

Research
Paper

Effect of drip irrigation levels on onion seed production

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ABSTRACT

An experiment was carried out during the *Rabi* seasons of 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 to study the effect of drip irrigation treatments on seed production of onion (*Allium cepa* L.) at Vegetable Research Station, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh. The treatments comprised of total thirteen treatments of drip irrigation including surface irrigation. The drip irrigation was applied on four different periods of schedules (daily, three days once, seven day once and ten days once) on the basis of three pan evaporation levels (75, 100 and 125 % of pan evaporation). Results revealed that significantly the highest seed yield of 6.52, 6.19, 5.93 and 6.21 q ha⁻¹ were recorded with the drip irrigation schedule at daily on the basis of 75 per cent pan evaporation during 2007-08, 2008-09, 2009-10 and in pooled, respectively. However, pooled result showed that there was no significant difference between drip irrigation schedule at 75 per cent pan evaporation on daily and 100 per cent pan evaporation application on daily. The maximum net returns of 128795 Rs. ha⁻¹ was recorded by the treatment of drip irrigation scheduling at daily on basis of 75 per cent pan evaporation level, while the highest benefit cost ratio of 1: 3.78 was recorded by the surface irrigation.

Dudhat, M.S. and Asodaria, K.B. (2011). Effect of drip irrigation levels on onion seed production, *Adv. Res. J. Crop Improv.*, 2 (2) : 232-234.

KEY WORDS : Onion crop, Drip irrigation schedules, Pan evaporation levels, Seed yield, Economics

Onion (*Allium cepa* L.) is an allogamous vegetable crop of global importance. It is popularly used both in immature and mature bulb stage as a vegetable and a spice. Onion is a biennial crop for the purpose of seed production. In one season, bulbs are produced from seed and in the second season bulbs are replanted to produce seed. Onion seeds are poor in keeping quality and lose viability within a year (Shukla *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, it is essential to produce fresh seed for bulb production every year. The national onion bulb productivity is only 10.6 tones ha⁻¹ which is lower than the world productivity (17.46 tones ha⁻¹) (Tomar *et al.*, 2005). The low productivity is attributed to limited availability of quality seed of high yielding varieties and hybrids and lack of optimum production technologies. This can be possible by adopting different improved production technologies including drip irrigation method. Among these, drip irrigation method play an important role in increasing seed production per unit area. Judicious use of water under drip irrigation regimes would substantially increase the seed yield. The information of the drip irrigation levels for onion seed production is meagre for Saurashtra region of Gujarat. Hence, the present experiment was carried out.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

A field experiment was conducted during the *Rabi* seasons of the year 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 at Vegetable Research Station, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh. The soil of the experiment site was medium black in texture, low in available nitrogen, high in available phosphorus and medium in available potash with pH of 8.20. The treatments comprised of total thirteen treatments of drip irrigation including surface irrigation were tested in Randomized Block Design with three replications. The drip irrigation was applied at four different schedules (daily, 3 days once, 7 days once and 10 days once) on the basis of pan evaporation (PE) of three levels of percentages (75, 100 and 125 % of PE). The bulbs were planted at 30 cm (within row) x 45 cm (between two row) x 135 cm (lateral) spacing in raised bed paired row planting system. The inline drip (4 LPH at 50 cm) was placed at 1.35m spacing in raised bed paired. The bulbs were planted on November 22, 2007, October 10, 2008 and October 12, 2009 during the respective experimental year. The common full dose of phosphorus, potash and half dose of nitrogen was applied as basal dose, while remaining half dose of nitrogen was applied as