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Response of major nutrients and organic manure on growth, yield and economics of ajwain (*Trachyspermum ammi* L.)

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Abstract

The primary goal of integrated nutrient management strategies is to substitute a portion of chemical fertilizers with a more sustainable and environmentally safe organic manure in order to mitigate soil degradation, improve crop production, and protect the environment. Nutrient management is closely associated with fertilizer type, application rate, application time, and application placement. Applying organic manure in combination with chemical fertilizers has become an effective approach towards nutrient management, this will maximize the agronomic value of organic manure and encourage recycling agricultural wastes into new valuable products for agricultural enhancement. Therefore, the present study was conducted to assess the impacts of different INM practices namely absolute control (T₁), 25 t/ha FYM (T₂), NPK – 40:20:20 Kg/ha + 5 t/ha FYM (T₃), NPK – 40:25:20 Kg/ha + 10 t/ha FYM (T₄), NPK – 40:30:20 Kg/ha + 15 t/ha FYM (T₅), NPK – 45:20:20 Kg/ha + 5 t/ha FYM (T₆), NPK – 45:25:20 Kg/ha + 10 t/ha FYM (T₇), NPK – 45:30:20 Kg/ha + 15 t/ha FYM (T₈), NPK – 50:20:20 Kg/ha + 5 t/ha FYM (T₉), NPK – 50:25:20 Kg/ha + 10 t/ha FYM (T₁₀) and NPK – 50:30:20 Kg/ha + 15 t/ha FYM (T₁₁) in RBD Design with three replications at Department of Plantation, Spices, Medicinal and Aromatic Crops, College of Horticulture, RVSKVV, Mandasaur, (M.P.) during the Rabi season of 2021-2022. The result indicated that treatment T₁₁ showed early germination, flowering and maturity. The treatment T₁₁ was recorded with superior values of plant height, number of branches plant⁻¹, fresh weight plant⁻¹ and dry weight plant⁻¹ at 45, 90 days after sowing and at harvest respectively. The treatment T₁₁ was registered with highest value of number of umbels plant⁻¹, number of fruit umbel⁻¹, number of umbellates umbel⁻¹, number of fruit umbellate⁻¹, test weight, seed yield and highest net return while T₉ recorded best B: C ratio.

Keywords: Growth, nutrients, organic manures, phenology, *Trachyspermum ammi* and yield

1. Introduction

Ajwain (*Trachyspermum ammi* L.) is a plant of the Apiaceae family also known as Bishop's weed or Carom seed. It is grown in the Mediterranean region and South West Asian countries such as Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Egypt, and India. In India, it is primarily grown in the states of Rajasthan and Gujarat, with other growing states including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, and Andhra Pradesh. The seeds of ajwain are the most lucrative and economical part of the plant and oil extracted from seeds used in the perfumery, essences, pharmaceutical and cosmetics. Ajwain seed gets its distinct odour and flavor from the presence of an essential oil (2-4%) that includes around 50% thymol, a powerful germicide, antispasmodic, and fungicidal agent and it is used as preservatives and flavorings in food (Thomas *et al.*, 2020) [1]. Because of their aromatic scent and spicy flavour, their seeds (volatile oil) are extensively used as a spice in curry powder (Fathi *et al.*, 2020) [2]. Plant nutrition is an important aspect in enhancing plant productivity (Chandravanshi *et al.*, 2021 and Chundawat *et al.*, 2023) [3, 4]. The integrated use of organic composts along with chemical fertilizer has been well-recognized as a vital agricultural practice to gain more benefits or at least comparable results with that of solely applying chemical fertilizers (Chouhan *et al.*, 2023) [5]. The partial replacement of chemical fertilizer by manure has a significant positive impact on nutrient supply and crop yield (Lazcano *et al.*, 2013) [6]. Importantly, the integrated use of organic compost and chemical fertilizers not only improves different soil properties and crop productivity, but also significantly minimizes the use of chemical fertilizer, which subsequently conserves energy, minimizing the risk of pollution, improving fertilizer use efficiency, reducing the cost for farmers especially in low-income

countries, and ensuring ecosystem sustainability against the degradation of soil and water resources.

2. Materials and Methods

The experiment was carried out with eleven treatments in simple Randomized Block Design and replicated three times at department of Plantation, Spices, Medicinal and Aromatic Crops, College of Horticulture, Mandsaur, (M.P.) during the winter season of 2021-2022. The treatments accompanied with Absolute control (T₁), 25 t/ha FYM (T₂), NPK – 40:20:20 Kg/ha + 5 t/ha FYM (T₃), NPK – 40:25:20 Kg/ha + 10 t/ha FYM (T₄), NPK – 40:30:20 Kg/ha + 15 t/ha FYM (T₅), NPK – 45:20:20 Kg/ha + 5 t/ha FYM (T₆), NPK – 45:25:20 Kg/ha + 10 t/ha FYM (T₇), NPK – 45:30:20 Kg/ha + 15 t/ha FYM (T₈), NPK – 50:20:20 Kg/ha + 5 t/ha FYM (T₉), NPK – 50:25:20 Kg/ha + 10 t/ha FYM (T₁₀) and NPK – 50:30:20 Kg/ha + 15 t/ha FYM (T₁₁). Full doses of all organic and inorganic fertilizers were applied at the time of sowing except, nitrogen which was applied in two split doses. All the parameters were noted at 45, 90 days after sowing and at

harvest. The statistical analysis of variance for the applied design (RBD) was analyzed using Genstat software (14th Edition). The F-test was measured at the $P < 0.05$ level of significance.

3. Results

3.1 Phenological parameters

Data pertaining to phenology are diagrammatically illustrated in Figure 1. The data showed non-significant relation at days to 50% germination to different level of NPK and FYM. However, at days to 50% flowering, showed significant variation on application of different level of NPK and FYM. Treatment T₁₁ recorded early flowering (95.00 DAS) followed by T₈ (95.67 DAS) and at par with T₅ (96.00 DAS), T₁₀ (96.33 DAS), T₂ (97.33 DAS) and T₇ (98.67 DAS), but significantly early then rest of the treatments. Late flowering was recorded under control T₁ (101.00 DAS). The results revealed that days taken to maturity of ajwain shown statistically non-significant variation due to different levels of NPK and FYM.

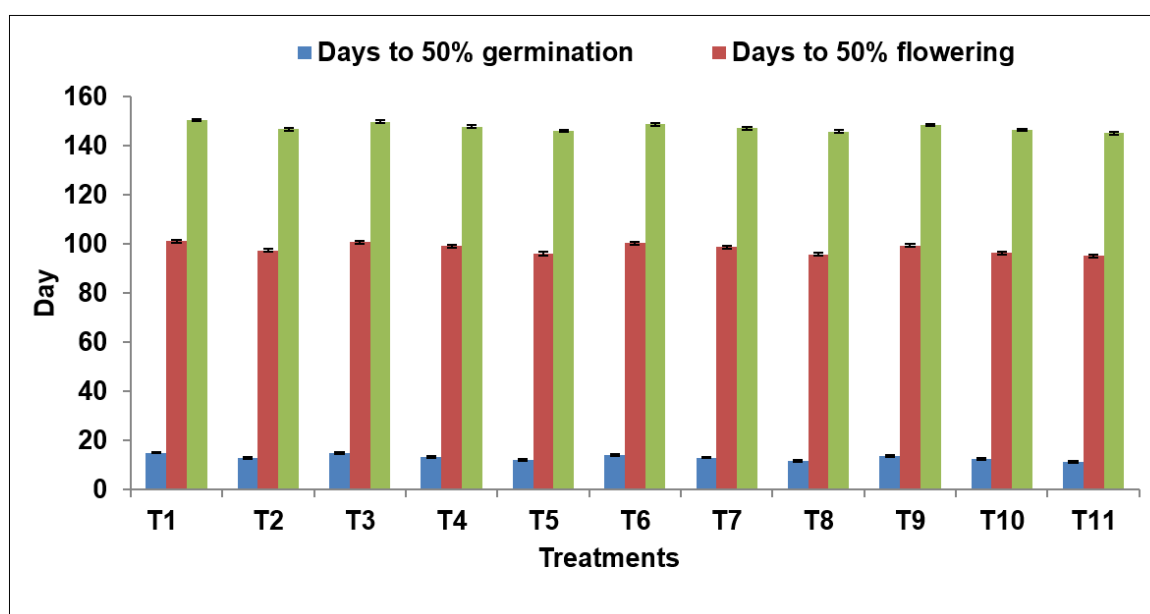


Fig 1: Effect of different levels of major nutrients and organic manure on phenological parameters of ajwain

3.2 Morphological parameters

The data on morphological parameters are presented in Table 1 and Table 2. The varied amounts of NPK and FYM had perceived significant changes in plant height during the different intervals of plant growth. The significantly highest plant height (9.19 cm) was recorded under the treatment T₁₁ which was at par with treatment T₈ (9.00) but significantly superior to rest of the treatments at 45 DAS. The treatment T₁₁ recorded significantly highest plant height (75.76 cm) over treatments T₆ (65.70 cm), T₃ (64.12 cm) and T₁ (63.07 cm) at 90 DAS. The treatment of varied levels of NPK and FYM had significant influence on the number of primary branches per plant during the various growth stages. At 45 days after sowing, the maximum number of primary branches per plant

was found in treatment T₁₁ (5.39) followed by treatment T₈ (5.36) and they were at par with treatment T₅ (5.34), T₁₀ (5.31), T₂ (5.12) and T₇ (5.02) and with each other but appreciably superior to remaining treatments. At 90 DAS, the data indicated that the treatment T₁₁ had the more number of primary branches per plant (14.60) and were at par with treatments T₈ (14.51), T₅ (14.34), T₁₀ (14.06), T₂ (13.55) and T₇ (13.44) but significantly superior over all the remaining treatments. At harvest, the significantly higher primary branches was recorded under treatment T₁₁ (15.26) than treatments T₉ (12.49), T₆ (11.04), T₃ (10.60) and T₁ (10.42). The fresh and dry weight were recorded significantly highest (220.59 g plant⁻¹ and 46.68 g plant⁻¹) under the treatment T₁₁ at harvest.

Table 1: Effect of different levels of major nutrients and organic manure on plant height and number of primary branches of ajwain

Treatments		Plant height (cm)			Number of primary branches		
		45 DAS	90 DAS	At harvest	45 DAS	90 DAS	At harvest
T ₁	Absolute control	7.20	63.07	103.72	4.12	10.03	10.42
T ₂	25t/ha FYM	7.67	69.84	123.68	5.12	13.55	14.06
T ₃	40:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	7.37	64.12	105.82	4.13	10.29	10.60
T ₄	40:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	7.61	68.46	113.39	4.97	12.62	13.04
T ₅	40:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	7.94	71.33	130.02	5.34	14.34	14.57
T ₆	45:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	7.40	65.70	107.80	4.79	10.83	11.04
T ₇	45:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	7.63	69.56	119.17	5.02	13.44	13.89
T ₈	45:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	9.00	74.41	132.99	5.36	14.51	14.70
T ₉	50:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	7.54	68.16	110.14	4.83	11.68	12.49
T ₁₀	50:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	7.77	70.47	128.91	5.31	14.06	14.22
T ₁₁	50:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	9.19	75.76	133.81	5.39	14.60	15.26
S.Em. ±		0.105	2.525	5.023	0.130	0.612	0.849
C.D. at 5%		0.310	7.449	14.818	0.385	1.807	2.505

Table 2: Effect of different levels of major nutrients and organic manure on fresh and dry weight of ajwain

Treatments		Fresh weight (g plant ⁻¹)			Dry weight (g plant ⁻¹)		
		45 DAS	90 DAS	At harvest	45 DAS	90 DAS	At harvest
T ₁	Absolute control	10.14	168.43	189.07	2.23	31.94	40.04
T ₂	25t/ha FYM	10.95	189.12	203.98	2.33	35.81	43.17
T ₃	40:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	10.22	171.48	192.70	2.25	32.52	40.47
T ₄	40:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	10.81	179.98	197.15	2.31	34.45	42.27
T ₅	40:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	11.15	194.61	215.77	2.40	36.87	45.59
T ₆	45:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	10.65	174.55	195.02	2.30	33.10	41.30
T ₇	45:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	10.89	185.75	200.64	2.32	35.16	42.53
T ₈	45:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	11.23	197.07	217.42	2.42	37.23	46.05
T ₉	50:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	10.81	182.40	199.54	2.30	34.11	41.90
T ₁₀	50:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	11.10	192.36	212.84	2.38	36.37	45.10
T ₁₁	50:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	11.27	199.57	220.59	2.44	37.56	46.68
S.Em. ±		0.260	4.462	4.100	0.033	0.816	1.032
C.D. at 5%		NS	13.163	12.096	0.098	2.407	3.044

3.3 Yield and their components

The significant differences were indicated among the yield and yield attributing traits and data is represented in Table 3. The result revealed that, treatment T₁₁ had significantly highest number of umbels plant⁻¹ (260.09), number of fruits umbel⁻¹ (437.83), number of umbellates umbel⁻¹ (19.52),

number of fruits umbellates⁻¹ (22.42), test weight (1.14g) and seed yield (14.32 q ha⁻¹). The lowest number of umbels plant⁻¹, number of fruits umbel⁻¹, number of umbellates umbel⁻¹, number of fruits umbellates⁻¹, test weight and seed yield were recorded in treatment T₁.

Table 3: Effect of different levels of major nutrients and organic manure on yield and yield attributes of ajwain

Treatments		Number of umbels (plant ⁻¹)	Number of fruits (umbel ⁻¹)	Number of umbellates (umbel ⁻¹)	Number of fruits (umbellate ⁻¹)	Test weight (g)	Harvest index (%)	Seed yield (q ha ⁻¹)
T ₁	Absolute control	232.06	228.17	13.73	16.51	0.73	34.04	9.35
T ₂	25 t/ha FYM	246.42	358.03	18.28	19.54	0.91	38.00	12.20
T ₃	40:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	235.79	261.32	14.88	17.60	0.76	36.50	10.16
T ₄	40:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	244.71	335.17	17.34	19.33	0.86	39.77	11.80
T ₅	40:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	252.15	396.25	19.01	20.91	1.02	41.82	13.63
T ₆	45:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	237.48	295.16	15.52	18.91	0.77	38.14	10.64
T ₇	45:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	245.94	353.56	18.19	19.40	0.88	39.48	11.99
T ₈	45:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	258.44	423.56	19.30	21.96	1.07	41.77	14.01
T ₉	50:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	240.94	309.03	15.87	19.30	0.80	40.93	11.59
T ₁₀	50:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	250.26	386.70	18.86	20.53	0.93	38.97	12.50
T ₁₁	50:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	260.09	437.83	19.52	22.42	1.14	42.44	14.32
S.Em. ±		4.348	17.940	0.348	0.980	0.056	3.233	0.743
C.D. at 5%		12.826	52.924	1.026	2.891	0.164	NS	2.193

3.4 Economics of the treatments

The result revealed from Table 4 that, treatment T₂ had maximum cost of cultivation (₹ 48210 ha⁻¹) followed by T₁₁ (₹ 41127 ha⁻¹). While the minimum cost of cultivation (₹ 23210 ha⁻¹) was recorded under treatment T₁. However, the maximum gross income was calculated in the treatment T₁₁ (₹

143233.33 ha⁻¹) followed by T₈ (₹ 140134.57 ha⁻¹). Similarly, the maximum net profit was obtained in T₁₁ (₹ 102106.33 ha⁻¹) followed by T₈ (₹ 99079.57 ha⁻¹). The maximum cost: benefit ratio (2.80) was noted under the treatment T₉ followed by T₁₀ (2.49) and T₆ - (2.49).

Table 4: Effect of different levels of major nutrients and organic manure on economics of ajwain

	Treatments	Total cost	Gross return	Net profit	B:C ratio
T ₁	Absolute control	23210	65435.31	42225.31	1.82:1
T ₂	25 t/ha FYM	48210	122034.16	73824.16	1.53:1
T ₃	40:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	30372	101609.88	71237.88	2.35:1
T ₄	40:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	35710	118044.03	82334.03	2.31:1
T ₅	40:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	40984	136287.65	95303.65	2.33:1
T ₆	45:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	30444	106376.54	75932.54	2.49:1
T ₇	45:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	35779	119869.14	84090.14	2.35:1
T ₈	45:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	41055	140134.57	99079.57	2.41:1
T ₉	50:20:20 kg/ha NPK+5 t/ha FYM	30516	115939.09	85423.09	2.80:1
T ₁₀	50:25:20 kg/ha NPK+10 t/ha FYM	35854	125004.94	89150.94	2.49:1
T ₁₁	50:30:20 kg/ha NPK+15 t/ha FYM	41127	143233.33	102106.33	2.48:1

4. Discussion

Result revealed that treatment T₁₁ showed early germination, flowering and maturity while, late under treatment T₁. The assumption seems to be justify that nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium application from organic and inorganic manure enhances the fertility, better aeration and porosity of the soil leads to early germination, increased NPK content in the plants from early stage of crop growth results in faster growth of plants and better availability of metabolites and nutrients, which synchronized to the demand of ajwain plant resulted in early flowering and maturity (Naruka *et al.*, 2012) [7]. Result determined that treatment T₁₁ attributed the highest plant height while, lowest under treatment T₁ at all growth stages. This could be due to addition of organic and inorganic fertilizer, particularly in deep soils, increased porosity, improved soil structure and aeration, and increased soil water availability. These substances promote root development and expansion, nutrient absorption, and the synthesis of growth hormones. Plant growth and development were enhanced, eventually led to increased plant height. The reason could be related to the addition of increased nitrogen doses, which stimulates plant growth and development by metabolic processes (Ali *et al.*, 2015 and Malhotra *et al.*, 2006) [8,9]. The treatment T₁₁ had more number of primary branches while, less in treatment T₁ during all the growth stages. The significant increase in growth parameters observed under greater fertilizer rates may be attributed to increased nutrient uptake by the plants, and it may have produced more branches, nodes, and plant dry matter production when compared to the recommended fertilizer level (Meena *et al.*, 2020 and Waskela *et al.*, 2017) [10,11]. The maximum fresh and dry weight was accumulated in T₁₁ while, minimum in T₁ during all the growth stages. The higher dry matter production might be linked to greater vegetative development, as measured by plant height, number of primary and secondary branches, and number of leaves, among other factors that contribute to the creation of more fresh weight (Thanuja *et al.*, 2020) [12]. The experimental data exhibited the yield and yield attributing parameters *viz.*, number of umbels, number of umbellates, number of fruit, test weight and seed yield were significantly highest in treatment T₁₁. Inorganic and organic fertilizers were probably responsible for the synthesis of essential enzymes, proteins, energy, chlorophyll and other components for photosynthetic translocation and increased the number of umbels. Positive nitrogen and phosphorus responses increased phosphorus availability in soil, which is a major structural element of the cell and aids in cell elongation, greater availability of photosynthesis, metabolites, nutrients to develop reproductive structures and translocation

of photosynthates from source to sink which attributed to higher yield attributes (Sathyanarayana *et al.*, 2015 and Shakywa *et al.*, 2022) [13,14]. The increased yield could be due to a better nutritional status of the soil, which could have stimulated the rate of various plant physiological processes, leading to increased yield attributing characteristics and their cumulative effect resulted in enhanced seed yield (Desai *et al.*, 2020) [15]. Increased yields may also be linked with fertilizer's effect in enhancing nutrient absorption by the root system, increased chlorophyll content, photosynthetic activity, and protein content in cultivated plants (Rana, 2012 and Sathyanarayana *et al.*, 2017) [16,17]. The present research manifested significant variation in economics. The maximum cost of cultivation was observed in treatment T₂ while highest gross return and net return was obtained in T₁₁. The maximum benefit: cost ratio was calculated in treatment T₉. The intensification in the net return may be attributed to supply of optimal level of nutrients by using organic manures and chemical fertilizer's to meet the crop mandate at proper time which in turn lead to higher yield.

5. Conclusions

On the basis of research and the results reported, it could be concluded that, the different levels of major nutrients and organic manure significantly influenced the growth and yield attributes of ajwain. Hence, out of eleven treatments, T₁₁ NPK – 50:30:20 Kg/ha + 15 t/ha FYM was best comprises for enhanced growth and yield of ajwain while T₉ NPK – 50:20:20 Kg/ha + 5 t/ha FYM recorded best B: C ratio among the treatments.

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7. Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

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