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Effect of sowing dates and nutrient management on economics of seed production in fenugreek

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Abstract : A field experiment entitled, effect of sowing dates and nutrient management on economics of seed production in fenugreek was conducted at the Main Garden, University Department of Horticulture, Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth, Akola during *Rabi* season of the years 2004-05 and 2005-06. The experiment was laid out in split plot design with four replications and twenty-four treatment combinations. The fenugreek seed sown on 1st November (S_1) and supplied the nutrient as 37.50 kg N + 18.75 kg P_2O_5 ha^{-1} + FYM @ 10 t ha^{-1} (F_5) recorded significantly the maximum gross monetary return (Rs. 52211/- and Rs. 66104/ -, respectively). The maximum net monetary return (Rs. 35984/- and 47914/-, respectively) were recorded with the 1st November (S_1) sown crop fertilized with 50 kg N + 25 kg P_2O_5 ha^{-1} (F_2). The mean data regarding cost: benefit ratio revealed that, the treatment combination S_1F_2 (1st November sowing of fenugreek seed fertilized with 50 kg N + 25 kg P_2O_5 ha^{-1}) have recorded the maximum cost: benefit ratio (5.59).

Key words : Fenugreek, Sowing dates, INM, Economics

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Fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum* L.) is an important seed spice popularly known by it's vernicular name *methi* belongs to a leguminous vegetable crops. Fenugreek is considered to be a native of eastern europe and ethiopia. It is also found growing wild in north-western india. It is an important condiment crop grown in southern india during the *Kharif* and *Rabi* seasons. The common methi is quick growing and produces erect shoot to a height of 40-70 cm. It has a light to dark green leaves with or without pink margin and produces 2-3 small white flowers at the base of each leaf. The pods are slender and of straw colour when riped, beak shaped and are about 8-10 cm long with 8-15 yellowish brown colour smooth surface seeds. The seed is about 0.3-0.5 cm long. There are two species of the genus *trigonella viz*., *trigonella foenum-graecum* the common methi and *trigonella corniculata* the kasuri methi (Som and Maity, 1993).

Fenugreek is the third largest seed spice in india after coriander and cumin (Thangaraj and Vijaykumaran, 2001).Generally, the seed production of methi is taken after 2-3 cuttings, but, the seed yield obtained without cuttings are better than the seed yield obtained after 2-3 cuttings. It is therefore, recommended to take the seed production of methi without any cuttings (Gill and Singh, 1988). In Maharashtra, though methi is cultivated as an important leafy vegetable and is also grown as a spice, but less attention is being paid on its commercial seed production. Fenugreek seed production is highly specialized job and it requires intimate knowledge of crop production particularly, the floral biology, mode of pollination, isolation distance, climatic and nutritional requirements, etc.

To increase the productivity of improved varieties of fenugreek by adoption of recommended package of practices for cultivation is very high step today. Among the various cultural practices, proper time of sowing and optimum quantity of manure and fertilizers to a given area are prerequisites to achieve an uniform crop stand which ultimately reflects on the seed yield and quality of crop.

RESEARCH METHODS

A field experiment entitled, effect of sowing dates and nutrient management on growth, seed yield and quality