



ISSN (E): 2277- 7695

ISSN (P): 2349-8242

NAAS Rating: 5.23

TPI 2022; 11(1): 781-786

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www.thepharmajournal.com

Received: 09-11-2021

Accepted: 20-12-2021

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Effect of different levels of irrigation and fertigation on growth and yield of papaya

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Abstract

The performance of drip irrigation in the field under various operating situations is key factor to ensure the required rate of water to all crops during growing periods. A unique characteristics of drip irrigation is the constant application of water and it is regulated by a robust design, management and adoption of the system. Preferably, a well-designed system discharges uniform water to each plant for meeting its needs of water in addition to feasible design and economics. Hence, a field experiment was conducted to study the effect of different levels of irrigation and fertigation on growth and yield of papaya during the year 2020-21 at Borsi Instructional Farm of Dau Kalyan Singh College of Agriculture and Research Station, IGKV, Bhatapara (C.G.). The experiment was laid out in the randomized block design with nine treatments combinations and three replications. The experiment comprised of nine treatments under drip method of irrigation with combination of three irrigation regimes viz. 60%, 80% and 100% of cumulative pan evaporation (CPE), three different levels of fertilizer 80%, 100% and 120% of RDF. The results showed that the maximum plant height (137.5 cm), number of leaves (33), early days to first flowering (76 days), earlier days to 50 percent flowering (92 days), earlier days to first fruiting (109 days), earlier days to 50% fruiting (127 days), highest number of fruits per plant (26), fruit length (42 cm), fruit diameter (9.45 cm), fruit weight (2.20 kg), fruit yield per plant (57.20 kg), fruit yield per unit area (143 t ha⁻¹) was observed highest in treatment irrigation of 100 percent of CPE and fertigation of 120 percent of RDF (T₉).

Keywords: Drip irrigation levels, fertigation levels, papaya growth and yield attributes

1. Introduction

Papaya (*Carica papaya* L.) has long been known as a Miracle fruit, of the tropics and grown primarily for its luscious and for separation of its ingestion constituent papain. It provides one of the maximum productions of fruits per hectare and a remunerative crop next to banana. The existing area under papaya farming is about 70 thousand hectare and production is around 1.5 million In Chhattisgarh the area under papaya cultivation is about 14.12 ha and production is around 352.84 tons and productivity is 24.99 tons per hectare (Ministry of Agriculture, 2016-17).

Rational use of irrigation water for agriculture is important for rising productivity and to save irrigation water, which is valuable and scanty resource. This can be gained by modern techniques of irrigation like trickle irrigation accompanied with other enhanced water management techniques. Drip irrigation is based on the basic approaches of irrigating root zone of crop rather than entire land surface, which results in maximum water use efficiency and crop yield. It also allows the application of fertilizer, pesticides and other water soluble chemicals applied with irrigation water with healthier crop response. Fertigation is a practice for uniformly distributing fertilizers to the crop along with water by drip irrigation on a regularly basis in precised way so as to permits for constant flow of nutrients by plants and to influence inputs of both water and fertilizer (Pandey *et al.*, 2013) [7].

Drip irrigation evaluation in the field under a set of operating conditions is very important to ensure the desired discharge to all the growing crops. A best and desirable feature of trickle irrigation is the uniform distribution of water and it is governed by proper design, management and adoption of the system. Ideally, a well-designed system applies nearly equal amount of water to each plant to meets its water requirements in addition to rational design and economics. Fertigation decision involves kind of fertilizer (solid/liquid), dose of fertilizer, selection of the most effective formulations, proper preparing solutions for injection and scheduling injections to ensure that essential nutrients are made available to the plant as needed (Sebastian and Bindu, 2020).

In view of the above facts, an experiment is planned to carry a study on Effect of Irrigation and Fertigation Levels on Performance of Papaya Crop (*Carica papaya* L.) under Drip Irrigation. Hence, the present study will be undertaken with the following specific objectives:

Materials and Methods

A field experiment was conducted at Borsi research farm, Dau Kalyan Singh agriculture college and research station, Bhatpara (IGKV, Raipur) Chhattisgarh during the July 2020 to may 2021. The experimental site is situated in the central part of Chhattisgarh in India. In this location the mean minimum temperature 10 °C and mean maximum temperature is 43 °C. The average relative humidity is 60.43 percent and average wind velocity is 2.10 ms⁻¹. The experiment site has sandy loam soil and falls under the semiarid zone. The experiment field was 88.8 m long and 46.2 m wide. The row to row spacing 1.65 m and plant to plant spacing 2.4 m. Recommended cultural operation are followed in raising the crops. The mean value obtained was used for estimating analysis of critical difference. These investigations were carried out using nine treatments with three replications. Treatments were tested in randomized block design. The details of treatments are given below.

Irrigation treatments for papaya crop

I₁ - Drip irrigation with IW/CPE (Irrigation water/ cumulative pan evaporation ratio of 0.6

I₂ - Drip irrigation with IW/CPE (Irrigation water/ cumulative pan evaporation ratio of 0.8

I₃ - Drip irrigation with IW/CPE (Irrigation water/ cumulative pan evaporation ratio of 1.0

Fertigation treatments for Papaya crop

F₁ - 80% of Recommended Dose of Fertilizer

F₂ - 100% of Recommended Dose of Fertilizer

F₃ - 120% of Recommended Dose of Fertilizer

Estimation of irrigation water requirement (V)

Reference crop evapotranspiration (ET₀) was calculated using Modified Penman Method (Doorenbos and Pruitt, 1977) [3]. The crop co-efficient (K_c) for different growth stages of papaya was selected. The actual crop evapotranspiration was estimated by multiplying reference crop evapotranspiration, crop co-efficient, area under each plant and wetting fraction. The crop water requirement of papaya crop was estimated by using the following equation:

$$V = ET_0 \times K_c \times A_p - A_p \times R_e \quad \dots (1)$$

Where,

V = Net depth of irrigation (litre/day/plant)

ET₀ = Reference crop evapotranspiration (mm/day)

K_c = Crop co-efficient

A_p = A x W = Effective area to be irrigated (Sq.m)

A = Area allocated to each plant (Sq.m)

W = Wetting fraction

R_e = Effective rainfall (mm/day).

The water requirement was estimated for the growing season of papaya. Daily time of operation of drip irrigation system was worked out. Drip irrigation was scheduled on Daily; hence total quantity of water delivered was cumulative water requirement of two days minus effective rainfall (if rain occurred).

Result and Discussion

Growth Parameters of Papaya

Data of the Table 1 clearly revealed that the growth attributing characters of papaya like plant height (137.5 cm) was recorded highest in treatment T₉ (100 percent irrigation and 120 percent fertigation level), followed by T₈, T₇ and T₆ having plant heights of 133.4, 128 and 127 cm, respectively (shown in Fig. 1). Minimum plant height (122 cm) was observed in treatment T₁ (60 percent irrigation and 80 percent fertigation level). Number of leaves (33) was found maximum under the treatment T₉, followed by T₈, T₇ and T₆ having number of leaves 30, 28.33 and 27, respectively (Fig. 2). Minimum number of leaves (20) was observed in treatment T₁. Days to first flowering (82 days) were maximum recorded under the treatment T₁, followed by T₂, T₃ and T₄ having first flowering of 81.33, 80.67 and 80 days respectively (Fig. 3). Earlier first flowering was observed in treatment T₉ (76 days). The maximum days to fifty percent flowering (Fig.4) (101.67 days) was noted under the combine effect of 60 percent irrigation levels and 80 percent fertigation levels (T₁), followed by T₂ having fifty percent flowering of 100.33 days, respectively. The earlier days to fifty percent flowering were observed in treatment T₉ (92 days). The delayed first fruiting (Fig. 5) (121.67 days) was recorded under the treatment T₁, followed by T₂ having first fruiting of 120.33 days, respectively. Minimum days to first fruiting were observed in treatment T₉ (109 days). The maximum days to fifty percent fruiting (Fig. 6) (143.67 days) was recorded under the treatment T₁, followed by T₈ having fifty percent fruiting of 142.33 Days, respectively. Earlier days to fifty percent fruiting were observed in treatment T₉ (127 days). Similar findings have been observed by researchers Srivastava *et al.*, (2014) [10], Hazarika *et al.*, (2016) [4], Mirza *et al.*, (2018) [6], Shethy *et al.*, (2019) [9] and Devarakonda *et al.*, (2020) [2].

Table 1: Growth attributing as influenced by different irrigation and fertigation levels of papaya

Treatments	Plant height (cm)	Number of leafs	Days to first flowering	Days to 50% flowering	Days to first fruiting	Days to 50% fruiting
T ₁	122.0	20.00	82.00	101.67	121.67	143.67
T ₂	124.5	23.40	81.33	100.33	120.33	142.33
T ₃	125.8	24.00	80.67	99.00	119.00	141.00
T ₄	125.0	24.00	80.00	98.00	116.00	137.00
T ₅	126.2	26.30	79.33	97.33	115.33	136.33
T ₆	127.0	27.00	78.33	96.33	114.33	135.33
T ₇	128.0	28.33	78.33	95.00	112.00	130.00
T ₈	133.4	30.00	77.67	93.67	110.67	128.67
T ₉	137.5	33.00	76.00	92.00	109.00	127.00
SE(M)±	1.84	0.51	0.79	0.76	0.79	0.80
CD at 5%	5.25	1.45	2.25	2.18	2.25	2.30

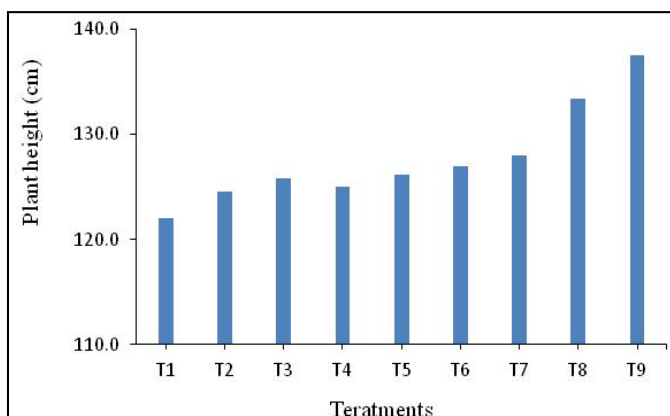


Fig 1: Effect of various treatments on Height Plant

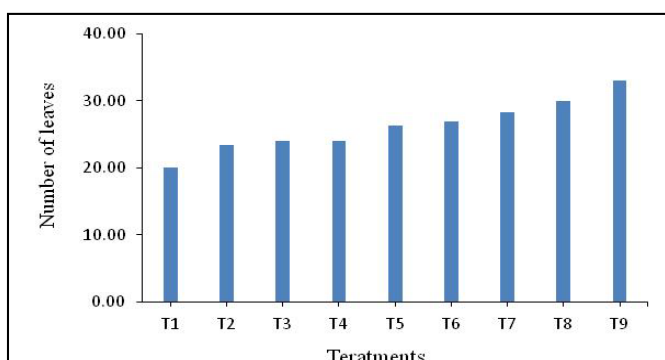


Fig 2: Effect of various treatments on Number of Leaf

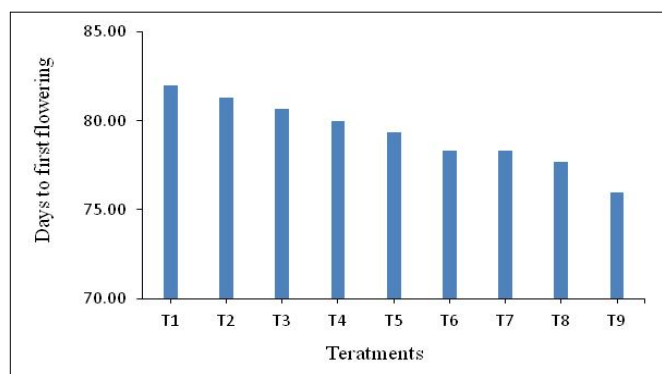


Fig 3: Effect of various treatments on Days to 1st Flowering

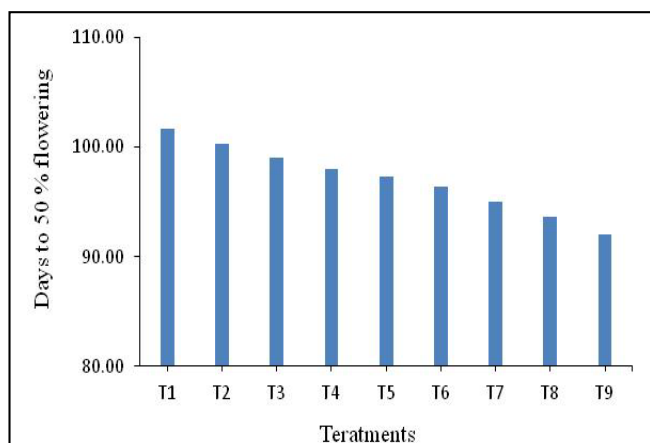


Fig 4: Effect of various treatments on Days to 50% Flowering

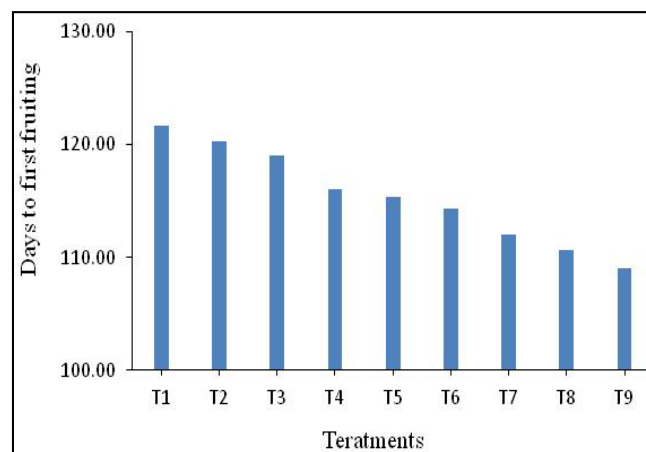


Fig 5: Effect of various treatments on Days to 1st Fruiting

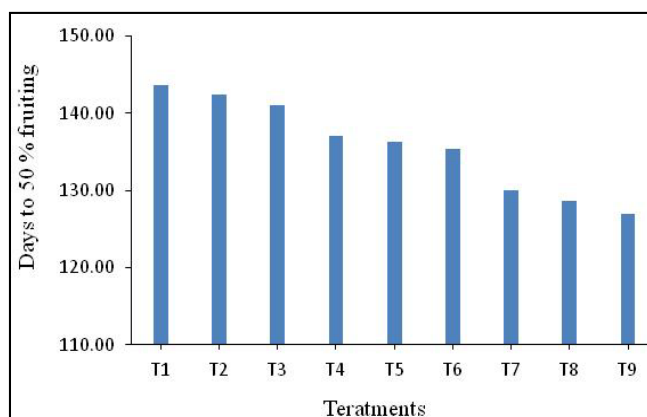


Fig 6: Effect of various treatments on Days to 50% Fruiting

Yield attributing

The results revealed that yield attributes (Table 2) under different levels of irrigation and fertigation of papaya planting. The highest number of fruits per plant (Fig. 7) (26) was counted under the T₉, followed by T₈, T₇, T₆, T₅, T₄ and T₃ having number of fruits per plant of 24, 23.60, 23, 22.67, 22 and 21.20, respectively, and minimum amount of fruits per plant was recorded in treatment T₁ (18). Similar findings have been observed by Hazarika *et al*, 2016 [4]. The largest fruit length (Fig. 8) (42 cm) was recorded under the treatment T₉, while the minimum (28 cm) was observed in treatment T₁. Diameter of petiole (Fig. 9) (9.45 cm) was highest with treatment T₉ and followed by treatments T₈, T₇, T₆, T₅, T₄ and T₃ having fruit diameter of 9.20, 8.77, 8.46, 8.22, 7.93 and 7.32 cm, respectively. Minimum fruit diameter was observed in treatment T₁ (6.15 cm). It is clear from the table that average fruit weight (Fig. 10) was recorded significantly the highest (2.20 kg) in treatment T₉ followed by T₈, T₇ and T₆, having fruit weight of 2.00, 1.95 and 1.85 kg, respectively. It was observed that are minimum fruit weight was observed in treatment T₁ (1.30 kg). The daily application of water through drip equal to 100% CPE and 120% RDF (T₉) gave maximum yield per plant (Fig. 11) (57.20 kg) and followed by T₈ and T₇ having fruit yield of 48.00 and 46.02 kg, respectively. The observations indicate that there was minimum fruit yield was observed in treatment T₁ (25.35 kg). Greater yield per plant obtained in treatments might be due to application of optimal level of irrigation through drip and fertigation (120 percent

RDF) (Sebastian 2020) [8]. The different combination of irrigation and fertigation levels, highest yield (Fig. 12) (143 t ha⁻¹) were obtained in 100 per cent irrigation of CPE level and fertigation level (120% of RDF), whereas, minimum yield (63.38 t ha⁻¹) in 60 per cent irrigation of CPE level and fertigation level (80% of RDF). Similar findings have been

reported by researchers Shethy *et al.* (2019) [9] and Devarakonda *et al.*, (2020) [2]. Judicious application of water directly to the root zone through drip irrigation could improve plant growth and development by maintaining optimum soil moisture and eliminating water stress to the plant (Deshmukh *et al.* 2014) [1].

Table 2: Yield attributing as influenced by different irrigation and fertigation levels of papaya

Treatments	Number of fruits per plant	Fruit length (cm)	Fruit diameter (cm)	Fruit weight (kg)	Fruit yield (kg plant ⁻¹)	Fruit yield (t ha ⁻¹)
T ₁	19.5	28.00	6.15	1.30	25.35	63.38
T ₂	20.4	29.80	6.69	1.40	28.56	71.40
T ₃	21.2	31.00	7.32	1.50	31.80	79.50
T ₄	22.00	32.40	7.93	1.65	36.30	90.75
T ₅	22.67	34.90	8.22	1.75	39.67	99.18
T ₆	23.00	36.00	8.46	1.85	42.55	106.38
T ₇	23.60	38.00	8.77	1.95	46.02	115.05
T ₈	24.00	40.00	9.20	2.00	48.00	120.00
T ₉	26.00	42.00	9.45	2.20	57.20	143.00
SE(M)±	0.73	0.61	0.30	0.10	3.43	8.57
CD at 5%	2.09	1.74	0.87	0.28	9.80	24.50

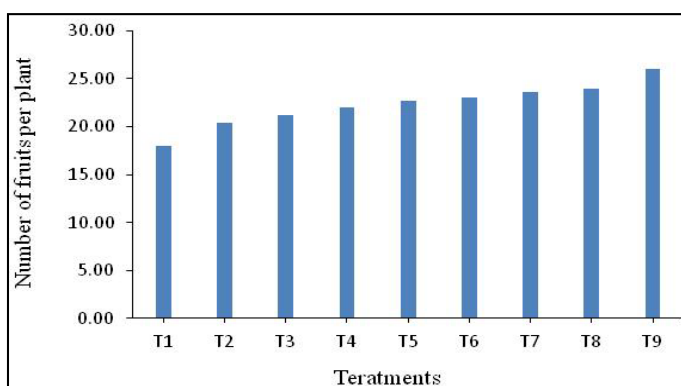


Fig 7: Effect of various treatments on Number of Fruits per Plant

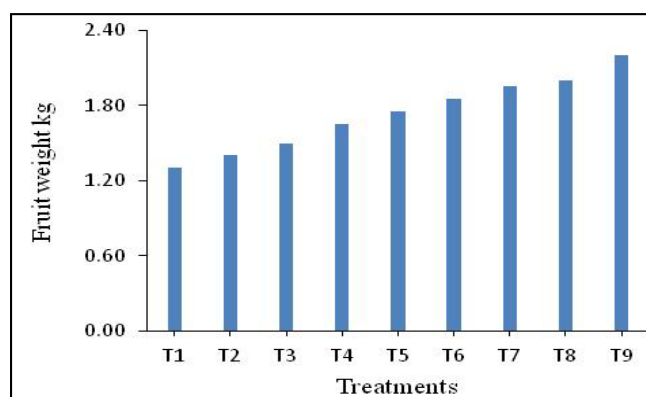


Fig 10: Effect of various treatments on Weight of per Fruit

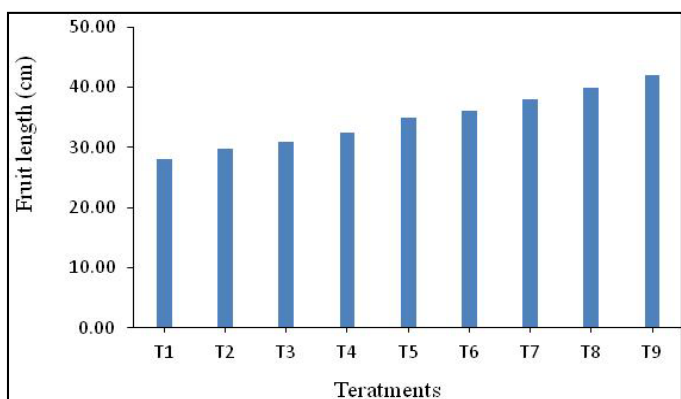


Fig 8: Effect of various treatments on Fruit Length

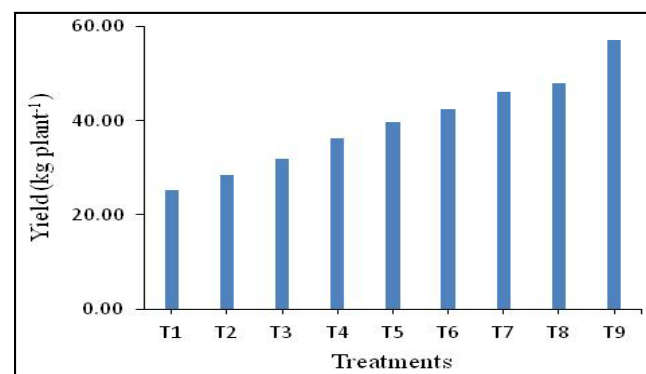


Fig 11: Effect of various treatments on Yield per Plant

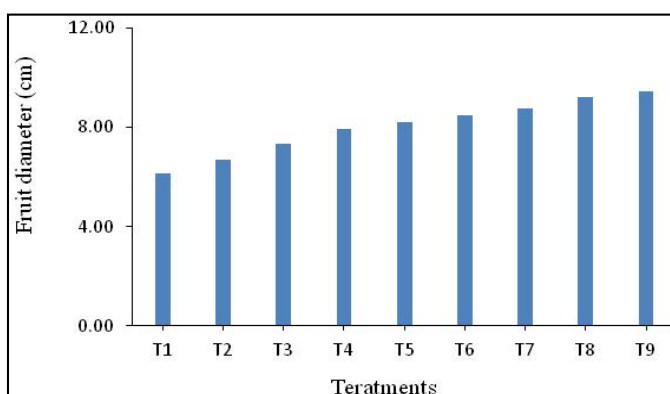


Fig 9: Effect of various treatments on Fruit Diameter

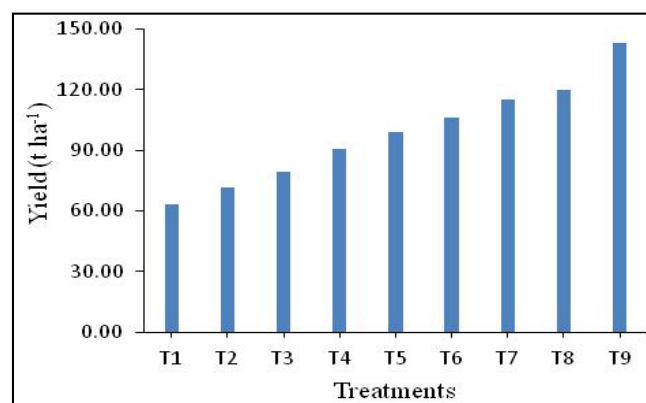


Fig 12: Effect of various treatments on Yield

Water and Fertilizer Use Efficiency

The water usage efficiency is important parameters in identifying constraints on improving the efficient use of water, as well as being a tool for increasing crop production and economizing water, in addition to preserving the environment. Details of the water use efficiency for all the treatment are presented in Table 3 and figure 13 and 14. It was also recorded that the highest water use efficiency 96.89 kg ha⁻¹ mm⁻¹ was found in treatment T₃ which was statistically at par with T₉ and the minimum water use efficiency 72.41 kg ha⁻¹ mm⁻¹ was observed in treatment T₁ due to very low yield response to the amount of water applied. Thus water use efficiency should be considered an important attribute in helping farmers increase their income through productivity and water saving, especially in areas deprived of water (Liu *et al.*, 2013) [5].

The data from table reveals that the fertilizer use efficiency was found higher in treatment T₇ (0.51) which was statistically at par with T₉ and lowest in treatment T₃ (0.25). The higher fertilize; use efficiency for the treatment T₇ was

mainly attributed to lower dose fertilizer application. The minimum fertilizer use efficiency was observed in treatment T₃ due to very low yields response to the amount of fertilizer applied.

Table 3: Water and fertilizer use efficiency under different treatment

Treatment	Water use efficiency (kg ha ⁻¹ mm ⁻¹)	Fertilizer use efficiency (q kg ⁻¹)
T ₁	72.41	0.28
T ₂	87.40	0.27
T ₃	96.89	0.25
T ₄	80.77	0.43
T ₅	85.60	0.36
T ₆	89.26	0.32
T ₇	76.74	0.51
T ₈	80.05	0.43
T ₉	95.39	0.47
SE(M)±	1.78	0.017
CD at 5%	5.02	0.05

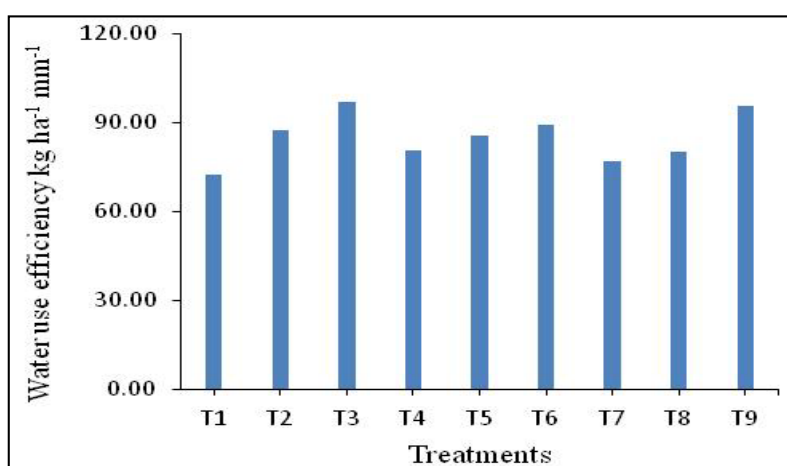


Fig 13: Effect of water use efficiency on various treatments

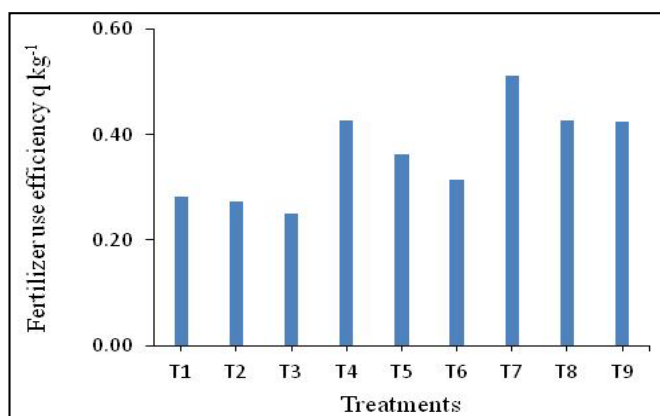


Fig 14: Effect of fertilizer use efficiency on various treatment

Conclusions

Based upon the results on yield and yield attributes of papaya of present investigation concluded that the treatment irrigation of 100 percent of CPE and fertigation of 120 percent of RDF (T₉) gave better growth, yield attributes and yield (143 t ha⁻¹) of papaya cultivar Red lady under study area. However, the water use efficiency and fertilizer use efficiency was found better in treatment T₃ and T₇.

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