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## Co-application effect of Zn and Fe on Physico-chemical properties of soil post cultivation of cow pea (*Vigna unguiculata* L.) Var. Pusa Komal in an inceptisol of Prayagraj

Naveen Meena, Amreen Hasan, Tarence Thomas and Raghu Nandan Singh Khatana

#### Abstract

A field trial was laid at Central Research Farm NAI, SHUATS, on the Co-application effect of Zn and Fe on Physico-chemical properties of soil post cultivation of cow pea (*Vigna unguiculata* L.) Var. Pusa Komal. The experiment analysed under RBD having nine treatments which were replicated thrice. The results reported that  $D_b$  ( $Mg\ m^{-3}$ ),  $D_p$  ( $Mg\ m^{-3}$ ), Percent Pore space (%), Water holding capacity (%) EC ( $dS\ m^{-1}$ ) Organic Carbon (%), Available Nitrogen ( $kg\ ha^{-1}$ ), Available Phosphorus ( $kg\ ha^{-1}$ ), Available Potassium ( $kg\ ha^{-1}$ ), Available Zinc ( $mg\ kg^{-1}$ ), Available Iron ( $mg\ kg^{-1}$ ) increased with Co-application of levels of Zn and Fe while pH of soil, decreased with increased Co-application of levels of Zn and Fe. The application of Zn and Fe significantly improved the soil Physico-chemical properties.

**Keywords:** Zn and Fe, Physico-chemical, cultivation, *Vigna unguiculata* L.

#### Introduction

According to investigations, cowpea was one of the grain legumes cultivated at Harappa (Indus-Saraswati civilization; 3200–2000 BC) [15]. Cowpeas are a wonderful source of protein, fodder, vegetables, and certain treats [22]. Pulses are particularly essential in Indian agriculture since they not only provide a rich source of protein for humans, but they also aid in the restoration of soil fertility. Pulses are planted over 25.26 million hectares in India, with a potential yield of 6.25 million tonnes and a production potential of 16.47 million tonnes.  $q\ ha^{-1}$  [10].

Cowpea (*Vigna unguiculata* L. Walp.) is a vital legume for millions of people in underdeveloped nations. Cowpea is a multipurpose grain legume that grows well in arid and semiarid climates. Cowpeas are an excellent source of protein, fodder, vegetables, and a variety of delights [22]. Cowpea is a versatile crop that can be used as a grain, leaf, or fodder, and it has a good nutritional value and palatability. It can help in fixing atmospheric Nitrogen in the soil at a rate of  $56\ kg\ ha^{-1}$  in optimal conditions when working with symbiotic bacteria. [14]. The mature cowpea seed contains 24.8 percent protein, 63.6 percent carbohydrates, 1.9 percent fat, 6.3 percent fibre, 7.4 parts per million thiamine, 4.2 parts per million riboflavin, and 28.1 parts per million niacin [1]. Green leaves have a protein concentration of 3 to 4%, immature pods have a protein concentration of 4 to 5%, and ripe seeds have a protein concentration of 25 to 30%.

Nitrogen is the most significant nutrient in plants. The plant can only use the nitrate ( $NO_3^-$ ) and ammonium ( $NH_4^+$ ) forms of nitrogen, despite the fact that the air contains 79 percent nitrogen. Nitrogen is contained in all proteins and enzymes and is involved in a variety of energy-transfer metabolic activities. Phosphorus is a macronutrient that is required for most growth processes. Among other organic components, it is required by nucleic acids, proteins, phospholipids, sugar phosphates, enzymes, and energy-rich phosphate compounds in plants. Although potassium (K) despite the fact that it is a crucial macronutrient for crop productivity, its economic benefits are often underestimated. The main reason for the Potassium deficiency is that farmers often overlook Potassium fertiliser because they believe it does not boost crop yields as much as N and P fertilisers. K is a crucial plant macronutrient involved in a variety of physiological tasks such as nutrition and water intake, nutrient transport, and growth, particularly in challenging conditions.

Plant metabolism, including the synthesis of auxin, glucose, phosphate, and nucleic acid, all require Zn [12]. Zinc (Zn) is a micronutrient that is required by both food crops and humans [8]. Despite recent gains in global food and energy sources, most underdeveloped countries still suffer from zinc deficiency [6]. Zinc (Zn) is an essential plant micronutrient with equivalent importance to key nutrients for agricultural productivity [19, 20]. Zinc is also essential for the production of proteins, RNA, and DNA. Iron has been discovered to be an activator of several enzymes, and it plays an important role in plant growth and production, such as chloroplast formation, protein synthesis, and chlorophyll synthesis [31-33]. Hemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying pigment, has iron as a component. Its lack causes difficulties in humans, including anaemia. Iron is a necessary component of all plants. Ferric ( $\text{Fe}_3^+$ ) and Ferrous ( $\text{Fe}_2^+$ ) are the two forms. Although  $\text{Fe}_3^+$  is insoluble and difficult to absorb,  $\text{Fe}_2^+$  is soluble and readily available to plants [21]. In photosynthesis, chloroplast formation, and chlorophyll biosynthesis, it plays a variety of critical biological activities. It is found in heme proteins like as cytochromes, catalase, and peroxidase, as well as Fe-S proteins such as ferredoxin, aconitase, and superoxide dismutase [3].

## Material and Method

**Experimental site:** The experiment was conducted at CRF NAI, SHUATS' Prayagraj, which is located at  $25^\circ 24'30''\text{N}$  latitude,  $81^\circ 51'10''\text{E}$  longitude, and 98 metres above sea level (MSL) Prayagraj has a subtropical climate with summer and winter extremes. Winter temperatures, particularly in December and January, can drop to as low as  $3\text{-}5^\circ\text{C}$ , while summer temperatures (May-June) can reach  $45\text{-}48^\circ\text{C}$ .

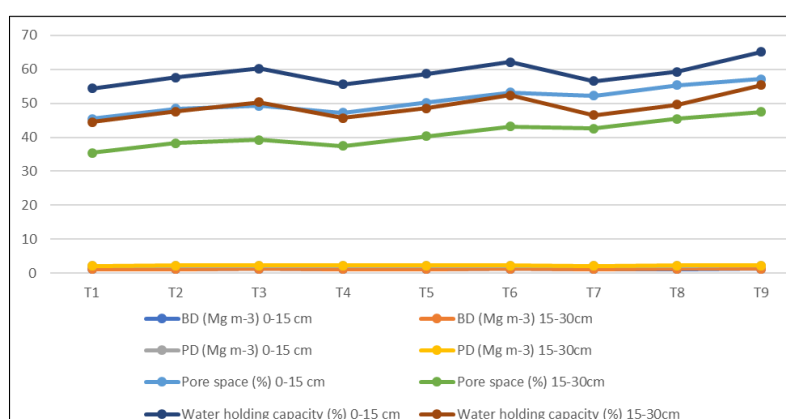
**Soil:** Soil samples were collected from the experimental plot at random depths of 0-15 cm and 15-30 cm after the crop was harvested with a soil auger and khurpi. A wooden mallet was used to pulverise and combine these soil samples. Coning and quartering were used to reduce the amount of the soil sample, which was then passed through a 2 mm screen to prepare it for mechanical, physical, and chemical analysis.

**Experimental Design and Treatments:** A (RBD) was used for experiment by taking Zn and Fe with different levels. The plot size 2m x 2m. the treatments were  $T_1$  Control (Absolute control),  $T_2$  (50%Zn+0%Fe),  $T_3$  (0%Zn+50%Fe),  $T_4$  (100%Zn+0%Fe),  $T_5$  (0%Zn+100%Fe),  $T_6$  (50%Zn+100%Fe),  $T_7$  (100%Zn+50%Fe),  $T_8$  (50%Zn+50%Fe)  $T_9$  (100%Fe+100%Zn). Sources of NPK were urea, SSP, MOP and Zn, Fe were Zinc sulphate, Iron chelates. Soil physical properties *i.e.*  $D_b$ ,  $D_p$ , Percent Pore space and Water holding Capacity was determined by Graduated Measuring Cylinder and soil texture by hydrometer [17]. In terms of chemical characteristics, pH was assessed using a potentiometric approach using soil water suspensions, while EC was evaluated using a digital EC metre The method of wet-oxidation was employed to determine Organic Carbon. [25]. In an 800 mL kjeldahl flask, the alkaline permanganate method was employed to determine the amount of Available Nitrogen [23]. Using a colorimetric approach and a spectrophotometer, the amount of Available Phosphorus was estimated [18]. The amount of available Potassium and neutral ammonium acetate solutions [24]. Available Zn and Fe was estimated by DTPA extraction by using Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer [13].

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1:** Effect of Zn and Fe on Physical properties of soil post harvest of cow pea

Treatment/depth (cm)	$D_b$ ( $\text{Mg m}^{-3}$ )		$D_p$ ( $\text{Mg m}^{-3}$ )		Pore space (%)		Water holding capacity (%)	
	0-15	15-30	0-15	15-30	0-15	15-30	0-15	15-30
$T_1$	1.13	1.16	2.14	2.18	45.44	35.48	54.4	44.5
$T_2$	1.14	1.17	2.15	2.20	48.43	38.3	57.6	47.6
$T_3$	1.23	1.24	2.18	2.22	49.29	39.2	60.2	50.4
$T_4$	1.17	1.21	2.14	2.19	47.3	37.4	55.6	45.7
$T_5$	1.17	1.20	2.16	2.21	50.2	40.3	58.7	48.6
$T_6$	1.26	1.29	2.18	2.22	53.26	43.2	62.2	52.4
$T_7$	1.18	1.22	2.15	2.18	52.21	42.6	56.6	46.5
$T_8$	1.21	1.25	2.17	2.24	55.37	45.4	59.3	49.6
$T_9$	1.29	1.32	2.20	2.25	57.2	47.5	65.2	55.4
F-test	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S
S.E+M	0.004	0.003	0.003	0.004	0.110	0.101	0.081	0.136
C.D.@5%	0.627	0.540	0.253	0.390	0.374	0.427	0.239	0.483



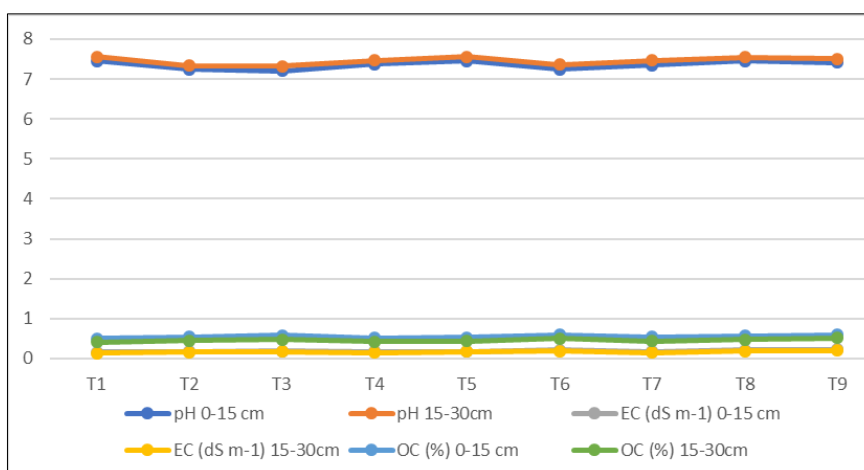
**Fig 1:** Effect of Zn and Fe on Physical properties of soil after harvest of cow pea

The results revealed that with respect to depth the max.  $D_b$  was found at treatment  $T_9$  (1.29), (1.32) with the application of RDF along with 100% Zn and 100% Fe. With respect to depth Min. Bulk density was found at treatment  $T_1$  (1.13), (1.16). Max.  $D_p$  was found at treatment  $T_9$  (2.20), (2.25) min. at treatment  $T_1$  (2.14) (2.18), Max. Pore space was found at

treatment  $T_9$  (57.2), (47.5) and Min. at treatment  $T_1$  (45.44), (35.48), Max. Water Holding Capacity was found at treatment  $T_9$  (65.2), (55.4) and min. at treatment  $T_1$  (54.4) at (45.5). This improvement in physical properties of soil in treatment  $T_9$  might be attributed to application of 100% Zn + 100% Fe. The results were in accordance with [34, 32].

**Table 2:** Effect of Zn and Fe on Chemical properties of soil post harvest of cowpea

Treatment/depth (cm)	pH		EC (dS m <sup>-1</sup> )		OC (%)	
	0-15	15-30	0-15	15-30	0-15	15-30
T <sub>1</sub>	7.56	7.66	0.16	0.14	0.50	0.41
T <sub>2</sub>	7.54	7.63	0.17	0.16	0.54	0.45
T <sub>3</sub>	7.50	7.62	0.19	0.17	0.58	0.48
T <sub>4</sub>	7.48	7.57	0.17	0.15	0.52	0.42
T <sub>5</sub>	7.45	7.58	0.18	0.17	0.53	0.44
T <sub>6</sub>	7.44	7.56	0.21	0.19	0.59	0.50
T <sub>7</sub>	7.34	7.47	0.18	0.15	0.54	0.44
T <sub>8</sub>	7.35	7.45	0.22	0.19	0.57	0.48
T <sub>9</sub>	7.33	7.41	0.23	0.20	0.60	0.51
F-test	S	S	S	S	S	S
S.E+M	0.014	0.008	0.002	0.002	0.003	0.003
C.D.@5%	0.330	0.187	1.975	2.943	1.015	1.160



**Fig 2:** Effect of Zn and Fe on Chemical properties of soil post harvest of cowpea

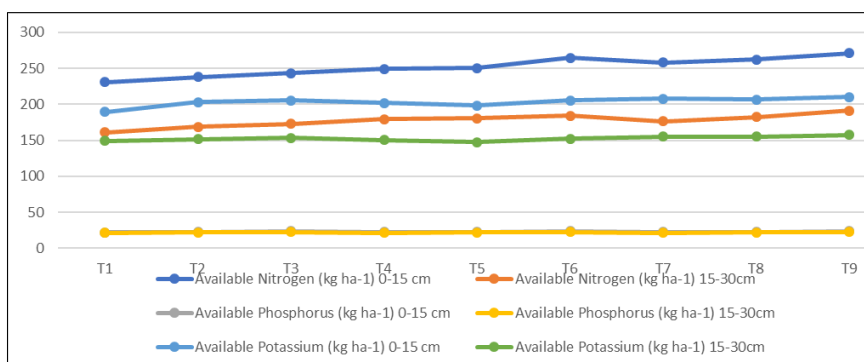
Table 2 demonstrates that differing quantities of micronutrients have a substantial impact on soil pH. With respect to depth Max. pH was recorded in treatment  $T_1$ (7.56) (7.66) and min. was recorded in treatment  $T_9$ (7.33) (7.41). The pH influences crop growth as availability of nutrients is max. at pH 6.5-7.5. The ionic activity of Iron and Zinc might be the reason for the rise in pH. Furthermore, carboxylates exuded by cowpea roots as legumes were capable of lowering soil pH [26]. After crop harvest, various levels of micronutrients had a substantial impact on the EC of the soil.

How-ever with respect to depth the max. EC was recorded in treatment  $T_9$ (0.23) (0.20) and min. was recorded in treatment  $T_1$  (0.16) and (0.14). Max. percentage OC was found at treatment  $T_9$  (0.60) (0.50) with the application of RDF along with 100% Zn and 100% Fe, Min. OC was found at treatment  $T_1$  (0.50) (0.41) with the application of RDF along with 0% Zn and 0%Fe. The improvement in OC status of soil after crop harvest in treatment  $T_9$  was to the extent of 11.89% over control. Similar results were shown by [35].

**Table 3:** Effect of Zn and Fe on Macronutrients on soil post harvest of cowpea

Treatment/depth (cm)	Available Nitrogen (kg ha <sup>-1</sup> )		Available Phosphorus (kg ha <sup>-1</sup> )		Available Potassium (kg ha <sup>-1</sup> )	
	0-15	15-30	0-15	15-30	0-15	15-30
T <sub>1</sub>	231.1	161.3	22.1	21.2	189.6	149.3
T <sub>2</sub>	238.3	168.5	22.7	21.8	203	151.6
T <sub>3</sub>	243.3	173.2	23.5	22.6	205.3	153.6
T <sub>4</sub>	249.4	179.3	22.4	21.6	202	150.6
T <sub>5</sub>	250.3	180.5	22.6	21.7	198.6	147.3
T <sub>6</sub>	264.4	184.4	23.7	22.6	205.6	152.3
T <sub>7</sub>	258.4	176.5	22.4	21.6	208	155.3
T <sub>8</sub>	262.2	182.3	22.7	21.7	206.6	155.3
T <sub>9</sub>	271.3	191.3	23.9	22.7	210.3	157.3

F-test	S	S	S	S	S	S
S.E+M	0.242	0.056	0.120	0.080	0.242	0.786
C.D.@5%	1.166	0.055	0.913	0.633	0.206	0.891



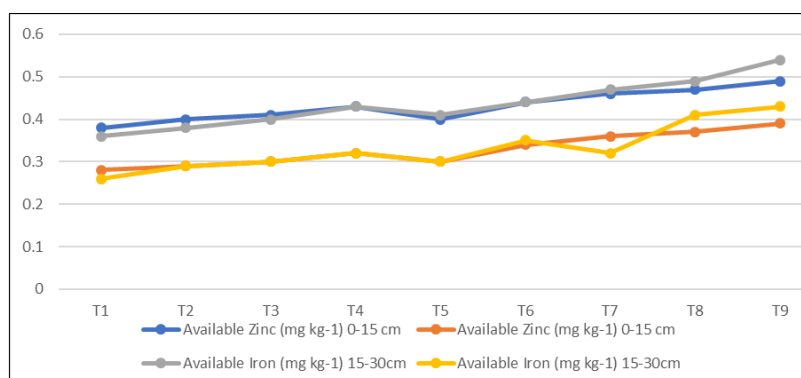
**Fig 3:** Effect of Zn and Fe on Macronutrients on soil after harvest of cowpea

According to the findings, with respect to depth the Max. amount of Available Nitrogen was found at treatment T<sub>9</sub> (271.3 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) (191.3 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) with the application of RDF along with 100% Zn and 100% Fe. Min. Available Nitrogen was found at treatment T<sub>1</sub> (231.1 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) (161.3 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) with the application of RDF along with 0%Zn and 0%Fe. Max. Available Phosphorus was found at treatment T<sub>9</sub> (23.9 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) (22.7 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) with the application of RDF along with 100% Zn and 100% Fe. Min. Available Phosphorus was found at treatment T<sub>1</sub> (22.7 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) (21.2 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) with the application of RDF along with 0%Zn and 0%Fe. The lower soil pH caused by the use of super phosphate in the soil experiment could be due to the gradual release of sulphate, which improved soil structure, chemical characteristics, and boosted the availability of important plant nutrients like N, P, and K,

as well as some micronutrients like Fe and Zn, following application to soil. With respect to depth Max. Available Potassium was found at treatment T<sub>9</sub> (210.3 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) (157.3 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) with the application of RDF along with 100% Zn and 100% Fe. Min. Available Potassium was found at treatment T<sub>1</sub> (189.6 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) (149.3 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) with the application of RDF along with 0%Zn and 0%Fe. The average values of N, P, K percent, Fe, and Zn are influenced by the addition of P to the soil at the rates shown in Table B. By increasing the rate of P application, the mean values of these parameters dramatically rose. It's possible that P-fertilization contributes to root system growth and, as a result, increases the root's ability to absorb additional nutrients. Such increases could also be attributed to similar increases in accessible N, P, K, Fe, and Zn in the soil under study. These findings are similar to [27-29].

**Table 4:** Effect of Zn and Fe on Micronutrients on soil after harvest of cowpea

Treatment /depth	Available Zinc (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> )		Available Iron (mg kg <sup>-1</sup> )	
	0-15 cm	0-15 cm	15-30cm	15-30cm
T <sub>1</sub>	0.38	0.28	0.36	0.26
T <sub>2</sub>	0.40	0.29	0.38	0.29
T <sub>3</sub>	0.41	0.30	0.40	0.30
T <sub>4</sub>	0.43	0.32	0.43	0.32
T <sub>5</sub>	0.40	0.33	0.41	0.30
T <sub>6</sub>	0.44	0.34	0.44	0.35
T <sub>7</sub>	0.46	0.36	0.47	0.32
T <sub>8</sub>	0.47	0.37	0.49	0.41
T <sub>9</sub>	0.49	0.39	0.54	0.43
F-test	S	S	S	S
S.E+M	0.004	0.026	0.026	0.021
C.D.@5%	1.871	0.608	0.608	0.582



**Fig 4:** Effect of Zn and Fe on Micronutrients on soil post harvest of cowpea

The results revealed that with respect to depth the max. Available Zinc was found at treatment T<sub>9</sub> (0.49 mg kg<sup>-1</sup>) (0.39 mg kg<sup>-1</sup>) with the application of RDF along with 100% Zn and 100% Fe. Min. Available Zinc was found at treatment T<sub>1</sub> (0.38 mg kg<sup>-1</sup>) (0.28 mg kg<sup>-1</sup>) with the application of RDF along with 0%Zn and 0%Fe. Max. Available Iron was found at treatment T<sub>9</sub> (0.49) (0.39) with the application of RDF along with 100% Zn and 100% Fe. Min. Available Iron was found at treatment T<sub>1</sub> (0.38) (0.28) with the application of RDF along with 0%Zn and 0%Fe. The lower soil pH caused by the use of super phosphate in the soil experiment could be due to the gradual release of sulphate, which improved soil structure, chemical characteristics, and boosted the availability of important plant nutrients like N, P, and K, as well as some micronutrients like Fe and Zn, following application to soil. Because the pH of the soil is important for Iron solubility, the pH of the soil tended to fall below 7.5, resulting in the solubilization of Iron, which made it available to plants while simultaneously lowering the available Iron concentration in the soil.

### Conclusion

Recent research on yield, physical, and chemical parameters of soil following cowpea harvest has concluded that the application of macro and micro nutrients played a critical role in the creation of higher yields and the availability of macro and micro nutrients in soil. The foregoing results demonstrated that soil addition of NPK, Zn, and Fe boosted yield, physical, and chemical characteristics of soil after harvest of cowpea plants. The treatment T<sub>9</sub> of (100%Fe+100%Zn) following the harvest of cowpea, the highest yield components, as well as physical and chemical parameters of soil, were obtained. Zinc concentrations are highest on the surface of the soil and decrease with depth. The reason for this is that plants absorb zinc from the subsoil and transport it to the leaves. Zinc is liberated from plant tissues and fixed in the surface soil as leaves fall and decay.

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