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Effect of shade levels on growth and frond production in boston fern [*Nephrolepis exaltata* (L.) Schott]

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ABSTRACT : Plants of *Nephrolepis exaltata* (L.) schott cv. BOSTONIENSIS were grown under three different shade levels *i.e.* under open field conditions as well as under 50 per cent and 75 per cent shade. Basal dose of 25 tones of FYM/ha was given at the time of planting, whereas, nitrogen was applied at 250 kg/ha in four equal splits at quarterly intervals. Under open field conditions, growth of the plants was severely affected during both the extremes. The best growth was obtained under 75 per cent shade and the plants exhibited most vigorous growth and produced the highest numbers of fronds during both the growing years. Under 50 per cent shade, average frond length and mean lamina length were higher than the other two treatments. This however, was compensated for by higher number of fronds produced under 75 per cent shade.

KEY WORDS : *Nephrolepis exaltata*, Shade levels, Frond production

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