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Effect of Foliar Applied Boron Application on Growth, Yield and Quality of Maize (Zea mays L.)

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(received April 7, 2011; revised December 17, 2011; accepted January 9, 2012)

Abstract. A field study was carried out to evaluate the effect of foliar applied boron application on growth, yield and quality of maize (*Zea mays* L.). Foliar application of boron was carried out after 20 days of crop emergence at 0, 0.15, 0.30 and 0.45 kg of B/ha. Boron application at 0.30 kg/ha increased the plant height, leaf area, stem diameter, cob weight, number of grains per cob, protein and oil contents. The maximum grain yield (7.14 tons/ha) and biological yield (527.4 tons/ha) was recorded in B₂ where application of boron was carried out at 0.30 kg/ha, however, further increase in boron dose decreased the yields.

Keywords: maize, hybrid, boron, foliar spray, cereal, micronutrient

Diversity Analysis of Marigolds – *Tagetes* (Asteraceae)

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(received December 2, 2011; revised September 6, 2012; accepted September 13, 2012)

Abstract. Characterization of 20 *Tagetes* cultivars was achieved using morphological and anatomical markers. *Tagetes erecta* 'Maurel orange' (E4) was the most vigorous compared with other genotypes and produced large flowers with high quality and quantity. An anatomical study of leaf secretory cavities differentiated between the cultivars and revealed that foliar secretory cavities were larger and more abundant in *T. erecta* cultivars than in *T. patula* cultivars. The size of oil glands also differed in each cultivar. From this study it is concluded that *T. erecta* cultivars especially *T. erecta* 'Maurel orange' appeared as more promising one to cultivate and more appropriate to be selected as the parental genotype in the hybridization processes for obtaining new varieties and cultivars. It is concluded that different marker systems (morphological, and anatomical) are appropriate to differentiate between the cultivars of Tagetes.

Keywords: marigold, Tagetes erecta, Tagetes patula, morphological traits, cultivars, diversity

A Study of Poisonous Plants of Islamabad Area, Pakistan

Saleem Ahmad

Pakistan Museum of Natural History, Garden Avenue, Islamabad, Pakistan

(received June 15, 2010; revised October 1, 2012; accepted October 8, 2012)

Abstract. Poisonous plants growing wild and cultivated in Islamabad area were studied. A total of 45 taxa belonging to 30 families are reported here from the study area. These include 6 trees, 12 shrubs and 27 herbs. Twenty species are found wild in the area, another 20 species are cultivated, while 5 species are found both cultivated and naturally occurring. Besides taxonomic details, poisonous parts, chemical constituents responsible for poisoning, and the human specific physiological effects of poisoning in relation to each plant are presented in a tabular format. The harm caused by these poisonous plants is often not serious, and is primarily restricted to gastrointestinal irritation or mild nervous system effects, that is curable. However, there have been cases of death resulting from the consumption of parts of highly poisonous plants in the area.

Keywords: poisonous plants, vegetation taxonomy, environment, Islamabad

Effects of *Passiflora foetida* Linn. (Passifloraceae) on Genital Tract, Serum Estradiol, Pituitary Gonadotropin and Prolactin Level in Female Adult and Immature Ovariectomized Rats

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(received August 26, 2011; revised August 6, 2012; accepted September 4, 2012)

Abstract. The effects of the extracts of *Passiflora foetida* on the genital tract, serum estradiol, pituitary gonadotropin (LH and FSH) and prolactin were studied in female adult (120-140 g) and immature ovariectomized (30-40 g) rats. Results showed that the aqueous extract increased significantly both the ovary and uterus weight whereas the hexane extract increased the weight of the ovary only and the methanol extract increased the weight of uterus only. Histological examination of these organs indicated that *P. foetida* treated rats were in estrous or proestrous phases of the estrous cycle. The hormone analysis showed that the serum LH was significantly increased by 17β estradiol and by the three extracts dose dependently in immature ovariectomized rats. Moreover, the aqueous extract increased significantly serum estradiol and pituitary gonadotropins and prolactin in adult non ovariectomized rats.

Keywords: Passiflora foetida, ovary, uterus, estradiol, gonadotropins, prolactin

Growth Performance of Juvenile Milkfish *Chanos chanos* (Forskal) on Replacement of Fish Meal with Plant Based Diet Supplemented with Dietary Cell Bound Phytase of *Pichia anomala*

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(received January 23, 2012; revised August 29, 2012; accepted September 26, 2012)

Abstract. Results of feeding trials on juvenile milkfish with seven types of fish meal and soybean meal based diets distinctly indicated better results with fish meal based diet. Nevertheless, soybean based diet supplemented with different levels of cell bound phytase from *Pichia anomala* produced better growth performance than the soybean based diet without supplementation of phytase. The observations clearly suggested that milkfish would not show normal growth with plant based diet without phytase supplementation. Among the three concentrations of cell bound phytase of *P. anomala* used in this investigation, 1000 FTU/kg supplementation with plant based diets appeared to be favourable for the growth and survival of milkfish. The results of feed conversion efficiency, weight gain, condition factor, specific growth rate, protein efficiency ratio and survival rate at 1000 FTU/kg of phytase supplementation in soybean meal showed values comparable with the controlled diet. The biochemical profiles of the fish fed first, second, third and sixth diets were similar as compared to the fish fed fourth, fifth and seventh diets. It is suggested that commercial farming of milkfish can be practiced with soybean based diet with microbial phytase supplementation.

Keywords: fish nutrition, soybean meal, cell bound phytase, Chanos chanos, Pichia anomala

Detoxification of Aflatoxin B1 in Poultry and Fish Feed by Various Chemicals

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(received February 22, 2012; revised June 20, 2012; accepted July 13, 2012)

Abstract. In this study various poultry and fish feed samples were initially analyzed for presence of aflatoxin. All the samples were found contaminated with aflatoxin B1 only. Contaminated samples were treated with different organic and inorganic chemicals to detoxify aflatoxin B1 in poultry and fish feed samples. The maximum reduction in the aflatoxin B1 concentration was observed with 0.5% HCl as 14.20 ppb to 2.09 ppb (86.50%) in the poultry and 69.26 ppb to 10.46 ppb (84.89%) in fish feed samples.

Keywords: aflatoxin, detoxification, chemicals, thin layer chromatography

Qualitative Assessment of Bacteria and Fungi in the Indoor Environment of Hospitals of Islamabad, Pakistan

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(received October 31, 2011; revised June 29, 2012; accepted August 10, 2012)

Abstract. This study was conducted to determine the health risks in the indoor air of the four government hospitals of the Islamabad city, Pakistan. Four different main wards, i.e., general male/female surgical wards, children's ward and microbiology laboratory were included. The sampling was done in the summer season due to the possibility of maximum recovery of microorganisms. Results showed presence of bacterial and fungal pathogens in the air of hospitals especially in surgical wards of all hospitals. Lowest bacterial counts were recorded in microbiology laboratory. Among bacterial isolates *Micrococcus* and *Staphylococcus aureus* were abundantly found in all hospitals as 22.09 % & 21.2 %, respectively followed by gram negative group of bacteria i.e, *Enterobacteriaceae* spp. (*Escherichia coli*), *Pseudomonas* spp. were found to be lowest as 6.5 % of the total bacterial load in all hospitals. Among the fungi *Aspergillus* (*fumigatus*, *niger*, *flavus*) recovery was the most in the environment of all hospitals with the value of 27.7 % and *Tricosporon* was observed lowest with the value of 1.15 %. p- value for total microbial load among the hospitals sampled was not significant.

Keywords: bacteria, fungi, hospitals, indoor air.

Short Communication

Effects of Some Oral Hypoglycaemic Drugs on Erythrocyte Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide Hydrogen Diaphorase (E.C.1.6.4.3) Activity of Wistar Albino Rats (*Rattus rattus*)

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(received April 9, 2011; revised April 25, 2012; accepted May 2, 2012)

Abstract. The *in vivo* effects of three oral hypoglycaemic drugs, daonil (a glubenclanude), diabenes (a sulphonylurea) and glucophage (a metformun) on erythrocyte nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide hydrogen (NADH) activity of Wistar albino rats (*Rattus rattus*) were monitored at drug concentrations of 0.00, 0.01, 0.02 and 0.03 mg/200 g body weight. The effects of the drugs were monitored at a pH 8.0 and 37 °C for 14 days at intervals of 1, 2, 6 and 14 day(s) following administration of each drug. Three rats were used per each drug concentration per time interval (days). Daonil significantly (P<0.05) activated NADH-diaphorase activity in a concentration dependent manner with an optimal activation (11.44 \pm 0.82) obtained at a concentration of 0.03 mg/200 g body weight and on the sixth day of drug administration. The increase in enzyme activity following drug administration was progressive with time duration (days); maximum effect was obtained on the 6th day with a decline on the 14th day. At 0.03 mg/200 g body weight, NADH activities (iu/L) of 20.53 \pm 0.57 were obtained on the 6th day with glucophage. Comparatively, the activation of the erythrocyte enzyme by the drug (on the 6th day of administration) was in the order: Glucophage >Daonil>Diabenese. Diabenese had no significant effect.

Keywords: daonil, diabenese, glucophage, erythrocyte, NADH, hypoglycaemia

Short Communication

Assessment of Selected Quality Attributes of Jam Formulated from Baobab-Hogplum Fruits

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(received November 10, 2011; revised May 18, 2012; accepted August 15, 2012)

Abstract. In this study, possibility of making jam from two underutilized fruits (baobab and hogplum fruits) known to have high pectin content was investigated. This will increase their consumption and further promote the popularity of jam among rural dwellers where these crops are found. Baobab and Hogplum fruits were cleaned, sorted, weighed and their pulps were extracted in each case using a mesh. Formulation was made in different proportions (100:0, 0:100, 70:30, 30:70, and 50:50) using both fruits. Dissolved sugar and acidifying agent (lime) were added to the mixture and heated at 80 °C until it sets. Samples were stored, under refrigeration till analysis. The jam samples were analyzed for pH, total soluble solids (°Brix), titratable acidity (TTA), ascorbic acid, β -carotene and moisture content (MC). Sensory attributes of the samples were compared with a commercial jam (apricot jam (APJ).

Keywords: baobab fruit, hog plum fruit, ascorbic acid, jam, beta carotene

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