**Bio-efficacy studies of Budmaker in relation to growth, yield and shelf-life of Thompson Seedless grape under multilocation**

**Abstract**

Application biostimulants is an innovative method to improve vine growth, quality and ultimately the final yield. Present research was conducted in two locations (at the farm of ICAR-National Research Centre for Grapes, Pune and at farmers field at Rahata in Ahmednagar of Maharashtra) during the year 2023-24 with the objective to assess the effects of bio-efficacy studies on growth, yield and quality of Thompson Seedless grapes. Budmaker were sprayed at three different stages (first at 1st leaf after sub-cane, second at 3rd and 4th leaf after sub-cane and third at 6th and 7th leaf after sub-cane) with different concentration (400,500 and 750 ml/acre). Among the different treatments, application of 500 ml/acre exhibited a significant increase in vegetative growth parameters such as pruned biomass (kg/vine), % fruitfulness, early cane maturity, yield parameters such as average bunch weight, 50 berry weight, yield/vine, berry length and diameter and chlorophyll content. Biochemical and nutrient content such as phenol (mg/g), protein (mg/g), reducing sugar (mg/g), calcium (%), phosphorus (%) were also estimated. The result revealed that the application of bio stimulant *i.e*., Budmaker found suitable to improve the yield and quality parameter of grapes cv. Thompson Seedless under multilocation trial.

**Keywords:** Budmaker, grapevine, yield, quality, shelf life

**Introduction**

Grape (*Vitis vinifera* L.) is one of most widely cultivated fruit crops, prized for their versatility and nutritional value. In India, grape cultivation plays a crucial role in the agricultural sector, supporting the production of table grapes (78%), raisins (17-20%), wine and juice (2%) as reported by Somkuwar *et al*., (2024). However, this industry is increasingly challenged by a range of abiotic stresses, including drought, salinity, excessive rainfall, high temperatures, intense solar radiation, and rising atmospheric CO2 levels. These factors, largely affected by global warming, are posing significant threats to sustainable grape production. Abiotic factors influence synthesis and breakdown of primary metabolites (such as sugars, amino acids, and organic acids) and secondary metabolites (including phenolic compounds, volatile aroma compounds and their precursors) (Bulgari *et al*. 2019). These factors also impact grapevine physiology, phenology and grape composition, ultimately affecting grape yield and quality directly or indirectly (Rao *et al*. 2016). This situation has led researchers to investigate different plant activators in the field of viticulture. Affecting plant growth, nutrition, product quality and yield positively; in order to increase the resistance of plants to abiotic stress (Rouphael, 2018; Bulgari *et al*. 2019: Yilmaz and Gazioglu 2021). Biostimulants are materials that are applied to plants from the leaves, soil or seeds (Bulgari *et al*. 2019). Grapes are amongst main crops on which bio stimulants are being used (Sharma *et al*., 2023). Biostimulants have been classified by some researchers as humic substances, amino acids and other nitrogenous compounds, seaweed and plant extracts, chitin and chitosan-like polymers, inorganic compounds, beneficial fungi and beneficial bacteria, waste, exudates and extracts of seeds, leaves and roots (Yilmaz and Gazioglu, 2021). Protein hydrolysates (PHs) are important plant biostimulants based on mixtures of peptides and amino acids mainly produced by enzymatic and/or chemical hydrolysis of proteins from animal or plant-derived raw materials (Colla *et al*., 2015). Glycine betaine (GB) is an N-trimethyl glycine derivative compound that belongs to the quaternary amines. It is found in many bacteria, plant and animal species (Monterio *et al*., 2022). It plays an adaptive role in osmoregulation and protecting the sub-cellular structures in stressed plants (Hayes *et al*., 2020). Seaweed are macroscopic multicellular algae that can be brown, red and green. They are an important source of organic matter and fertilizer nutrients (Bulgari *et al*., 2019). They are applied as foliar spray and are able to enhance plant growth, abiotic stresses tolerance, photosynthetic activity and resistance to fungi, bacteria and virus, improving yield and productivity of several crops (Norrie *et al*., 2006; Sharma *et al*., 2014). Seaweeds used for bio stimulant production contain cytokinins and auxins or other hormone-like substances (Hamza, 2001). For a plant activator to be called a bio stimulant, the product must also be effective against abiotic stress conditions on the plant (Bulgari *et al*., 2019). Considering this a study was conducted to know the effect of Budmaker on yield and quality of Thompson Seedless grapes uner multilocations.

**Material and Methods**

**Experimental conditions**

The experimental trials were carried out at two different locations (at ICAR-National Research Centre for Grapes in Pune (18°32ʹN and 73°51ʹE) and farmer’s plots at Rahata (19°42ʹN and 74°28ʹE) in Ahmednagar of Maharashtra) during the year 2023-24. The grape variety Thompson Seedless was selected for the study in both locations. The experiment was laid out in RBD design with four treatments of five replications, each replication comprised of five vines. The vines were pruned twice in a year in both the locations. First pruning was done during mid-last week of April 2023 (foundation pruning) while the second pruning during mid-last week of October 2023 (forward pruning). The treatments imposed during experiment are T1: control, T2: foliar application of Budmaker @400 ml/acre, T3: foliar application of Budmaker @500 ml/acre and T4: foliar application of Budmaker @750 ml/acre. The Budmaker was applied at three different stages (at 1st leaf after sub-cane, second at 3rd and 4th leaf after sub-cane and third at 6th and 7th leaf after sub-cane). Budmaker was applied as foliar spray, water volume used was based on the canopy size (250 to 400 L/acre).

**Growth parameters**

The length of the shoots was measured from 1st node during 120 days after fruit pruning and expressed in centimetre. Shoot diameter of the matured cane was measured between fifth and sixth node with Vernier calliper for five cane per vine at 120 days after pruning (foundation pruning) from five vines and their mean was expressed in mm. Leaf area was measured by linear method (LBK method) expressed in cm2 (Ghule *et al*., 2019). The mathematical relationship for calculation was given as follows: Leaf area (A) = L x B x K (0.810). Pruned biomass was collected from each vine immediately after pruning and weight of biomass was recorded using weighing balance and mean was calculated and expressed in kg/vine. The percentage of fruitful canes was computed from number of canes and number of fruitful canes. Days taken for cane maturity was calculated from the date of foundation pruning to the cane maturity for individual vine and mean was calculated.

**Bunch and yield parameters**

The total number of bunches were counted from five vines in each treatment and mean number of bunches per vine was calculated after berry set. The total number of berries were counted from five bunches in each treatment and mean number of berries per bunch was calculated. The mean weight of the bunch was recorded by averaging the weight of 10 bunches from five vines selectedrandomly at harvest. This was expressed in grams. The berries form five vines were collected randomly during harvesting. The mean weight of the berry was derived by averaging the weight of 50 berries and was expressed in grams. The grapes were harvested after attaining the maturity (TSS and acidity). The yield was recorded at the time of harvest and expressed in kg.

**Berry quality parameters**

Ten berries were randomly selected from each replication and berry length and berry diameter (mm) were measured using Vernier Caliper. Randomly selected berries were taken for juice extraction and total soluble solids in the juice were determined using hand refractometer. The TSS was measured in degree brix (°Brix). Total titratable acidity was determined by titrating the berry juice with 0.1 N NaOH and was expressed in %.

**Biochemical parameter**

Chlorophyll content in leaves was estimated using Dimethyl sulfoxide (DMSO) method. Phenol was estimated by Folin-Ciocalteu as suggested by Singleton and Rossi, (1965) and expressed in mg/g. Fruit soluble protein content at harvest was estimated as per the method suggested by Lowry *et al.* (1951) and expressed as milligram per gram of fresh weight (mg/g).The percentage of reducing sugars in the grape berries was determined by Dinitro-Salicylic acid (DNSA) method as suggested by Miller (1972). A known volume of alcohol extract was taken and allowed to evaporate the alcohol completely. Clear solution was taken for estimation of reducing sugar-using DNSA-reagent by following above method and results were expressed in percentage. The diacid extract was used for the calcium (ppm) determination. It was determined by using neutral normal ammonium acetate method. The digest prepared with diacid mixture was used for the determination of phosphorous content (%) from petiole samples. The phosphorus was estimated by Venadomolybdo phosphoric acid yellow color method with a Spectrophotometer as given by Jackson (1973). The intensity of the yellow color was measured on a Double Beam Spectrophotometer using wavelength 470 nm.

**Physical properties of treated grapes**

The thickness of the pedicel was measured using vernier caliper and expressed in millimeter. The skin of ten randomly selected berries was peeled off using lazar blade and skin thickness was measured by mini portable digital caliper micrometer thickness gauge and expressed in mm. To study the change in physical properties of treated grapes with advancement in storage time, physiological loss in weight (PLW) was studied as described by Sharma *et al*., (2023). Shelf-life in terms of physiological loss in weight (%) was calculated as the percentage of mass lost by the bunch from the beginning to the end of the shelf-life period. The mass of each treatment was taken on daily basis for 5 days. The PLW (%) at each interval was calculated as:

**Statistical analysis**

The data recorded from field experiment was statistically analyzed by using Randomized Block Design (RBD) as described by Panse and Sukhatme (1985).

**Result and Discussion:**

       The data recorded on growth parameters of Thompson Seedless grapes is presented in Table 1. Statistically significant variation was recorded in shoot length, shoot diameter, leaf area, pruned biomass, percent fruitful canes and days taken to cane maturity with different concentrations of Budmaker across locations. Treatment T1 showed highest shoot length (100.00 cm), shoot diameter (7.44 mm). This variation could be attributed to environmental conditions and cultivation practices (Somkuwar *et al*., 2024). The maximum leaf area) was recorded in T3 (163.83 cm2) treatment whereas lowest shoot length (82.25 cm) and minimum shoot diameter (7.05mm) was recorded in T3 which was followed by T2 and minimum leaf area in T2 (152.46 cm2) at ICAR-NRCG. The Rahata site exhibited a somewhat similar trend with distinct values. Vegetative parameters like shoot length and diameter indirectly influenced grape yield and quality. As shoot length increases, more photosynthetic products are utilized, reducing the resources available for cane development and sink growth (Somkuwar *et al*., 2024).  During October pruning, the treatment T3 recorded higher % fruitful canes (92.52%) and pruned biomass (0.62 kg) over the control treatment (73.21 % and 0.53 kg respectively). The early days to cane maturity were also achieved in treatment T3 (118.4 days) which was followed by T4 (123.0 days) whereas late cane maturity was achieved in T1 (Control) with123.0 days at ICAR-NRCG. Similar trends with different values were recorded for pruned biomass and fruitfulness but non-significant result was obtained in case of days taken to cane maturity at Rahata location. The increase in pruned biomass in Budmaker treatment over control is due to bio stimulant helps plant to uptake more Nitrogen by promoting Carbon and Nitrogen metabolism in plants (Yilmaz and Gazioglu, 2021).

**Table 1: Effect of Budmaker on growth parameters of Thompson Seedless grape.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Treatments | Foundation pruning  (90 Days) | | October pruning | | |  |
| Shoot length  (cm) | Shoot diameter (mm) | Leaf area (cm2) | Pruned biomass (kg/vine) | Fruitful canes  (%) | Days taken to cane maturity |
| Pune location | | | | | | |
| T1- Control | 100.00 | 7.44 | 155.05 | 0.53 | 73.21 | 123 |
| T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L | 90.01 | 7.28 | 152.46 | 0.55 | 79.67 | 121 |
| T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L | 82.25 | 7.05 | 163.83 | 0.62 | 92.52 | 118.4 |
| T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L | 85.50 | 7.2 | 160.5 | 0.54 | 82.85 | 119.8 |
| CD at 5% | 2.00 | 0.17 | 3.95 | 0.016 | 2.47 | 1.7 |
| Sig | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* |
| Rahata location | | | | | | |
| T1- Control | 97.50 | 7.60 | 152.00 | 0.56 | 80 | 120.99 |
| T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L | 88.00 | 7.45 | 150.10 | 0.59 | 85 | 120.5 |
| T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L | 80.10 | 7.00 | 165.10 | 0.64 | 92 | 117.61 |
| T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L | 83.40 | 7.10 | 158.60 | 0.54 | 85.4 | 118.9 |
| CD at 5% | **1.96** | **0.18** | **4.06** | **0.02** | **2.34** | **2.74** |
| Sig | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **ns** |

**Bunch and yield parameters**

The data recorded on number of bunches/vines, number of berries/bunch, average bunch weight (g), 50-berry weight and yield/vine are presented in Table 2. It was observed that application of Budmaker had no significant effect on number of bunches per vine across location while, the number of berries/bunch had non-significant effect at Rahata location. This was mainly due to the fact that the fruit bud differentiation was already been completed during the period of 40 to 70 days after foundation pruning. In addition, considering the quality yield for export purpose, bunch thinning is also done after berry set. Similarly, no significant difference in number of bunches per vine were reported by Sharma *et al*., (2023). The treatment T3 significantly showed highest average bunch weight (446.56 g), 50-berry weight (204.88 g) and yield/vine (15.10 kg) followed by T4 (415.60 g, 185.14 g, 13.79 kg respectively) over the control treatment T1 (351.26 g, 144.80 g, 12.00 kg respectively). The increase in yield was primarily attributed to the larger size and heavier weight of the bunches and berries, likely enhancing the efficiency of carbon assimilation through photosynthesis and protein synthesis due to the application of bio stimulants Deshmukh *et al*., (2023). The greatest increase in berry and bunch weight was also reported by Secco *et al*. (2016). Use of Bio stimulant significantly increased yield over control in Thompson Seedless and Sharad Seedless as reported by Sharma *et al*., (2023) and Deshmukh *et al*. (2023). The treatment T4 recorded maximum number of berries per bunch (119.00) while minimum number of berries were recorded in T3 (114.60) at ICAR-NRCG. A more or less similar trends with different values was recorded at Rahata location. The increase in bunch and yield parameters in Budmaker might be due to stimulator ability to modify some molecular processes that allow to improve water and nutrient use efficiency of crops, stimulate plant development and counteract abiotic stresses (Van *et al*., 2017) by enhancing primary and secondary metabolism (Rao *et al*. 2016).

**Table 2: Effect of Budmaker on bunch and yield parameters of Thompson Seedless grapes**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Treatments | No of bunches/ vine | No of berries/bunch | Average bunch weight (g) | 50 berry weight (g) | Yield/vine  kg) |
| Pune location | | | | | |
| T1- Control | 34.20 | 117.60 | 351.26 | 144.80 | 12.00 |
| T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L | 33.04 | 116.00 | 372.98 | 164.46 | 12.33 |
| T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L | 33.84 | 114.60 | 446.56 | 204.88 | 15.10 |
| T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L | 33.16 | 119.00 | 415.60 | 185.14 | 13.79 |
| CD at 5% | 1.17 | 2.65 | 45.14 | 31.57 | 1.6 |
| Sig | NS | \* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* |
| Rahata location | | | | | |
| T1- Control | 33.10 | 100.00 | 450.00 | 225.02 | 14.92 |
| T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L | 32.00 | 105.00 | 500.10 | 238.16 | 17.31 |
| T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L | 34.50 | 106.29 | 540.00 | 254.40 | 18.50 |
| T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L | 35.00 | 108.00 | 535.20 | 249.41 | 17.51 |
| CD at 5% | 2.38 | 7.85 | 13.57 | 18.66 | 1.11 |
| Sig | NS | NS | \*\* | \* | \*\* |

**Berry quality parameters**

The grape quality mainly consists of berry length, berry diameter, TSS and acidity. The data recorded on grape berry quality is presented in Table 3. Use of Budmaker significantly increased berry length and berry diameter. The treatment T3 recorded highest berry length (21.12 mm) and berry diameter (18.40 mm) followed by T4 (20.05 and 18.00 mm respectively) as compared to the untreated control T1 (18.51 and 16.80 mm respectively) at ICAR-NRCG. A comparable pattern with varying values was observed at the Rahata location. In the present study, the treatment with 500 ml/L concentration proved better in term of berry diameter. The increase in berry size could be attributed to the stimulation of cell division and elongation, likely triggered by the application of bio stimulants (Warusavitharana *et al*., 2008; Deshmukh *et al*. 2023). Berry length and berry diameter together contribute for shape of berry. Our result confirms finding of Sharma *et al*. (2023) who also reported bio stimulant contribute in increasing berry length and diameter significantly over control.

Use of different concentrations of Budmaker showed non-significant variation for TSS of grape berry. However, the TSS ranged between 18.08°Brix to 18.22°Brix where control (T1) showed maximum TSS (18.22°Brix) while least in treatment T2 (18.08°Brix). Lower TSS in treated berries was reported by Norrie and Keathley (2006). The acidity ranged from 0.52 % in T1 to 0.64 % in T3 treatment at ICAR-NRCG. The acidity in grape berries was within the acceptable limit in all the treatments. Similar trends, though with different figures were noted at Rahata. At harvest non-significant effect on total soluble solids was also reported by Frioni *et al*. (2019; Sharma *et al*. (2023) and Deshmukh *et al*., (2023).

**Table 3: Effect of Budmaker on berry quality parameters of Thompson Seedless grapes**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Treatments** | **Berry length (mm)** | **Berry diameter (mm)** | **TSS (°Brix)** | **Acidity (%)** |
| **Pune location** | | | | |
| **T1- Control** | 18.51 | 16.80 | 18.22 | 0.52 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 19.16 | 17.50 | 18.08 | 0.62 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 21.12 | 18.40 | 18.12 | 0.64 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 20.05 | 18.00 | 18.20 | 0.58 |
| **CD at 5%** | **0.68** | **0.45** | **0.47** | **0.04** |
| **Sig.** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **NS** | **\*\*** |
| **Rahta location** | | | | |
| **T1- Control** | 20.00 | 18.00 | 18.00 | 0.55 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 21.50 | 18.50 | 18.40 | 0.60 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 23.60 | 20.00 | 18.80 | 0.62 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 22.80 | 19.40 | 18.50 | 0.56 |
| **CD at 5%** | **0.60** | **0.49** | **1.40** | **0.04** |
| **Sig.** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **NS** | **\*\*** |

**Chlorophyll content in leaf**

Application of Budmaker significantly increased chlorophyll content in leaves in the present study. The data recorded on chlorophyll content in leaf at 90 days after foundation and fruit pruning of grapes is presented in Table 5. Chlorophyll b content in leaf at 90 days after the foundation pruning and also at 90 days after the fruit pruning was non-significant among treatments. The treatment T3 showed highest chlorophyll a and total chlorophyll content (12.07 ug/ml and 16.18 ug/ml) while treatment T1 had least chlorophyll a content (9.82 ug/ml and 13.06 ug/ml) with the application of foliar spray of Budmaker at ICAR-NRCG. slightly different set of values but a similar trend was recorded for foundation pruning at Rahata. Except, after 90 days of fruit pruning, with the application of Budmaker the treatment T2 showed maximum chlorophyll-a (15.50 ug/ml) followed by T4 (14.10 ug/ml) compared to lowest in control T1 (12.80 ug/ml). The chlorophyll b was higher in T3 (4.10 ug/ml) compared to lowest in control T1 (2.70 ug/ml). Total chlorophyll content in grape leaf was higher in T2 (19.30 ug/ml) followed by T3 (17.60 ug/ml) while lowest in control T1 (15.50 ug/ml). The increase in chlorophyll content in Budmaker treatments might be due to increase in photosynthesis, nutrient uptake, iron and magnesium which are essential elements for chlorophyll biosynthesis. The rise in chlorophyll content resulted from a decrease in its degradation and an enhancement in chloroplast biogenesis. One of the roles of bio stimulant treatment is an increase in chlorophyll content in the treated plant has been recorded by Battacharyya, *et al*. (2015) and Sharma *et al*. (2023).

**Table 4. Effect of Budmaker on chlorophyll content in leaf of Thompson Seedless grapes**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Treatments** | **90 Days Foundation Pruning** | | | **90 Days Fruit Pruning** | | |
| **Chlorophyll a (ug/ml)** | **Chlorophyll b (ug/ml)** | **Total Chlorophyll (ug/ml)** | **Chlorophyll a (ug/ml)** | **Chlorophyll b (ug/ml)** | **Total Chlorophyll (ug/ml)** |
| **Pune location** | | | | | | |
| **T1- Control** | 9.82 | 3.24 | 13.06 | 11.44 | 2.76 | 14.20 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 10.77 | 3.71 | 14.48 | 12.55 | 2.56 | 15.12 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 12.07 | 4.12 | 16.18 | 11.69 | 3.04 | 14.73 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 11.96 | 3.91 | 15.87 | 12.21 | 2.92 | 15.13 |
| **CD @ 5%** | 1.20 | 0.75 | 1.90 | 1.09 | 0.52 | 1.36 |
| **Sig** | \*\* | **NS** | **\*** | **NS** | **NS** | **NS** |
| **Rahta location** | | | | | | |
| **T1- Control** | 9.00 | 3.80 | 12.80 | 12.80 | 2.70 | 15.50 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 11.50 | 4.60 | 16.10 | 15.50 | 3.80 | 19.30 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 13.20 | 5.10 | 18.30 | 13.50 | 4.10 | 17.60 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 12.00 | 4.00 | 16.00 | 14.10 | 3.00 | 17.10 |
| **CD @ 5%** | 0.37 | 1.00 | 1.17 | 0.33 | 0.12 | 0.74 |
| **Sig** | \*\* | **NS** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** |

**Biochemical contents in grape berries**

The data recorded on biochemical contents (phenol, protein, reducing sugar, calcium and phosphorus) is presented in Table 5. Statistically significant variation was found in phenol, protein, reducing sugar, calcium and phosphorous % at full bloom and veraison stage of berry development except at ICAR-NRCG non-significant difference was recorded in phosphorous content. Phenolic compounds constitute one of the most important groups of plant metabolites, as they participate in a multitude of physiological processes (Martínez-Lorente *et al*. 2024). Phenol was relatively higher in T3 (0.52 mg/g) while it was lowest in T1 (0.36 mg/g) treatment. The application of bio stimulant has been found to increase phenolic compounds in different plant parts such as fruits, leaves and roots of multiple crops (Martínez-Lorente *et al*. 2024). Similarly, treatment T3 recorded highest protein and reducing sugar (23.50 and 245.20 mg/g respectively) which followed by T4 (22.18 and 240.94 mg/g respectively) whereas T1 showed lowest protein content (18.20 mg/g) while reducing sugar was less in T2 (175.10 mg/g). The application of biostimulants provides a balance during maturity, preserves the sugar content of fruits and increases the anthocyanin and polyphenol contents (Salvi *et al*., 2015).

The maximum calcium content in grape berries was recorded in treatment T4 (33.48 ppm) followed by T2 and T3 (33.08 and 31.74 ppm) while minimum in T1 (23.72 ppm) at ICAR-NRCG. Rahata location showed a comparable trend, but with variations in the recorded values for phenol, protein and reducing sugar. However, the maximum calcium content was recorded in treatment T3 (34.00 ppm) which was followed by T4 (33.80 ppm) and T2 (32.20 ppm) while minimum calcium in T1 (24.00 ppm). The maximum phosphorous content in leaf petiole at full bloom and veraison stage was recorded in T3 (0.520 %) and T4 (0.251 %), whereas minimum phosphorous content in leaf petiole at full bloom and veraison stage was recorded in T1 (0.410 and 0.225 %). Phosphorus (%) content in leaf petiole was positively correlated with fruitful canes percent (0.880). Phosphorus is essential for plant energy transfer through the formation of ATP and other nucleotide triphosphates. It supports the synthesis of key molecules like sucrose, phospholipids, cellulose, and nucleic acids (DNA and RNA) which are crucial for cell structure and function, including protoplasm, the nucleus and cell walls. Its mobility within plants allows efficient translocation, ensuring it reaches all parts to sustain vital cellular processes (El-Boray *et al*. 2007). Nutrient absorption and assimilation from the soil are crucial for healthy plant growth as they are required for the production of essential metabolites and enzymes, as well as serving as cofactors in various physiological processes. Many researchers reported that different biostimulants can significantly improve the uptake of phosphorus (P) and calcium (Ca) in different fruit crops (Martínez-Lorente *et al*. 2024).

**Table 5: Effect of Budmaker on biochemical parameters of Thompson Seedless grapes**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Treatments** | **Phenol mg/g** | **Protein mg/g** | **Reducing sugar mg/g** | **Calcium (ppm)** | **Phosphorus (%) full bloom** | **Phosphorus (%)**  **at veraison** |
| **Pune location** | | | | | | |
| **T1- Control** | 0.36 | 18.20 | 222.00 | 23.72 | 0.419 | 0.219 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 0.49 | 22.02 | 175.10 | 33.08 | 0.503 | 0.225 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 0.52 | 23.50 | 245.20 | 31.74 | 0.531 | 0.238 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 0.46 | 22.18 | 240.94 | 33.48 | 0.497 | 0.243 |
| **CD at 5%** | **0.07** | **0.62** | **6.22** | **3.05** | **0.09** | **0.04** |
| **Sig** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **NS** | **NS** |
| **Rahta location** | | | | | | |
| **T1- Control** | 0.40 | 19.00 | 230.00 | 24.00 | 0.410 | 0.225 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 0.54 | 22.60 | 180.00 | 32.20 | 0.500 | 0.230 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 0.56 | 24.00 | 248.00 | 34.00 | 0.520 | 0.245 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 0.51 | 23.10 | 244.10 | 33.80 | 0.495 | 0.251 |
| **CD at 5%** | **0.02** | **0.62** | **6.33** | **1.41** | **0.013** | **0.005** |
| **Sig** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** |

**Shelf life**

              The data on shelf life of grapes, in terms of PLW (%) during storage at room temperature is presented in Table 6. In all the treatments, the PLW (%) increased with the advancement in storage duration. The minimum physiological loss in weight (%) was recorded in treatment T3 from 1st day (1.23 %), 2nd day (2.39 %), 3rd day (3.03 %), 4th day (3.26 %) and 5th day (5.00 %). The physiological loss in weight (%) in grape berries of control treatment increased rapidly from1st day (1.54 %), 2nd day (2.82 %), 3rd day (3.70 %), 4th day (4.19 %) and 5th day (6.12 %) at ICAR-NRCG. At Rahata, the trends were similar, but the values varied. The data recorded on pedicel thickness and skin thickness of fresh grape berries is presented in Table 7. Pedicel thickness was relatively higher in T3 (0.544 mm) while it was lowest in T1 (0.420 mm) treatment. The treatment T4 recorded maximum skin thickness (0.247 mm) while it was minimum in T1 (0.183 mm) treatment at Pune location. A trend of a similar nature, though with fluctuating values was seen at Rahata. However, the maximum pedicel and skin thickness contribute in increasing storability of grape bunch. Similarly, Deshmukh *et al*. (2023) also reported maximum skin thickness in bio stimulant treated vines lead to increase in storage life of grapes compared to untreated ones. The application of bio stimulants may activate various lipid peroxidation processes and defense-related enzymes, which contribute to preserving the firmness of grape berries. This also helps reduce fruit drop, minimize physiological weight loss, and prevent berry decay during storage (Liu *et al*., 2016; Zaharah *et al*., 2012; Deshmukh *et al*., 2023; Sharma *et al*., 2023).

**Table 6: Effect of Budmaker on physiological loss in weight (%) of Thompson Seedless grapes**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Treatments** | **Physiological loss in weight (%)** | | | | |
| **1 day** | **2 day** | **3 day** | **4 day** | **5 day** |
| **Pune location** | | | | | |
| **T1- Control** | 1.54 | 2.82 | 3.70 | 4.19 | 6.12 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 1.46 | 2.55 | 3.59 | 4.00 | 5.67 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 1.23 | 2.39 | 3.03 | 3.26 | 5.00 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 1.36 | 2.50 | 3.34 | 3.85 | 5.12 |
| **Rahta location** | | | | | |
| **T1- Control** | 1.85 | 3.13 | 3.86 | 4.51 | 6.29 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 1.59 | 2.96 | 3.83 | 4.14 | 5.97 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 1.28 | 2.73 | 3.26 | 3.49 | 5.22 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 1.48 | 2.78 | 3.59 | 4.11 | 5.28 |

**Table 7: Effect of Budmaker on pedicel thickness (mm) and skin thickness (mm) of Thompson Seedless grapes**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Treatments** | **Pune location** | | **Rahta location** | |
| **Pedicel thickness (mm)** | **Skin thickness (mm)** | **Pedicel thickness (mm)** | **Skin thickness (mm)** |
| **T1- Control** | 0.420 | 0.183 | 0.410 | 0.195 |
| **T2- Budmaker @ 400 ml/L** | 0.506 | 0.199 | 0.450 | 0.200 |
| **T3- Budmaker @ 500 ml/L** | 0.544 | 0.223 | 0.535 | 0.250 |
| **T4- Budmaker @ 750 ml/L** | 0.456 | 0.247 | 0.500 | 0.235 |
| **CD at 5%** | 0.09 | 0.04 | 0.011 | 0.006 |
| **Sig** | **\*** | **\*** | **\*\*** | **\*\*** |

**Conclusion:**

A multilocation trial was conducted in Thompson Seedless for bio efficiency studies of Budmaker during 2023-24. Different doses of Budmaker were applied through sprays and compared with untreated control. All the treatments of Budmaker significantly increased fruit bud differentiation, early cane maturity, grape yield, and berry quality parameters as well as shelf life as compared to untreated control. In both the locations, among the different treatments of Budmaker, the treatment T3 i.e., application of 500 ml/L Budmaker through foliar spray (after sub cane-emergence of 1st leaf, after emergence of 3rd and 4th leaf and after 6th and 7th leaf emergence) showed better performance for fruitfulness, bunch, berry quality parameters as well as shelf-life, however as a result it also improved the final yield of the vines. Therefore, the foliar spray of Budmaker with its higher concentration at all the three different stages could be suggested to improve the quality and yield of grapevine.

**COMPETING INTERESTS DISCLAIMER:**

Authors have declared that they have no known competing financial interests OR non-financial interests OR personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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