



Original Paper

Effect of Mineral and Biofertilizers on Nutritional Values of *Acacia saligna* Seedlings

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The present study was conducted to figure out the effect of some mineral and biofertilizers on nutritional value of *Acacia saligna* seedlings. This study was carried for 14 months at the nursery of Forestry and Wood Technology Department, Faculty of Agriculture, Alexandria University-Egypt. Three commercial mineral fertilizers were used in this study: Urea, Calcium superphosphate, and Potassium sulphate as a source of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium (NPK). In this study, six levels of mineral fertilization treatments were used [F0-F5]. The results of this study showed that *Acacia saligna* seedlings treated with F2 & F3 fertilizers recorded the highest value of crude protein, whereas, treatment with F2 fertilizer showed the highest value of crude fat. In addition to that, the lowest content of crude fat was found in the seedlings of *Acacia saligna* treated with F5 (halex biofertilizer). Seedlings treated with F4 fertilizer showed no significant difference in content of crude protein from that treated with F5 fertilizer. i.e., the crude protein and crude fat were found to respond to mineral fertilizers, whereas, crude fiber and total ash are not effected by adding fertilizers.

Keywords: Mineral, Biofertilizers, Nutritional Values, *Acacia saligna* Seedlings

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The present study concerns mainly with the effect of mineral and biofertilizers on the nutritional value of *Acacia saligna* seedlings. Such species is well adapted to barren slopes, derelict land, and arid conditions. *Acacia saligna* is used for stabilizing drift sands and wood production, whereas, its leaves and pods are used as supplementary feed for sheep and goats [13]. Application of mineral fertilizers more especially NPK increase the absorption of nutritions by roots, which in turn led to increase the growth of the species under investigation. In addition to that, application of biofertilizer showed an increase in Nitrogen content in the plant organs. Baumi (2010) indicated that biofertilizers increased the productivity and the content of both crude protein and crude fibers

for *Acacia saligna*, and found that the highest significant crude fiber was in fall (21-90%) compared to spring (17-70%). Abdultazak et al. (2000) reported that crude protein of *Acacia* foliage is high enough to use as supplement to low quality diets. Alosif (2020) recorded the highest shoot height, leaf number, leaf dry weight, and highest value of shoot/root ratio of *Acacia saligna* were obtained when seedlings treated with mineral fertilizers, and no effect on growth when seedlings treated with halex biofertilizer. Almodares et al. (2009) revealed that application of Nitrogen fertilizers increased the amount of forage protein and decreased the fiber content. In 2000 (El-Shaer) determined the chemical composition of *Acacia saligna*, and showed that the value of protein (12.5%) is reasonable and enough to cover the maintenance requirements of protein for ruminants. Several authors have published number of publications concerning the effect of mineral and biofertilizers on the nutritional value of *Acacia saligna* seedlings and other plants [5-9,12 & 14- 15].

Materials and Methods

Seeds of *Acacia saligna* were collected from healthy trees at the nursery of Forestry and Wood Technology Department, Faculty of Agriculture, Alexandria University-Egypt. The soil used in this study was obtained from Department nursery in Abies region, Alexandria, and it was a mixture of clay and sand [1:2, V: V]. Three commercial mineral fertilizers were used: Urea [46% N], Calcium superphosphate [15% P₂O₅], and Potassium sulphate [48% K₂O] as a source of nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium respectively. In addition to that, halex biofertilizer was also used. Samples of leaves and stems were grounded in Wiley mill into powder; part of each sample was analyzed for dry weight crude protein, crude fat, and total ash as described by Association Official Analytical Chemists (A.O.A.C.) in 1990.

Seedlings were fertilized with the 1st dose after 4 months [1st of July 2013], and the 2nd dose after two months later [1st of September 2013], when seedlings aged 6 months. Six levels of fertilizers were used in this study: F₀ [control]. F₁ [1g N, 0.5 P₂O₅, and 0.5g K₂O/Kg soil]. F₂ [0.5g N, 0.25g P₂O₅, and 0.25g K₂O/Kg soil], F₃ [1g N, 0.5g P₂O₅, 0.5g K₂O], and [0.5g halex/Kg soil]. F₄ [0.5g N, 0.25g P₂O₅, 0.25g K₂O, and 0.25 halex/Kg soil], and F₅ [1g halex/Kg soil]. The nutritive values investigated in this study included crude protein, crude fat, crude fiber, and total ash. The determination of sulphuric acid consumed gives the content of crude protein in g/kg as described by (A.O. A. C). The crud fat determination was done by using soxhlet fat extraction as described by (A.O. A. C). The crude fiber (CF) content [g/kg dm (dry matter)] is given by the ratio of the equation {CF= (a-b/w) *1000}, where a= loss of weight after ashing, b= loss of weight (g) after ashing during blank test, and w= sample weight (g dm). The total ash content (g/kg dm) is determined by the equation {TA= (a-b/w) *1000}, where a= mass (g) of crucible after ashing, b= mass (g) of dry tared crucible, and w= mass (g) of dry sample.

RESULTS

The effect of mineral fertilizers on the nutritional value of *Acacia saligna* seedlings was studied and the results had shown the followings [Table 1]. Seedlings treated with F₂ fertilizer displayed the highest crude protein content (20.89%) followed by F₃ fertilizers (19.13%), whereas, those

treated with F₄ (18.38%) & F₅ (18.13%) revealed less crude protein content. Moreover, statistical analysis variance had shown no significant differences between seedlings treated with halex & NPK (F₄) and those treated with only halex (F₅) in crude protein content. However, seedlings treated with F₄ & F₅ fertilizers increased crude protein content compared with those treated with F₀ (control) which displayed the lowest crude protein content (16.472%). In addition to that, statistical analysis showed that there is no significant effect of any treatments on crude fiber content in *Acacia saligna* seedlings. However, the mean average of crude fiber in the seedlings of *Acacia saligna* was 14.147%. As for crude fat the results showed that seedlings treated with F₂ fertilizer displayed the highest crude fat content (2.25%), whereas, those treated with F₁ & F₃-F₅ fertilizers have no significant differences between them with an average of 2.120%, 2.110%, 2.102%, and 2.134% respectively, however, the lowest content of crude fat (1.974%) was obtained in seedlings treated with F₀ (control). As it is appeared in (Table 1), fertilization treatments with F₁-F₅ had no significant impact on the total ash content in seedlings of *Acacia saligna*, and regardless of fertilization, the mean average of total ash content is 12.035%.

Table 1: Means of crude protein, crude fiber, crude fat, and total ash of leaves of unfertilized and 14 months fertilized *Acacia saligna* seedlings.

Treatments	Mean			
	Crude Protein (%)	Crude Fiber (%)	Crude Fat (%)	Total Ash (%)
F₀ [control]	16.4720 ^D	14.1220 ^A	1.97400 ^C	12.1520 ^A
F₁	18.3500 ^C	14.3820 ^A	2.12000 ^B	11.7080 ^A
F₂	20.8900 ^A	15.1080 ^A	2.25000 ^A	11.5860 ^A
F₃	19.1340 ^B	13.9380 ^A	2.11000 ^B	12.4100 ^A
F₄	18.3860 ^C	13.7320 ^A	2.10200 ^B	12.1100 ^A
F₅	18.1300 ^C	13.6000 ^A	2.1340 ^B	12.2440 ^A
Mean	18.5603	14.14700	2.115000	12.03500
L.S.D	0.7461	2.0576	0.0951	0.9566
C.V	3.047202	11.02434	3.407100	0.025166

Within each column, Values with the same superscript are not significant at 0.05, 0.01 level probability.

DISCUSSION

This study concerned mainly with the effect of mineral and biofertilizers on nutritional value of *Acacia saligna* seedlings. Application of biofertilizer to the seedlings of *Acacia saligna* showed an increase in nitrogen content, the productivity, and the content of both crude protein and crude fiber. In addition to that, seedlings treated with F₂ & F₃ fertilizers showed an increase in crude protein [20.89% & 19.13%] respectively. Whereas, those treated with F₄ & F₅ fertilizers revealed less crude protein content, i.e., no significant differences had been noticed in treatments with F₄ (18.38%) or F₅ (18.13%) in terms of crude protein content. However, seedlings treated with F₀ (unfertilized) displayed the lowest crude protein content (16.472%). Statistical analysis showed that there is no significant effect of any treatments on crude fiber content in seedlings of *Acacia saligna*, and the mean average of crude fiber recorded was 14.147%. Moreover, seedlings treated with F₂ fertilizer revealed the highest crude fat content (2.25%), whereas, those treated with F₁ & F₃-F₅ fertilizers showed no significant difference between them (Table 1). On the other hand, seedlings of *Acacia saligna* treated with F₁-F₅ fertilizers showed no significant effect on the total ash content, and regardless of fertilization, the mean average of total ash content is 12.035%. In general, the seedlings of *Acacia saligna* were sensitive to fertilizers in terms of crude protein and crude fat only; however, the content of crude fiber and total ash was not affected by additions of any fertilizers. Biofertilizer F₅ recorded to increase the content of crude protein, but has no effect on the content of crude fat.

Based on the results in (Table 1) it is recommended to add mineral fertilizers particularly F₂ fertilizer to increase dry weight and nutritional value mainly crude protein & crude fat of *Acacia saligna* shrub. Fertilization in general makes plants juicer and less fibrous especially at seedling and sapling stages.

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