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Studies on evaluation of different micronutrient grades on growth, yield and quality of French bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.)

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Abstract

A field experiment was conducted at research farm of Department of Soil Science, College of Agriculture, Vasantao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani, Maharashtra during *Rabi* season of 2024-2025 to optimize nutrient-management practices through foliar feeding in 'Phule Vijaya' variety of french bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.) The experiment was laid out in a randomized block design with ten treatments viz., T₁- absolute control, T₂- RDF (As per crop), T₃- RDF+ Grade-1(a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based), T₄- RDF+ Grade-1(b) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Bentonite based), T₅- RDF+ Govt. notified Grade 1(c) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based), T₆- RDF+Grade-II (a) @ 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with EDTA), T₇- RDF+ Grade-II (b) @ 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with glycine), T₈- RDF+ Grade-II (c) 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with EDTA), T₉- RDF+ Grade-II (d) 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with citric acid) and T₁₀- RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-II (e) @ 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with EDTA). It is revealed that application of RDF+ Grade-1(a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) resulted in maximum grain yield (1105.41 kg/ha) and straw yield (387.58 kg/ha). Maximum plant height (31.19 cm), number of pods/plant (9.23), chlorophyll content (48.62 SPAD value) and quality parameter viz., protein content (22.73%), test weight (16.79 gm) were obtained from the same treatment.

Keywords: French bean, micronutrient grades, grain yield, straw yield, protein content

1. Introduction

French bean is a minor pulse crop cultivated throughout the world having 34.80 million hectares of area contributing to 27.54 million tonnes of production. India ranks first in area 13 million hectares and production 5.46 million tonnes followed by Myanmar having area 3.34 million hectares and production 3.05 million tonnes and Brazil with area 2.68 million hectares and production 3.03 million tonnes. (Anonymous, 2020) [3].

Beans are mostly utilized as pulses and green vegetables in India. It is prized for its seeds, which are high in protein (23%). Iron, phosphate and calcium are also abundant in seeds. Vegetables are made from the fresh pods. Each 100 g of edible pods contains 50 mg of calcium, 28 mg of phosphorus, 1.7 mg of iron, 132 mg of carotene, 0.08 mg of thiamine, 0.06 mg of riboflavin and 24.0 mg of vitamin C, making it a nutrient-dense vegetable (Chadha, 2001) [9].

Both macro and micronutrients are necessary for the plant's regular growth and development. In contrast to other leguminous crops, french beans have a relatively low capacity to fix atmospheric nitrogen in their root zone (Habbish and Ishaq, 1974) [15]. The most essential nutrient is nitrogen, which is absorbed by plants more than any other element. The dose of nitrogen was found to enhance french bean yield and vegetative growth (Chandra *et al.*, 1987) [11]. Since phosphorus is essential for energy storage and transfer for metabolic activities, it is one of the most significant components that enhances plant growth and biological yield (Srivastava *et al.*, 1998; Nassar and Ismail, 1999) [25, 20]. French beans like cereals, react favourably to phosphorus. It has a noticeably greater P need than other pulse crops. The third important nutrient in commercial fertilizers is potassium. It plays a crucial role in raising crop output and quality overall and fortifies plants resistance to disease. French beans flowering, seed maturity and yield are all considerably impacted by potassium (Arya *et al.*, 1999) [4].

2. Materials and Methods

A field experiment was conducted at research farm of Department of Soil Science, College of Agriculture, Vasantao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, Parbhani, Maharashtra. The experimental soil was clayey in texture, calcareous in nature, moderately alkaline reaction, low in organic carbon (3.27 g kg^{-1}), available nitrogen ($131.98 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$), available phosphorous (11.86 kg ha^{-1}), high in available potassium ($711.78 \text{ kg ha}^{-1}$), sufficient in available sulphur (10.12 kg ha^{-1}), deficient in DTPA zinc (0.68 mg kg^{-1}), DTPA iron (4.75 mg kg^{-1}), DTPA copper (1.33 mg kg^{-1}), DTPA manganese (2.58 mg kg^{-1}) and available boron (0.33 mg kg^{-1}). The experiment was laid out in a randomized block design with ten treatments viz., T_1 -absolute control, T_2 -RDF (As per crop), T_3 - RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25 kg ha^{-1} (Gypsum based), T_4 - RDF+ Grade-I (b) @ 25 kg ha^{-1} (Bentonite based), T_5 - RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25 kg ha^{-1} (Gypsum based), T_6 - RDF+ Grade-II (a) @ 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with EDTA), T_7 - RDF+ Grade-II (b) @ 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with glycine), T_8 - RDF+ Grade-II (c) 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with EDTA), T_9 - RDF+ Grade-II (d) 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with citric acid) and T_{10} - RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-II (e) @ 0.5 and 1% (Chelation with EDTA). The recommended dose of fertilizer is 120:60:60 NPK kg ha^{-1} was applied. The half dose of N along with full dose of P and K was applied as basal and remaining half dose of N is applied as top dressing on 30 days after sowing.

Preparation of soil and foliar micronutrient formulation grades

In the present investigation different micronutrient formulations

were prepared as per the nutrient standards mentioned in the table 1. The soil micronutrient formulations Grade-I (a) gypsum and Grade-I (b) bentonite based contains, Zn: 6%, Fe: 5%, Mn: 1%, B: 1% and Cu: 0.5%. The micronutrient formulation Govt. notified Grade-I (c) gypsum based was prepared as per Maharashtra State Department of Agriculture recommendations i.e. Zn: 5%, Fe: 2%, Mn: 1%, B: 1.0% and Cu: 0.5%. The foliar micronutrient formulation chelation's were made viz., Grade-II (a) with EDTA, Grade-II (b) with glycine, Grade-II (c) with EDTA and Grade-II (d) with citric acid was prepared as Zn: 4%, Fe: 3%, Mn: 1%, B: 0.5%, Cu: 0.2% and Mo: 0.1% and Grade-II (e) with EDTA was prepared which contains Zn: 4.5%, Fe: 3.5%, Mn: 1%, B: 0.5%, Cu: 0.2% and Mo: 0.1%. These mixtures were prepared in the laboratory by using laboratory chemicals viz., ferrous sulphate, zinc sulphate, manganese sulphate, copper sulphate, boric acid, sodium tetraborate and ammonium molybdate.

Table 1: Content of soil and foliar micronutrient grades

Grade	Zn (%)	Fe (%)	Mn (%)	B (%)	Cu (%)	Mo (%)
Soil application						
Grade-I (a) and (b)	6	5	1	1	0.5	-
Govt. notified Grade-I (c)	5	2	1	1	0.5	-
Foliar application						
Grade-II (a) to (d)	4.5	3.5	1	0.5	0.2	0.1
Govt. notified Grade-II (e)	3	2.5	1	0.5	1	0.1

Sources: Soil application (Grade-I which were prepared in 1 kg pack)

Formulation-I		
Grade-I (a)	:	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{H}_3\text{BO}_3 + \text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (Gypsum based)
Grade-I (b)	:	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{H}_3\text{BO}_3 + \text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (Bentonite based)
Govt. notified Grade-I (c)	:	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{H}_3\text{BO}_3 + \text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (Gypsum based)

Foliar application (Grade-II which were prepared in 1 liter capacity)

Formulation-II		
Grade-II (a)	:	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{Na}_2\text{B}_4\text{O}_7.10\text{H}_2\text{O}$ (Borax) + $\text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O} + (\text{NH}_4)_2\text{MoO}_4$ (Chelation with EDTA)
Grade-II (b)	:	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{H}_3\text{BO}_3 + \text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O} + (\text{NH}_4)_2\text{MoO}_4$ (Chelation with glycine)
Grade-II (c)	:	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{H}_3\text{BO}_3$ (Boric acid) + $\text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O} + (\text{NH}_4)_2\text{MoO}_4$ (Chelation with EDTA)
Grade-II (d)	:	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{H}_3\text{BO}_3 + \text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O} + (\text{NH}_4)_2\text{MoO}_4$ (Chelation with citric acid)
Govt. notified Grade-II (e)	:	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{H}_3\text{BO}_3 + \text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O} + \text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O} + (\text{NH}_4)_2\text{MoO}_4$ (Chelation with EDTA)

Table 2: Sources used for soil and foliar micronutrient formulation

Sr. No.	Nutrient	Source	Nutrient content (%)
1	Fe	$\text{FeSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O}$	20.10
2.	Mn	$\text{MnSO}_4.\text{H}_2\text{O}$	32.51
3.	Zn	$\text{ZnSO}_4.7\text{H}_2\text{O}$	22.75
4.	Cu	$\text{CuSO}_4.5\text{H}_2\text{O}$	25.47
5.	B	H_3BO_3	17.49
6.	B	$\text{Na}_2\text{B}_4\text{O}_7.10\text{H}_2\text{O}$	11.34
7.	Mo	$(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{MoO}_4$	54.35

3. Results and Discussion

Effect of different micronutrient grades on growth of french bean

Plant height (cm)

Results showed that application of micronutrient formulation basal dose had a substantial impact on plant height. Application of treatment RDF+Grade-I (a) @ 25 kg ha^{-1} (Gypsum based) recorded significantly taller plant (31.19) over rest of the treatments. Whereas, the dwarf plant was observed with

treatment T_1 : control (26.56 cm). Treatment RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25 kg ha^{-1} (Gypsum based) recorded 30.77cm plant height of french bean which was found to be at par with treatment RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25 kg ha^{-1} (Gypsum based). It is also followed by treatment RDF+ Grade-I (b) @ 25 kg ha^{-1} (Bentonite based) with plant height 30.06 cm. Increase in plant height might be due to micronutrients involvement in various physiological processes such as; enzyme activation, chlorophyll formation, electron transport and stomata regulation. Application of Zn enhanced the plant height due to increase in distance of internodes. Similar findings were reported by Addow *et al.* (2020) [2], Abhilash *et al.* (2023) [1], Maurya *et al.* (2024) [19] and Shubhashree *et al.* (2011) [26].

Number of pods per plant

The data indicated that significant difference in the number of pods per plant were recorded with values at maturity extent from 5.33 to 9.23. The highest pods count per plant (9.23) was found with treatment RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25 kg ha^{-1} (Gypsum based),

which was closely at par with treatment RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) *i.e.* 8.20. The remaining all treatments showed significantly maximum number of pods plant⁻¹ over treatment T₁: Absolute control which noted minimum number of pods plant⁻¹ (5.33). The increase in number of pods per plant due to balanced supply of nutrients at all the stages of crop growth and plant nutrient supplied through foliage might have been better used more efficiently by the plant. Similar findings were also observed by Band *et al.* (2007) [6], Shubhashree *et al.* (2011) [26] and Rajkumar *et al.* (2023) [21].

Chlorophyll content

The chlorophyll content of French bean leaves varied from 39.54 to 48.62 during flowering stage. The maximum chlorophyll content (48.62) was observed at treatment T₃

involves RDF + Grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) which was found to be statistically at par with treatment T₅- RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) with value 47.65. However, the minimum chlorophyll content (39.54) was recorded with absolute control (39.54) at flowering stage of french bean. The increased in total chlorophyll content in leaves could be attributed to the functional role of iron and zinc in setting up some chlorophyll biosynthesis pathway enzymes and some antioxidants enzymes such as ascorbate peroxidase and glutathione reductase have a fundamental role and prevent the chlorophyll degradation by reactive oxidation process. Similar observations were noted by Bhamare *et al.* (2018) [7], Kumar *et al.* (2021) [17], Baddour and Attia (2021) [5] and Durgude *et al.* (2021) [14].

Table 3: Effect of different micronutrient grades on growth of French bean

Tr. No.	Treatment details	Plant height (cm)	Pods plant ⁻¹	Chlorophyll content (SPAD value)
T ₁	Absolute control	26.56	5.33	39.54
T ₂	RDF (As per crop)	26.82	5.40	42.03
T ₃	RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Gypsum based)	31.19	9.23	48.62
T ₄	RDF+ Grade-I(b) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Bentonite based)	30.06	8.00	45.35
T ₅	RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Gypsum based)	30.77	8.20	47.65
T ₆	RDF+ Grade-II (a) @ 0.5&1% (Chelation with EDTA)	27.62	6.27	41.50
T ₇	RDF+ Grade-II (b) @ 0.5&1% (Chelation with glycine)	27.88	6.60	43.67
T ₈	RDF+ Grade-II (c) 0.5&1% (Chelation with EDTA)	29.15	7.87	45.32
T ₉	RDF+ Grade-II (d) 0.5&1% (Chelation with citric acid)	28.06	6.67	44.72
T ₁₀	RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-II (e) @0.5&1% (Chelation with EDTA)	28.30	6.93	45.00
	SE ±	0.65	0.39	1.09
	CD at 5%	1.94	1.17	3.24

Effect of different micronutrient grades on yield of French bean

Grain yield

Application of RDF along with different micronutrient grades on grain yield of French bean was extent from 571.00 to 1105.41 kg ha⁻¹. The highest grain yield was recorded with application of treatment T₃, which receiving RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) resulting in 1105.41 kg ha⁻¹ and found to be superior over rest of the treatments. It was found statistically at par with treatment T₅ receiving RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) with value 1081.37. However, the lowest grain yield was recorded at the absolute control treatment (T₁) *i.e.* 571.00 kg ha⁻¹ and the remaining all treatments shown significantly maximum grain yield of French bean over absolute control. Further, the results clearly indicated that the use of different micronutrient grades on plants leads to improved grain yield due to elevated growth hormone levels, enhanced metabolic processes, and improved photosynthetic activities. An increase in grain yield is the direct result of improvement in yield components. Grain size, number of grains per pod and test weight had a positive correlation with grain yield and might be the direct effect of improvement in grain yield. This finding corroborates the finding of Kalita *et al.* (2016) [16], Zahida *et al.* (2016) [29], Rajkumar *et al.* (2023) [21] and Chandar *et al.* (2023) [10].

Straw yield

Straw yield extent from 258.83 to 429.65 kg ha⁻¹ with application of recommended dose of fertilizer and different micronutrient grades. The highest straw yield (429.65 kg ha⁻¹) was recorded with treatment T₃-RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) over rest of treatments. It was statistically found to be at par with treatment T₅: RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) *i.e.* 425.32 kg ha⁻¹.

Whereas, lowest straw yield (258.83 kg ha⁻¹) was recorded in the absolute control treatment (T₁). Increase of straw yield with RDF and micronutrient grades might be due to the role of zinc in the production of biomass and that iron is necessary for chlorophyll synthesis and has many essential roles in plant growth and development. The involvement of nutrients in a variety of physiological and biochemical processes, culminating in more dry matter production. Comparable findings were reported by Zahida *et al.* (2016) [29], Chaudhary *et al.* (2018) [12] and Abhilash *et al.* (2023) [1].

Table 4: Effect of different micronutrient grades on yield grain and straw yield of french bean

Treatment details	Grain yield (kg ha ⁻¹)	Straw yield (kg ha ⁻¹)
T ₁ : Absolute control	571.00	258.83
T ₂ : RDF (As per crop)	735.11	316.11
T ₃ : RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Gypsum based)	1105.41	429.65
T ₄ : RDF+ Grade-I(b) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Bentonite based)	1013.60	387.58
T ₅ : RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Gypsum based)	1081.37	425.32
T ₆ : RDF+ Grade-II (a) @ 0.5&1% (Chelation with EDTA)	761.47	325.48
T ₇ : RDF+ Grade-II (b) @ 0.5&1% (Chelation with glycine)	905.02	329.42
T ₈ : RDF+ Grade-II (c) 0.5&1% (Chelation with EDTA)	1003.54	382.11
T ₉ : RDF+ Grade-II (d) 0.5&1% (Chelation with citric acid)	961.15	335.48
T ₁₀ :RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-II (e) @0.5&1% with EDTA)	981.38	371.88
SE±	23.46	9.23
CD at 5%	69.70	27.43

Effect of different micronutrient grade on quality of French bean

Protein content

French bean protein content was extent from 19.75 to 22.73%. The highest protein content was recorded at treatment T₃ which involving RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based), resulting in 22.73%. The treatment T₃ was found to be at par with the treatment T₅-RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based), resulting in 22.67% and T₄, which includes RDF+ Grade-I(b) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Bentonite based), with a protein content of 22.63%. Whereas, the lowest protein content was recorded in the absolute control treatment (T₁) with value 19.75%. The increase in protein content might be due to iron and zinc are two important elements in enzyme structure involved in amino acid biosynthesis and because amino acids are base of protein synthesis and thereby protein content increases in case of these micronutrients. Also, the nitrogen fertilizer in a plant is mainly in its presence in the nucleic acid protein structure. In addition, nitrogen is also found in the chlorophyll molecule. Chlorophyll enables a plant to transfer energy from sunlight by photosynthesis to assimilate. The current findings are consistent with Zahida *et al.* (2016) [29], Borang and Sharma (2020) [8],

Bhamare *et al.* (2018) [7] and Mahadule *et al.* (2020) [18].

Test weight

The good impact of RDF and different micronutrient grades on test weight of french bean was observed which extent from 14.62 to 16.79 g. The highest test weight of french bean seeds was recorded in treatment T₃ receiving RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) with value 16.79 g. The treatment T₃ was followed by treatment T₅: RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) with test weight of 16.58 g and T₄, which included RDF+ Grade-I (b) @ 25 kg ha⁻¹ (Bentonite based), with test weight of 16.25 g. Whereas, the lowest test weight was recorded in the absolute control treatment (T₁) with value 14.62 g. Further, results showed that the increase in test weight in study of french bean due to utilisation of micronutrient grades fertilizers and RDF in crop. The improvement in test weight of french bean seeds may be due to boron, which affects cell division, carbohydrate metabolism, sugar and starch formation, which increase the size and weight of the seeds. The present results have been corroborated with findings of Zahida *et al.* (2016) [29], Reddy *et al.* (2023) [22], Senapati *et al.* (2022) [24] and Shubhashree *et al.* (2011) [26].

Table 5: Effect of different micronutrient grades on protein content and test weight of French bean seeds

Treatment details	Protein content (%)	Test weight (gm)
T ₁ : Absolute control	19.75	14.62
T ₂ : RDF (As per crop)	19.94	14.79
T ₃ : RDF+ Grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Gypsum based)	22.73	16.79
T ₄ : RDF+ Grade-I(b) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Bentonite based)	22.63	16.25
T ₅ : RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha ⁻¹ (Gypsum based)	22.67	16.58
T ₆ : RDF+ Grade-II (a) @ 0.5&1% (Chelation with EDTA)	20.06	15.15
T ₇ : RDF+ Grade-II (b) @ 0.5&1% (Chelation with glycine)	20.15	15.16
T ₈ : RDF+ Grade-II (c) 0.5&1% (Chelation with EDTA)	20.35	15.48
T ₉ : RDF+ Grade-II (d) 0.5&1% (Chelation with citric acid)	20.10	15.38
T ₁₀ : RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-II (e) @0.5&1% (Chelation with EDTA)	20.29	15.50
SE ±	0.57	0.37
CD at 5%	1.70	1.10

4. Conclusion

Considering the above results it may be concluded that, soil application of RDF along with micronutrient grade-I (a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based) was produced the taller plants, highest number of pods plant⁻¹, chlorophyll content. Quality parameters *i.e.* protein content and test weight were, grain and straw yield significantly enhanced by the application of same treatment. Application of treatment T₃ [RDF+ Grade-I(a) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based)] resulted in the maximum seed and straw yields of french bean, closely followed by treatment T₅ [RDF+ Govt. notified Grade-I (c) @ 25kg ha⁻¹ (Gypsum based)] than the other treatments.

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