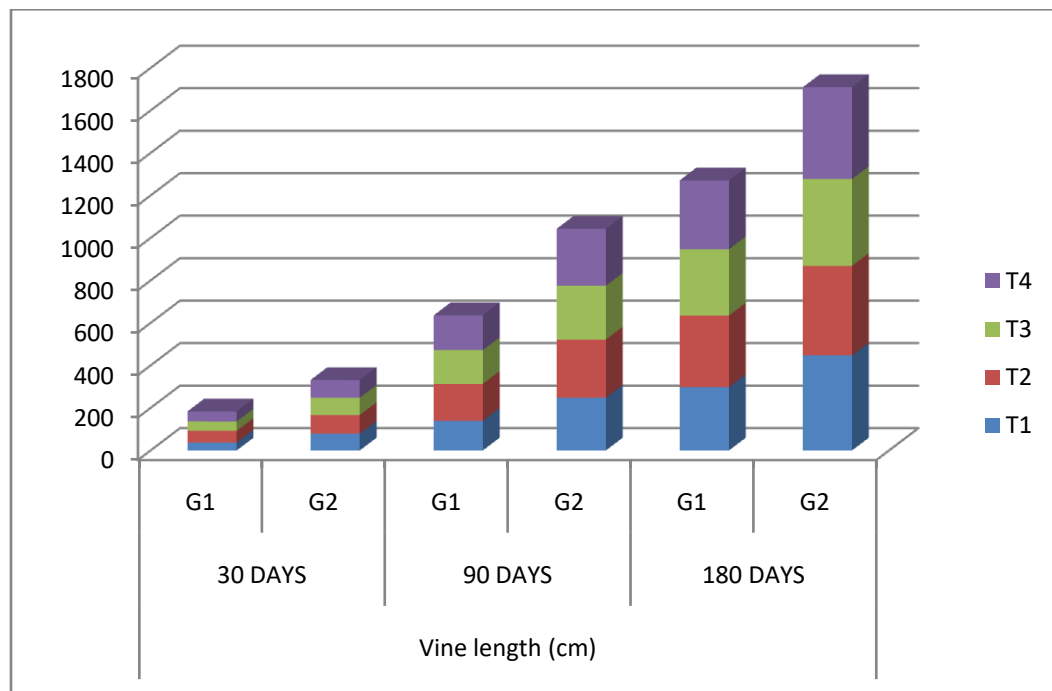


Figure 1 : Growth parameters

Table -2 Effect of growing environments and training systems on number of primary branches and internodal length of coccinia.

Treatment combinations	Number of primary branches			Internodal length (cm)		
	G1	G2	G x T	G1	G2	G x T
T1	2.01	4.55		5.3	7.43	
T2	3.92	5.42		3.98	6.52	
T3	2.92	4.98		4.98	7.14	
T4	3.05	5.02		4.52	6.98	
S.Ed	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T
	0.05	0.07	0.10	0.06	0.09	0.12
CD (0.05) - G x T	0.23			NS		

G1 -Open field , G2-Polyhouse; T1-Trellis system, T2- Vertical system,T3-Fishnet system, T4-Pandal system.

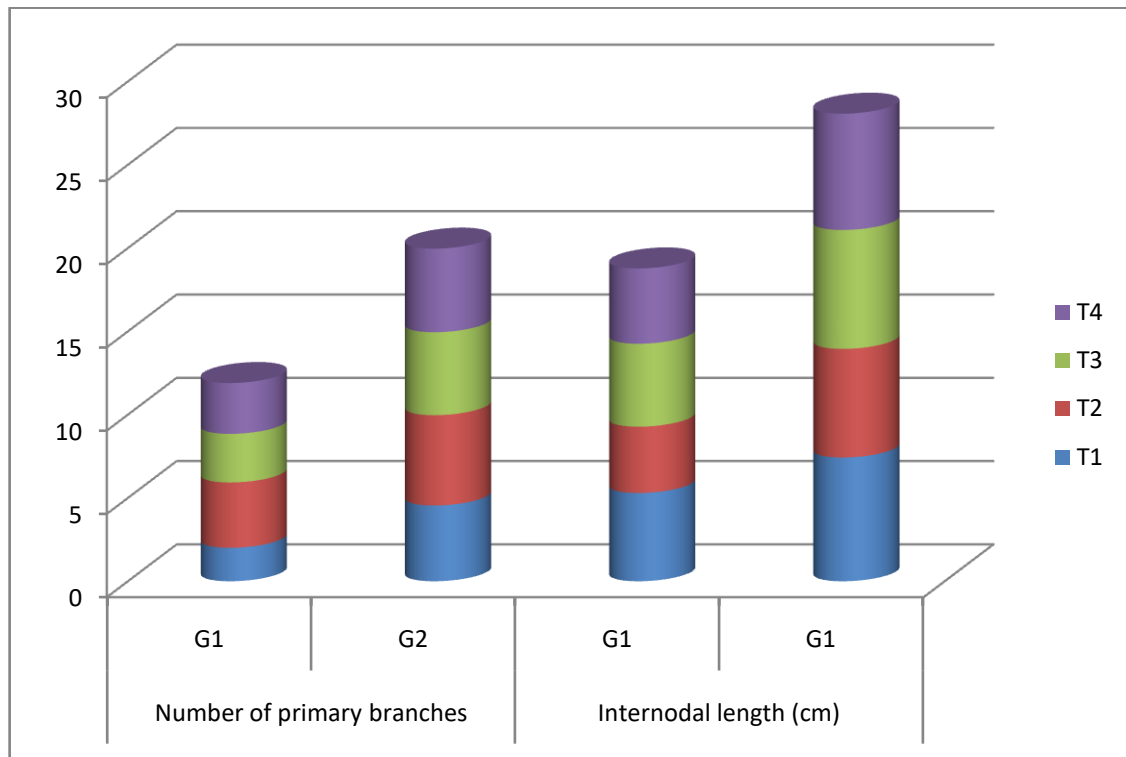


Figure 2 : Primary branches and internodal length ratio

3.2 FLOWERING PARAMETERS:

The number of days for first flowering was minimum (42.01) in open field conditions trained in vertical system of training which also reflected in minimum days to picking (48.3). But the days taken for first flowering and first picking was statistically found to be non significant and it was on par with pandal system of training. This findings were similar to Dhillon *et al.* [9] in cucumber. The days taken for 50 % flowering was found to be non significant for different growing environments and training systems. The similar results were also reported by Thakur *et al.* [12] in capsicum and Shivaraj *et al.* [13] in cucumber. The delay in flowering in polyhouses might be due to the conditions which favoured more vegetative growth than reproductive growth. similar findings were reported by Kumari *et al.* [14] for tomato in polyhouse and Gupta *et al.* [15] in tomato.

The different growing environments and training systems showed non-significant influence on nodal position count of first female flower. Plants trained with vertical system produced first female flower at least node (5.27) in polyhouse conditions while the plant trained with trellis in open field condition showed flower at highest node (6.92).

Table-3. Interaction effect of growing environments and training systems on flowering attributes of coccinia

Treatment combinations	Node at which first female flower appears			Days to first flowering			Days to 50 % flowering		
	G1	G2		G1	G2		G1	G2	
T1	6.92	6.38		42.35	48.2		51.2	56.2	
T2	5.56	5.27		42.01	48.01		49.8	54.3	
T3	5.92	5.47		42.90	48.37		51	56.2	
T4	5.86	5.43		42.05	48.92		50.2	55.2	
S.Ed	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T
	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.32	0.46	0.65	0.39	0.55	0.79
CD (0.05) - G x T	NS			NS			NS		

G1 -Open field , G2-Polyhouse; T1-Trellis system, T2- Vertical system, T3-Fishnet system, T4-Pandal system

3.3 YIELD PARAMETERS:

Fruit length (8.92 cm) and fruit diameter (2.84 cm) was found to be highest in vertical system of training in polyhouse. The vertical system recorded 7.02 cm length and 2.25 cm fruit diameter in open field. Similar results to the findings of Kumar *et al.* [11] in cucumber where the highest fruit length and diameter were recorded in vertical training system.

Vertical training system under polyhouse condition (G2T2) excelled with reference to highest number of fruits per vine (17.92), fruit yield/vine/month (1.49/kg), fruit yield/plant (5.15 kg), fruit yield/plant/year (61.90 kg/plant) and fruit yield /year (154.76 t /ha) and these characters were statistically found to be significant. Vertical system of training was found to be superior followed by pandal system. Lowest number of fruits per plant (6.87), fruit yield/vine (0.50/kg) fruit yield/plant/year (25.90 kg/plant) and fruit yield /year (64.76 t/ha) were observed in trellis system under open field condition.

The number of fruits per plant is directly proportional to fruit yield. Highest yield under protected condition is due to the favourable micro climate which helped in better photosynthesis and accumulation of food materials. The results obtained were similar to the findings of Rajalingam *et al.* [16] in cucumber, Kalyanrao and Singh [17] in bottle gourd. Vertical system of training recorded highest yield 154.76 t/ha/year in polyhouse and 80.49 t/ha/year in open field also. This is due to canopy structure which is highly suitable to absorb more solar energy and thus increasing photosynthesis. Similar results were recorded by Sharma *et al.* [7] in cucumber, Rana *et al.* [18] in Tomato and Swarnapriya [19] in rubber intercropping. Dhillon *et al.* [9] had reported that vertical system of training exhibited highest yield due to the maintenance of canopy structure by training.

Table-4 Interaction effect of growing environments and training systems on fruit yield attributes of coccinia

Treatment combination	Days to first picking			Number of fruits/vine			Fruit length (cm)			Fruit diameter (cm)		
	G1	G2	G x T	G1	G2	G x T	G1	G2	G x T	G1	G2	G x T
T1	49.2	54.92		6.87	16.82		6.27	8.76		2.17	2.69	
T2	48.3	53.3		8.96	17.92		7.02	8.92		2.25	2.84	
T3	49	54.3		7.92	16.92		6.42	8.72		2.18	2.72	
T4	48.6	53		7.96	17.52		6.56	8.87		2.21	2.81	
S.Ed	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T
	0.51	0.73	1.03	0.11	0.16	0.22	0.08	0.12	0.17	0.02	0.03	0.08
CD (0.05) - G x T	NS			0.490			NS			NS		

G1 -Open field , G2-Polyhouse; T1-Trellis system, T2- Vertical system, T3-Fishnet system, T4-Pandal system

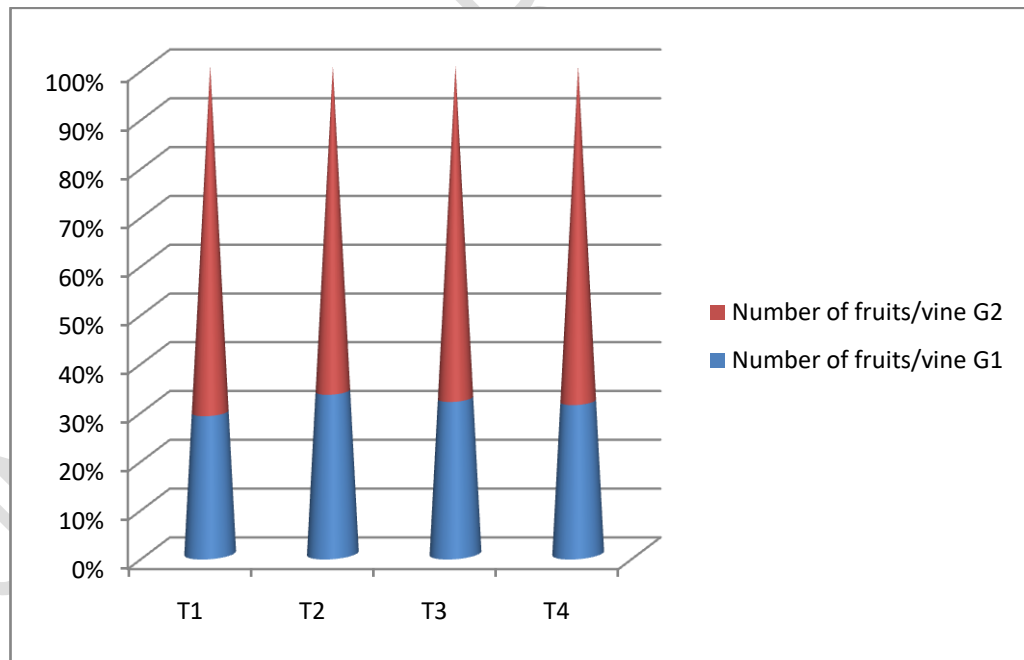


Figure 3 : Fruits and vine ratio

Table - 5: Interaction effect of growing environments and training systems on fruit yield attributes

Treatment combination	Fruit yield/vine/month (kg)		Fruit yield/plant (kg)		Fruit yield /plant/ Year (kg)			Estimated fruit yield/year (t/ha)				
	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2	G1	G2				
T1	0.50	1.40	2.15	4.16	25.90	50.02	64.76	125.05				
T2	0.74	1.49	2.68	5.15	32.19	61.90	80.47	154.76				
T3	0.56	1.41	2.26	4.50	27.20	54.01	68.00	135.02				
T4	0.64	1.42	2.53	4.79	30.43	57.54	76.08	143.85				
S.Ed	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T	G	T	G x T
	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.05	0.07	0.43	0.61	0.86	0.96	1.35	1.92
CD (0.05) - G x T	0.048		0.171		1.859			4.119				

G1 -Open field , G2-Polyhouse; T1-Trellis system, T2- Vertical system, T3-Fishnet system, T4-Pandal system

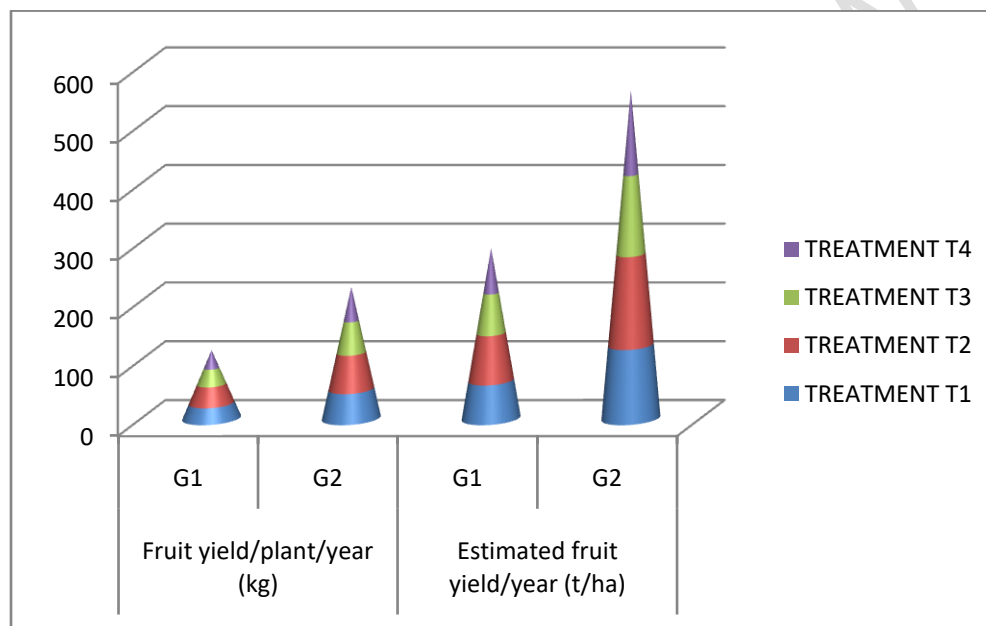


Figure 4 : Yield ratio

4. CONCLUSION

As evident from the result, it is concluded that the best performance of coccinia was found in polyhouse growing environment adopted with vertical system of training. The plant attributes viz., vine length (433.98 cm), number of Primary branches (5.42), number of fruits/vine (17.92) and fruit yield/plant/year (61.90 kg) were found to be superior in polyhouse condition trained with vertical system. In coccinia the fruit yield was superior in polyhouse with the yield of 154.76 t/ha/year and 80.49 t/ha/year in open field. So it can be concluded that growing environment and training system is vital to reap increased yield and productivity. Thus, highest productivity in coccinia can be obtained from polyhouse cultivation (G2) with the adoption of vertical system of training (T2).

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