



## Growth and yield of clusterbean as influenced by fertilizer application in arid region of Andhra Pradesh

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### ABSTRACT

A field experiment was conducted to study fertilizer management in clusterbean in alfisols of scarce rainfall zone under rainfed conditions for three years during kharif, 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 at Agricultural Research Station, Ananthapuram of Andhra Pradesh. Pooled analysis of data revealed that number of pods per plant, seed yield, gross returns, net returns and B:C ratio was not significantly influenced by different fertilizer management practices. However highest mean number of pods per plant was resulted with application of 20 kg K ha<sup>-1</sup>, seed yield was registered with 20 kg N + 20 kg P + 20 kg K + 3 kg Bo ha<sup>-1</sup>. Higher gross returns were realized with 20 kg N + 20 kg P + 20 kg K + 3 kg Bo ha<sup>-1</sup>, highest net returns obtained with 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup> and highest benefit cost ratio was realized with 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup>. Application of 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup> can be recommended to scarce rainfall zone of Andhra Pradesh for maximization of profits in clusterbean crop.

**Key words:** Clusterbean, Rainfed Red Soils

Clusterbean, popularly known as guar is *kharif* legume crop, very drought tolerant, sun-loving but susceptible to frost that requires only 300-400 mm annual rainfall recently classified in arid legume group and is grown for vegetable, green fodder, green manure and for grain. Its deep penetrating root system enables the plant to utilize available moisture more efficiently and thus offers better scope for rainfed cropping. The crop survives best even under moderate salinity and alkalinity. Clusterbean tolerates high temperatures and dry conditions and is adapted to arid and semi-arid climates (Undersander *et al.*, 1991). It is a principal source of galactomannan (28 -33 % guar gum) and has numerous food and industrial uses *viz.*, textiles, paper, petroleum, pharmaceuticals, food processing, cosmetics, mining explosives, oil drilling etc. India is leading producer of the crop in the world contributing to around 75-82% of the total production. The consumption pattern of its seed is largely influenced by the demands from the petroleum industries in USA and oil fields in the Middle East. The trend of consumption has also increased in rest of the world that has led to its introduction in many countries.

India is a leading exporter of guar gum with 80% of world production, followed by Pakistan. In India, Rajasthan is the largest clusterbean

producing states in the world as it dominates the Indian production scenario contributing to 70% of the total production in India followed by Haryana (12%) and Gujarat (11%). Clusterbean basically grown under arid rainfed conditions and there was year to year huge yield fluctuations due to erratic rainfall (Pathak *et al.*, 2009 and Singh *et al.*, 2003 & 2005).

Clusterbean responds to phosphorus rather than nitrogen. As N fixing legume usually require more P than minimal N fertilizer because P plays very vital role in the nodule development and their activity (Serraj *et al.*, 2004). In recent years, the continuous application of only N and P led to the deficiency of micronutrients in arid soils. Deficiency of micro nutrients has great detrimental effects on metabolic pathways, enzyme activities, performance of crops and uptake of macronutrients. Zn application significantly increased the nitrogen activity, carbohydrate and protein content in clusterbean (Nandwal *et al.*, 1990). Potassium also plays a critical role under moisture stress conditions through its influence on maintenance of turgor potential photosynthesis, translocation of photosynthetic, starch synthesis and activation of number of enzymes. Vyas *et al.* (2001) found increase in seed yield of arid legumes with increasing K levels even under low levels of soil moisture

availability. Due to moisture scarcity, the soil organic matter turnover and fertilizer use efficiency is very low (Garg and Uday Burman, 2011).

After seeing great revenues with the crop during previous years by Rajasthan farmers, farmers in Ananthapuram, Guntur, Kurnool, Karimnagar, Nellore, Prakasam and Ranga Reddy districts of Andhra Pradesh have also started the cultivation of this crop for seeds in more than 1000 ha. Ananthapuram district is the second most drought - affected district of India. It receives around 500 mm rainfall annually. The agriculture is predominantly dependent on rainfall which is very erratic and uncertain. Being located in the scarce rainfall zone of Andhra Pradesh does not get the full benefit of either the southwest or northeast monsoon. Rainfed agriculture in Ananthapuram district is greatly influenced by water shortage caused by low, highly variable and erratic rainfall. In clusterbean information on fertilizer management is meagre for scarce rainfall zone hence present study was initiated.

#### MATERIAL AND METHODS

A field experiment was conducted to study fertilizer management in clusterbean in alfisols of scarce rainfall zone under rainfed conditions for three years during *kharif*, 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16 at Agricultural Research Station, Ananthapuram of Andhra Pradesh. The soil of the experimental site was red sandy loam with shallow depth, low in organic carbon (0.34%) and low in available nitrogen (138 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>), medium in available phosphorous (28 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) and potassium (215 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>). The experiment was laid out in randomized block design with three replications. The treatments consisted of eleven treatments viz., T<sub>1</sub>: Control (No N, P and K), T<sub>2</sub>: 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>3</sub>: 20 kg P ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>4</sub>: 20 kg K ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>5</sub>: 20 kg N + 20 kg P ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>6</sub>: 20 kg P + 20 kg K ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>7</sub>: 20 kg N + 20 kg K ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>8</sub>: 20 kg N + 20 kg P ha<sup>-1</sup> + 20 kg K ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>9</sub>: T<sub>8</sub> + 25 kg Zn So<sub>4</sub> ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>10</sub>: T<sub>8</sub> + 3 kg Bo ha<sup>-1</sup>, T<sub>11</sub>: T<sub>8</sub> + 25 kg Zn So<sub>4</sub> ha<sup>-1</sup> + 3 kg Bo ha<sup>-1</sup>. The experimental field was prepared by working with a tractor drawn disc plough and then tractor drawn cultivator was drawn along the field. The individual plots were laid out according to the layout plan. Healthy seeds of clusterbean (var. RGC 1025) with good germination percent (95%) used for sowing purpose. As per the treatments N, P<sub>2</sub>O<sub>5</sub> and K<sub>2</sub>O was applied at the time of sowing through urea, single super phosphate and muriate of potash respectively. All

other cultural practices were kept normal and uniform for all treatments. At harvest five plants were randomly selected from each treatment for recording growth parameters such as plant height, number of pods per plant, number of seeds per pod, test weight. At harvest in each treatment grain and haulm yield from the net plot (5 m x 5 m) was recorded and expressed in kg ha<sup>-1</sup>. Labour charges, cost of inputs were worked out to compute the cost of cultivation. Gross returns were calculated based on local market prices of clusterbean and net returns by subtracting the total cost of cultivation from gross returns.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Rainfall and crop performance

In 2013-14, annual rainfall received (431.8 mm) in 23 rainy days was 75.7% of normal annual rainfall (570 mm). During 2013-14, crop was sown on 12.7.2013 and harvested on 4.10.2013 with crop duration of 85 days. During the crop period 328.4 mm rainfall was received in 11 rainy days (Table 1). In 2014-15, annual rainfall 375.2 mm received in 26 rainy days it was 65.8% of normal annual rainfall (570 mm). During 2014-15, crop was sown on 16.7.2014 and harvested on 10.10.2014 with 86 days crop duration. During this period 160.6 mm rainfall was received in 10 rainy days. In 2015-16, annual rainfall 641 mm received in 44 rainy days it was 108% of normal annual rainfall (590.6 mm). During 2015-16, crop was sown on 19.6.2015 and harvested on 11.9.2015 with a crop duration of 84 days. During this period 212.6 mm rainfall was received in 14 rainy days. The average seed yield during 2015 was higher by 40% and 25% compared to 2013 and 2014 respectively and was attributed to optimum soil moisture resulted through sufficient rainfall received in 14 rainy days during different phenophases especially during pod initiation to pod development and pod development to maturity whereas in 2013, 267.1 mm rainfall received in 8 rainy days during pod development to maturity resulted in excess moisture in soil profile which hindered pod development resulting in less test weight and seed yield. Higher seed yield during 2015 compared to 2013 and 2014 was also attributed to fairly higher test weight.

### Growth

Data pertaining to plant height and yield attributes of clusterbean as influenced by fertilizer management practices presented in Table 5. Plant height of clusterbean measured at harvest was

not significantly influenced by different fertilizer management practices. However, the highest mean plant height was observed with application of 20 kg K ha<sup>-1</sup>. These results are in agreement with Ayub *et al.* (2012) who reported that application of P alone could not produce significantly higher plant height over control treatment. Plant height was not affected significantly due to different fertilizer management practices as observed in this study is not in line with those of Suzuki *et al.* (1991) who reported an increase in growth with nitrogen application. The contradictory results might have been due to heterogeneity in fertility status of soil.

### Yield attributes

Different fertilizer management practices had no significant influence on number of pods per plant. However, highest mean number of pods per plant was resulted with application of 20 kg K ha<sup>-1</sup>. Number of pods per plant was not affected significantly due to different fertilizer management practices as recorded in this study is not in line with those of Suzuki *et al.* (1991) who reported an increase in yield attributes with nitrogen application.

Number of seeds per pod did not vary significantly due to adopted fertilizer management practices. However, highest number of seeds per pod was noticed with 20 kg N + 20 kg P ha<sup>-1</sup>. Burman *et al.* (2007) reported that application of nitrogen (20 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) in association with P (20 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) significantly enhanced yield attributes of clusterbean under rainfed condition of Jodhpur in a two years study. Raj Singh and Khan (2002) found that application of 20 kg N and 40 kg P ha<sup>-1</sup> increased yield attributes of clusterbean under rainfed condition. Fertilizer management practices had no significant influence on test weight. However, highest test weight was obtained with 20 kg N + 20 kg P + 20 kg K + 25 kg Zn So<sub>4</sub> ha<sup>-1</sup>.

### Seed and haulm yield

Data pertaining to seed, haulm yield and economics of clusterbean as influenced by fertilizer management practices presented in Table 6. Mean seed yield was not influenced significantly due to different fertilizer management practices. However, maximum mean seed yield was registered with 20 kg N + 20 kg P + 20 kg K + 3 kg Bo ha<sup>-1</sup> followed by 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup> treatment. Seed yield was not affected significantly due to different fertilizer management practices as observed in this study is not in line with those of

Suzuki *et al.* (1991) who reported an increase in seed yield with nitrogen application. Raj Singh and Khan (2002) found that application of 20 kg N and 40 kg P ha<sup>-1</sup> increased seed yield of clusterbean under rainfed condition. Burman *et al.* (2007) found that application of nitrogen (20 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) in association with P (20 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>) significantly enhanced the seed yield of clusterbean under rainfed condition of Jodhpur in a two years study. Under moisture stress condition plant response to applied fertilizers is frequently reduced (Bradford and Hsiao, 1992). It is agreed that plant response to applied nutrients by rainfed crops is not assured and sometimes may not be profitable unless proper soil moisture is available. However, the degree of yield response varied with rainfall pattern, intensity of drought, native soil fertility and crop species. Application of P was observed to enhance drought tolerance under different intensities of water stress in clusterbean genotypes (Burman *et al.*, 2009). P nutrition mellowed adverse effects of water stress on leaf metabolites, NR activity and photosynthesis leading to improved seed yields. Efficient translocation of accumulated assimilates to the reproductive parts under comfortable nitrogen nutrition might be responsible for the beneficial effect on elevating the stature of all the yield attributes. Similar results have been reported by Singh and Singh (1989) and Sharma and Nehara (2004). Higher guar yield with application of nitrogen, as noticed in the present investigation confirms the documented evidence of Bamboo and Rana (1995), Patel *et al.*, (2005), Sharma and Nehara (2004) and Rathore *et al.*, (2007). The studies of Vyas *et al.* (2001) also indicated that seed yield of arid legumes increased with increasing K levels even under low levels of soil moisture availability. There was no significant difference in mean haulm yield due to different fertilizer management practices. However, the highest mean haulm yield was obtained with 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup> treatment.

### Economics

Gross returns, net returns and B:C ratio for different fertilizer management practices were calculated and presented in Table 6. Gross returns, net returns and B:C ratio were not significantly influenced by various fertilizer management practices. But however, higher gross returns were realized with 20 kg N + 20 kg P + 20 kg K + 3 kg Bo ha<sup>-1</sup> followed by 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup> treatment. Higher

**Table 1: Rainfall and rainy days during crop growth period**

Parameter	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Date of sowing	12.07.2013	16.07.2014	19.06.2015
Date of harvesting	04.10.2013	10.10.2014	11.09.2015
Crop duration (days)	85	86	84
Normal annual rainfall (mm)	573	570	591
Actual annual rainfall (mm)	431.8	375.2	641
Rainfall during crop period (mm)	328.4	160.6	212.6
Number of rainy days during the year	23	26	44
Number of rainy days during crop period	11	10	14

**Table 2: Weather during crop growth period of clusterbean during 2013-14**

Phenophase	Number of days	Maximum temperature (°C)	Minimum temperature (°C)	Rainfall (mm)	Rainy days
Sowing to emergence	3	31.1	22.7	40.8	1
Emergence to flowering	22	32.4	23.2	8.6	1
Flowering to pod initiation	12	32.1	23.0	10.4	1
Pod initiation to pod development	9	33.6	22.9	1.6	0
Pod development to maturity	39	32.1	22.2	267.1	8

**Table 3: Weather during crop growth period of clusterbean during 2014-15**

Phenophase	Number of days	Maximum temperature (°C)	Minimum temperature (°C)	Rainfall (mm)	Rainy days
Sowing to emergence	4	33.4	23.6	16	1
Emergence to flowering	21	33.5	23.5	4.0	0
Flowering to pod initiation	10	34.3	23.3	5.4	1
Pod initiation to pod development	10	33.0	22.4	84	5
Pod development to maturity	41	33.3	22.4	51.2	3

**Table 4: Weather during crop growth period of clusterbean during 2015-16**

Phenophase	Number of days	Maximum temperature (°C)	Minimum temperature (°C)	Rainfall (mm)	Rainy days
Sowing to emergence	3	30.6	23.5	42.8	1
Emergence to flowering	20	35.9	24.8	2.0	0
Flowering to pod initiation	11	35.1	24.8	10.6	1
Pod initiation to pod development	11	35.4	24.3	27.6	1
Pod development to maturity	39	34.3	23.7	129.6	11

**Table 5: Plant height and yield attributes of clusterbean as influenced by fertilizer management practices in rainfed alfisols (Mean of 3 years data)**

Treatments	Plant height (cm)	No. pods per plant	No. seeds per pod	Test weight (g)
T <sub>1</sub> : Control (No N, P and K)	33.5	20.2	6.3	32.0
T <sub>2</sub> : 20 kg N ha <sup>-1</sup>	34.5	19.1	6.4	32.7
T <sub>3</sub> : 20 kg P ha <sup>-1</sup>	34.4	21.8	6.4	32.6
T <sub>4</sub> : 20 kg K ha <sup>-1</sup>	35.8	23.1	6.4	34.0
T <sub>5</sub> : 20 kg N + 20 kg P ha <sup>-1</sup>	34.5	22.2	6.9	32.5
T <sub>6</sub> : 20 kg P + 20 kg K ha <sup>-1</sup>	33.9	21.4	6.3	33.2
T <sub>7</sub> : 20 kg N + 20 kg K ha <sup>-1</sup>	31.9	20.0	6.5	33.1
T <sub>8</sub> : 20 kg N + 20 kg P ha <sup>-1</sup> + 20 kg K ha <sup>-1</sup>	34.0	22.4	6.5	32.0
T <sub>9</sub> : T8 + 25 kg Zn So4 ha <sup>-1</sup>	34.8	20.4	6.5	34.1
T <sub>10</sub> : T8 + 3 kg Bo ha <sup>-1</sup>	34.6	20.3	6.3	33.6
T <sub>11</sub> : T8 + 25 kg Zn So4 ha <sup>-1</sup> + 3 kg Bo ha <sup>-1</sup>	33.9	21.3	6.5	33.6
S.Em ±	1.45	2.01	0.16	1.07
CD at 5%	NS	NS	NS	NS

**Table 6: Yield and economics of clusterbean as influenced by fertilizer management practices in rainfed alfisols (Mean of 3 years data)**

Treatments	Seed yield (kg/ha)	Haulm yield (kg/ha)	Gross Returns (Rs/ha)	Net Returns (Rs/ha)	B : C ratio
T <sub>1</sub> : Control (No N, P and K)	633	1315	20644	11344	1.22
T <sub>2</sub> : 20 kg N ha <sup>-1</sup>	689	1555	22484	12926	1.35
T <sub>3</sub> : 20 kg P ha <sup>-1</sup>	637	1421	20597	10322	1.00
T <sub>4</sub> : 20 kg K ha <sup>-1</sup>	673	1374	21885	12014	1.22
T <sub>5</sub> : 20 kg N + 20 kg P ha <sup>-1</sup>	616	1350	19912	9379	0.89
T <sub>6</sub> : 20 kg P + 20 kg K ha <sup>-1</sup>	639	1245	20662	9816	0.90
T <sub>7</sub> : 20 kg N + 20 kg K ha <sup>-1</sup>	669	1417	21501	11371	1.12
T <sub>8</sub> : 20 kg N + 20 kg P ha <sup>-1</sup> + 20 kg K ha <sup>-1</sup>	648	1215	20841	9737	0.88
T <sub>9</sub> : T8 + 25 kg Zn So4 ha <sup>-1</sup>	654	1326	21022	8467	0.67
T <sub>10</sub> : T8 + 3 kg Bo ha <sup>-1</sup>	713	1387	23139	11284	0.95
T <sub>11</sub> : T8 + 25 kg Zn So4 ha <sup>-1</sup> + 3 kg Bo ha <sup>-1</sup>	625	1372	20224	7219	0.56
S.Em ±	51.4	95	-	-	-
CD at 5%	NS	NS	-	-	-

**Table 7: Correlation coefficient between yield attributes and yield of clusterbean as influenced by fertilizer management practices in rainfed alfisols during 2013-14**

Parameter	Plant height	No. pods	No. seeds	Test weight	Seed yield	Haulm
yield	(cm)	(cm)	per plant	per pod	(g)	(kg/ha)
			(kg/ha)			
Plant height (cm)	1					
No. pods per plant	0.167	1				
No. seeds per pod	0.118	0.440	1			
Test weight (g)	-0.168	-0.708	-0.702	1		
Seed yield (kg/ha)	0.338	0.234	0.516	-0.424	1	
Haulm yield (kg/ha)	0.346	0.071	0.651	-0.501	0.739	1

net returns and B:C ratio were obtained with 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup> followed by 20 kg K ha<sup>-1</sup> treatment and control.

#### Correlation between yield attributes and yield

There was no significant correlation between yield attributes and yield during three years of experimentation (Table 7, 8, 9 and 10). However in 2013-14, seed yield and haulm yield were positively correlated with plant height and number of seeds per pod. Number of seeds per pod was positively correlated with number of pods per plant, seed yield was positively correlated with number of pods per plant and haulm yield. During 2014-15, number of pods per plant, number of seeds per pod and seed yield were positively correlated with plant height. Number of pods per plant were positively correlated with number of seeds per pod. Seed yield was positively correlated with haulm yield. In 2015-16, number of pods per plant, test weight and seed yield were positively correlated with plant height. Seed yield was positively correlated with number of pods per plant. Number of seeds per pod were positively correlated with haulm yield. In pooled data, number of pods per plant were positively correlated with plant height. Haulm yield and number of seeds per pod were positively correlated with number of pods per plant. Seed yield and haulm yield were positively correlated with number of seeds per pod. Test weight was positively correlated with seed yield. Seed yield was positively correlated with haulm yield.

From the above studies, it is concluded that application of 20 kg N ha<sup>-1</sup> can be recommended to scarce rainfall zone of Andhra Pradesh of for maximization of profits in clusterbean crop.

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