

Exploring the Interplay of Micronutrients in Enhancing Tree Mulberry Growth, Yield and Sericultural Success Across Diverse Nutrient Regimens

Devamani Mahadevaswamy*¹, Dhahira Beevi Nagoorgani² and Manoj T. S³

¹⁻³ Centre for Higher Studies in Botany and Sericulture (RSRS) (Periyar University), Vaikkalpattarai, Salem-17, Tamil Nadu, India

Received: 10 May 2024; Revised accepted: 18 Jun 2024

Abstract

A research study conducted from 2021 to 2023 at the Regional Sericultural Research Station, Salem, Tamil Nadu, investigated the effects of ten nutrient levels on the growth, yield, and quality of tree mulberry in response to challenges such as water scarcity. T₂ exhibited superior growth and yield parameters, with 33.99 branches per tree, 29.99 leaves per branch, a branch length of 145.35 cm, and leaf/stem yields of 31.21 and 19.89 mt/ha/year, respectively. T₅ showed the best results in silkworm economic parameters, including larval weight (52.83 g), cocoon weight (2.18 g), shell weight (0.53 g), shell ratio (24.19%), and filament length (1328 m). Regarding nutrient content, T₅ recorded the highest percentages of N, P, K, S, Ca and Mg (3.88, 0.29, 3.62, 0.29, 3.67, 1.0%). Additionally, sulfur content was similar in T₅ and T₂ (0.29%). Micronutrients such as Zn, Fe, Mn and B were also highest in T₅ (61.24, 148.63, 140.61, and 82.64 ppm). Nutrient uptake analysis revealed that T₂ followed by T₅ had the highest uptake of macro nutrients N, P, K, S, Ca, and Mg (260.82, 18.97, 242.17, 20.05, 250.89, and 75.33 kg/ha/year for T₂ and 237.35, 17.89, 220.65, 19.42, 218.69, and 68.31 kg/ha/year for T₅). The study revealed that T₂ and T₅ exhibited superior performance in tree mulberry plants.

Key words: V₁, Soil, Leaf nutrients, Nutrients uptake, Silkworm

Mulberry cultivation is commonly practiced in three distinct forms, bush, low-cut, and tree, each yielding varying quality outcomes due to rearing techniques [1]. The quality and yield of mulberry leaves have been impacted by changes in water availability and increasing water resource depletion, leading to a reduction in leaf quality. This situation has prompted sericulturists to adapt by reducing the size of mulberry gardens to accommodate water constraints. To address this issue, some farmers have transitioned to cultivating mulberry as small trees, optimizing limited irrigation water and minimizing labor requirements. A spacing of 6'x6' or 8'x8' or 10'x10' with tree heights of 4' to 5' is maintained, both under rainfed and irrigated conditions. This approach facilitates mechanized cultural practices, intercropping, and drip irrigation, effectively reducing labor costs while maintaining leaf quality. Notably, mulberry leaf quality from trees surpasses that of conventional gardens. To ensure the sustained production of high-quality mulberry leaves, adopting the step-up and step-down method of pruning is essential. This technique involves retaining a desired number of branches based on plant spacing, promoting proper shape and size, and creating an umbrella-like crown that exposes shoots to enhanced sunlight and aeration. Successful establishment of a productive tree mulberry garden necessitates planting saplings that are at least 8 months old. Deep-rooted mulberry varieties such as S13, S1635, MSG2, RC1, RC2, RFS175, V1, and Vishala is well-suited for this approach. Overall, the

combination of strategic pruning methods and appropriate variety selection contributes to healthy tree mulberry growth and superior leaf quality.

Mulberry trees exhibit exceptional resilience, enduring 20 days of inundation during growth a rarity among xerophytic plants. Their robust water logging tolerance during dormancy further sets them apart. In India, recent decades have witnessed environmental shifts, including erratic monsoons and altered rainfall patterns. These changes have compelled farmers to adopt strategies like reduced planting with wider spacing and improved irrigation methods (AMITs) to maintain quality and quantity of mulberry leaf yield [2]. Mulberry (*Morus* spp.) is a swiftly growing deciduous woody perennial, typically pruned to a bush or dwarf tree form [3]. Spacing and mulberry species significantly impact growth parameters. Notably, Vishwa variety under 4'x4' spacing has shown substantial yield improvement and enhanced phytochemical traits [4-5]. For feeding the Jammu SH6 × NB4D2 hybrid silkworm, the mulberry variety TR-10 both in bush and cultivated tree forms alongside a wild tree of the same age were selected. This selection was based on suitability for the Jammu region [6]. The quality and quantity of mulberry vary based on factors like nutrient supply, soil fertility, climate, and variety. Over 70% of the nutrients needed for silk protein synthesis (Sericin and fibroin) come from mulberry leaves. Leaf nutrient quality viz., crude protein (18.66%), total sugar (3.36%), starch (14.55%), crude fiber (9.32%), CHO (17.91%), moisture content

*Correspondence to: Devamani Mahadevaswamy, E-mail: devikattani@gmail.com; Tel: +91 9655198107

Citation: Mahadevaswamy D, Nagoorgani DB, Manoj TS. 2024. Exploring the interplay of micronutrients in enhancing tree mulberry growth, yield and sericultural success across diverse nutrient regimens. *Res. Jr. Agril. Sci.* 15(4): 901-907.

(76.52%), and minerals (9.35%) is higher in mulberry trees compared to low-cut and bush forms [1]. A combination of chemical and organic fertilizers, green manuring, and bio-fertilizers has been effective in maintaining consistent crop output over extended periods [7-8]. In tropical regions with abundant solar radiation, FYM decomposition is rapid, and around 80% of applied phosphorus becomes fixed in the soil.

The growth and yield parameters of mulberry, including moisture content and nutrient uptake, exhibited significant improvement when using different genotypes combined with wider spacing and the step-up method of leaf harvesting compared to closer spacing. Additionally, there was a notable increase in silkworm economic parameters, though no significant differences were observed concerning genotypes, spacing, and treatments [9-10]. In studies exploring interactions, no significant difference was found in yield and growth parameters. However, the combination of NPK 150:25:50 kg/ha/year with a spacing of 120 x 90 cm was found to be superior compared to 100:50:50 NPK with a spacing of 90 x 90 cm [11-12]. Closer spacing (60*60cm) resulted in higher leaf moisture, nitrogen uptake, and leaf and stem yield, while wider spacing yielded significantly higher values for other parameters. Notably, wider plant spacing did not favor leaf and shoot yields [13]. Hence, the current study was conducted to investigate the response of the V1 as tree mulberry to different micro-nutrient application levels with 6' x 6' plant spacings and influence on silkworm economic parameters.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted during 2021-2023 at Farmers field, Regional sericultural research station, Salem, Tamil Nadu, India, under irrigated conditions. The experiment took place in an established tree mulberry garden with 6' x 6' spacings. The research followed a Randomized Complete Block Design (RCBD) and included ten treatments with three replications each. Various growth parameters of mulberry trees were assessed, including the number of branches per tree, number of leaves per branch, shoot length, yield, and stem yield. Moisture content was also evaluated 52-60 days after fertilizer application, involving the harvesting of fresh and dry leaf and stem weights from the treated trees (10 trees per replication). Total leaf weight per crop was recorded and subsequently converted into yield per hectare per year. Soil chemical analysis was conducted using established methods: Walkley and Black's method [14] for soil organic carbon, Kjeldhal's method [15] for nitrogen, Olsen *et al.*'s method [16] for phosphorus, Jackson's method [17] for boron and Lindsay and Norvel's method [18] for micronutrient analysis. Each replication consisted of 300 larvae of the silkworm crossbreed (CB), and they were fed three times a day. Bioassays were conducted following the method described by Krishnaswami [19-20]. Data analysis employed the SPSS statistical software, utilizing the Two-way ANOVA method. The details of the treatments are as follows:

Treatment details:

- T₁: 100 % RDF (350:140:140 kg NPK/ha/year)
- T₂: 100 % RDF + 30 kg /ha/year micronutrients -soil application
- T₃: 100 % RDF + 25 kg /ha/year micronutrients -soil application
- T₄: 100 % RDF + 20 kg /ha/year micronutrients -soil application
- T₅: 100 % RDF + 0.5% micronutrients (Zn, Fe, Mn) + 0.2% Borax- foliar application
- T₆: 100 % RDF + 0.25% micronutrients (Zn, Fe, Mn) + 0.1% Borax- foliar application

- T₇: 100 % RDF + 0.7% Poshan – foliar application
- T₈: 100 % RDF + 3% Panchagavya- soil application
- T₉: 100 % RDF + 5% Panchagavya – soil application
- T₁₀: Absolute control

Micro and macro nutrients applied in mulberry garden in the form of ZnSO₄, FeSO₄, MnSO₄, Borax, Ammonium Sulphate (Nitrogen-N), Single super phosphate (Phosphorus-P), Murate of Potash (Potash-K) and Poshan purchased from CSR&TI, Mysore. Silkworm parameters calculated by using the formula as followed below:

1. Larval weight (g): The weight of the ten matured larvae were selected randomly for each replication on the 6th day of fifth instar larvae weight will be recorded and expressed in terms of grams.
2. Larval Duration (h): It depicts the larval period from hatching to onset of spinning and it includes both feeding and moulting durations.
3. Cocoon weight (g): 5th day of spinning 10 cocoons were selected randomly from each replication and record weight (g).
4. Pupal weight (g): 5th day of spinning 10 cocoons were selected randomly from each replication. Slightly cut the cocoons and take out pupae then weight(g) recorded.
5. Shell weight (g): Ten cocoons were selected randomly from each replication. Slightly cut the cocoons and remove pupae then weight(g) recorded. It was calculated by using the formula: Cocoon shell weight = Total of cocoon weight- pupal weight
6. Shell ratio (%): $Shellratio = \frac{Shell\ weight}{Cocoon\ weight} \times 100$
7. Filament Length (m): Ten cocoons were randomly selected from each batch was reeled to find out the filament length of the cocoon using eprouvette and it was determined by adopting the formula:

$$L = R \times 1.125\ m$$

Where, L = total length of filament / cocoon (m)

R = number of revolutions

1.125 = circumference of eprouvette

8. Denier (d): Weight of the 9000m silk filament is expressed as denier by using the formula:

$$Denier = \frac{weight\ of\ the\ filament\ (g)}{length\ of\ the\ filament\ (m)} \times 9000$$

9. Renditta (kg): The Renditta is expressed as the quantity or kg of green cocoons require to get a kg of raw silk.

$$Rendita = \frac{Weight\ of\ the\ cocoons}{Weight\ of\ the\ raw\ silk\ reeled}$$

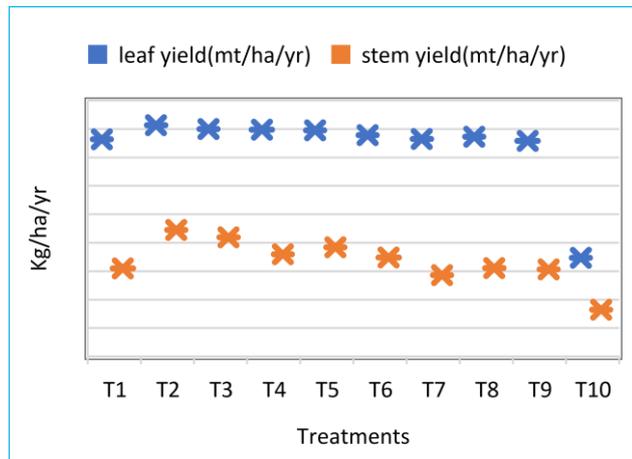
Preparation of Panchagavya

Panchagavya is an organic product that has the potential to promote plant growth and enhance immunity. To prepare Panchagavya, various ingredients are combined in specific proportions. These include fresh cow dung (7 kg), cow urine (3 liters), cow milk (2 liters), curd (2 liters), cow ghee (1 kg), sugarcane juice (3 liters), coconut water (3 liters), banana paste made from 12 fruits, and water (10 liters). The ingredients are mixed in a plastic drum placed in a shaded area and covered with a wire mesh to prevent houseflies from laying eggs. The mixture is stirred thirty times in a clockwise and counter clockwise direction, twice daily. After 18-20 days, the Panchagavya stock solution is ready for use. The prepared Panchagavya stock solution can be applied to the soil at 3% and 5% concentrations for soil application.

Poshan (0.7%): CSRTI, Mysuru has developed a foliar spray with a balanced multi-nutrient formulation for healthy mulberry growth and silkworm nutrition. A single spray is recommended 25-30 days after pruning/picking to address nutrient.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Mulberry cultivating as a large/dwarf tree with the spacing of 6' x 6' or 8' x 8' or 10' x 10' are better suitable plants for conservation of water and soil with small land/area, reduction in runoff during flooding can be up to 10–20% [21]



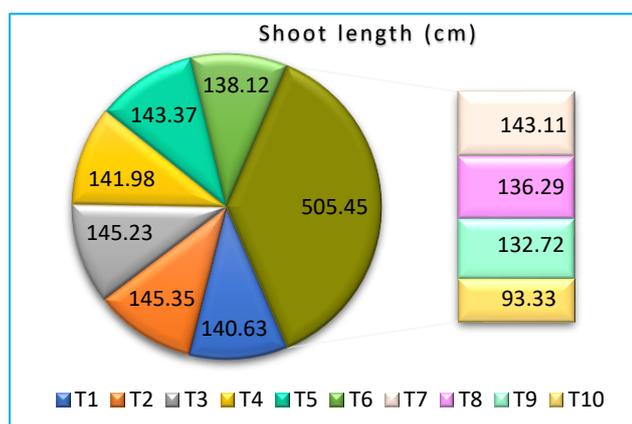
Graph 1 Micronutrients influence on tree mulberry leaf and stem yield

Leaf and stem yield

In terms of treatments, T₂ demonstrated significantly higher leaf yield (36.88 mt/ha/year) and stem yield (19.89 mt/ha/ year), followed by T₃ (36.21 and 18.61 mt/ha/ year). Conversely, leaf and stem yield were lower in T₁₀ (17.37 and 10.87 mt/ha/ year) (Graph 1). These observations related to spacing echo the findings of Santhoskumar Magadum *et al.* [24], Vinodkumar *et al.* [25]. No noteworthy differences were noted among treatments regarding leaf and stem yield, in line with the results of Das *et al.* [11], Bongale [13] (Graph 1).

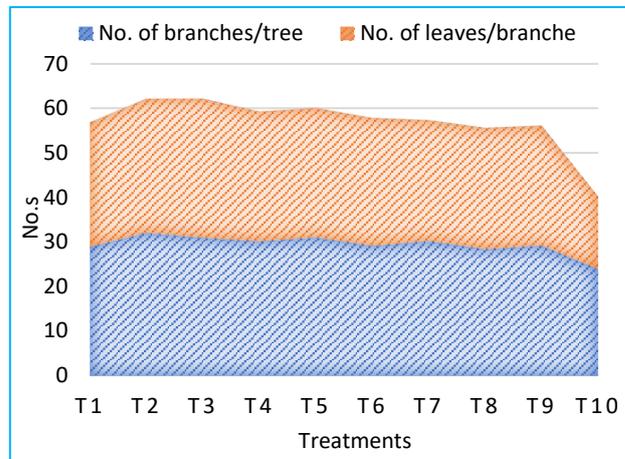
Growth parameters

Among various nutrient levels, T₂ followed by T₃ exhibited significantly higher values for the number of branches per tree (33.99, 33.15), branch length (145.35, 143.37 cm), and leaves per branch (30.10, 29.98), respectively. These results were comparable to other treatments except T₁₀, where growth parameters were comparatively lower (23.90, 119.30 cm, and 21.37). These observations align with the studies conducted by Magadum *et al.* [2], Vinodkumar *et al.* [24], emphasizing the impact of spacing on growth. Interactions among treatments did not yield significant differences in the number of branches per tree, branch length, and leaves per branch, consistent with the findings of Das *et al.* [11], Bongale [13] (Graph 2-3).



Graph 3 Micronutrients influence on tree mulberry shoot length (cm)

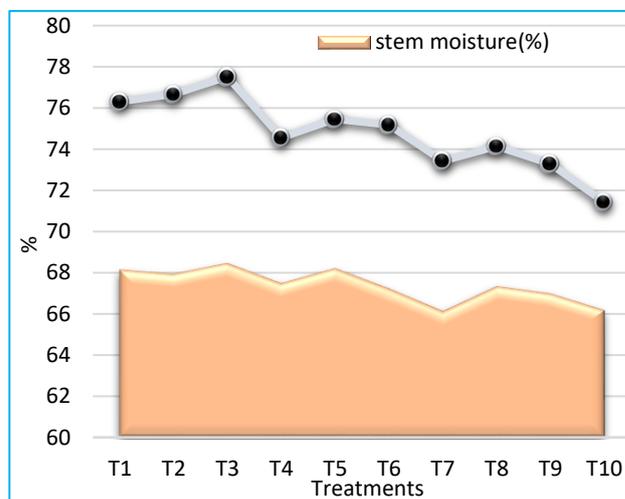
with a crown height of 5' to 6' from the ground level and stem girth of 4 to 5 inches referred to tree mulberry [12], [22]. 3' and 3.5' stump height was the most followed by the farmers as it facilitates them harvesting leaves/shoots and pruning with ease, despite, a study states that 1' to 1.5' stump height is convenient for cultural operations [23].



Graph 2 Micronutrients influence on tree mulberry number of branches per tree and leaves per branch

Leaf and stem moisture

Regarding various nutrient levels, T₃ followed by T₂ registered slightly elevated leaf and stem moisture (77.51%, 76.66% and 68.42%, 68.17%), aligning with all other treatments (Graph 4). No significant distinctions were observed among treatments regarding leaf and stem moisture percentage, in line with the findings of Murthy *et al.* [5], Das *et al.* [11], Bongale [13].



Graph 4 Micronutrients influence on tree mulberry leaf and stem moisture percentage

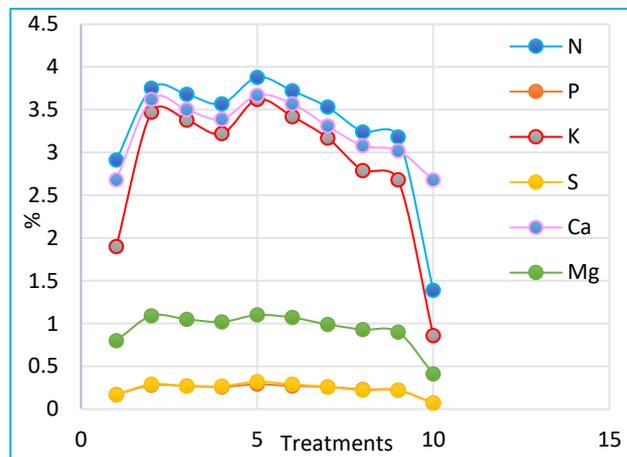
Leaf nutrient content (%)

Among the ten nutrient levels, T₅ exhibited significantly higher macro nutrient content percentages, including N, P, K, S, Ca, and Mg (3.88, 0.29, 3.62, 0.29, 3.67, 1.10%) followed by T₂ (3.75, 0.28, 3.47, 0.29, 3.62, 1.09%), with similar sulfur content in T₅ and T₂ (0.29%). Conversely, T₁₀ recorded significantly lower nutrient content percentages (1.39, 0.07, 0.86, 0.07, 3.02 and 0.41% respectively) (Graph 5). No significant differences were observed among treatments in nutrient content percentages. In terms of micronutrients such as Zn, Fe, Mn and B, T₅ recorded the highest values (61.24, 148.63, 140.61 and 82.64 ppm) followed by T₂ (58.63, 144.78,

134.04 and 75.90 ppm), while T₁₀ exhibited significantly lower values (6.36, 10.96, 12.18 and 15.72 ppm respectively) (Graph-6). Significant differences were noted among treatments in micronutrient content percentages.

Nutrient uptake (kg/ha/year)

Among the ten nutrient levels, T₂ exhibited the highest macro nutrient uptake in kilograms per hectare per year for N, P, K, S, Ca, and Mg (260.82, 18.97, 242.17, 20.05, 250.89 and 75.33 kg/ha/year) followed by T₅ (237.35, 17.89, 220.65, 19.42, 218.69 and 68.31 kg/ha/year). Similarly, micronutrient uptake including Cu, Zn, Fe, Mn, and B was highest in T₂ (42.97, 484.16, 988.05, 1206.49 and 529.86 g/ha/year) followed by T₅ (40.04, 473.39, 949.61, 1169.36 and 507.19 g/ha/year). Conversely, T₁₀ recorded significantly lower nutrient uptake (73.89, 3.54, 48.97, 3.85, 69.17, 20.75 kg/ha/year, and 36.45, 12.86, 61.85, 45.94, 90.30 g/ha/year respectively) (Table 1). No significant differences were observed among the treatments except for T₁₀ in terms of nutrient uptake (kg/ha/year).



Graph 5 Macro and secondary nutrients composition percentage in tree mulberry leaf influenced by micronutrients
N-nitrogen, P-phosphorus, K-potash, S-sulphur, Ca-calcium, Mg-magnesium

Table 1 Nutrients uptake of tree mulberry as influenced by different nutrient levels

Treatment	N	P	K	S	Ca	Mg	B	Cu	Zn	Fe	Mn
	Kg/ha/year						g/ha/year				
T ₁	149.22	8.51	99.24	8.47	137.02	41.13	209.54	27.58	85.85	161.7	98.09
T ₂	260.82	18.97	242.17	20.05	250.89	75.33	529.86	42.97	484.16	988.05	1206.49
T ₃	232.74	16.95	215.29	16.95	218.69	65.63	455.79	36.78	257.4	342.95	662.65
T ₄	225.66	16.53	204.11	16.78	214.38	64.26	434.21	37.06	258.07	344.29	630.96
T ₅	237.35	17.89	220.65	19.42	218.69	68.31	507.19	40.04	473.39	949.61	1169.36
T ₆	216.65	15.87	199.05	16.79	208.36	62.5	436.24	35.11	309.2	741.68	744.11
T ₇	199.01	14.61	179.42	14.82	185.05	55.47	378.32	32.26	214.79	307.74	488.46
T ₈	179.24	12.99	153.35	12.32	172.33	51.7	313.69	32.54	103.19	189.7	99.94
T ₉	196.44	13.57	164.83	13.29	186.82	56.11	328.19	35.46	109.44	209.98	115.95
T ₁₀	73.89	3.54	48.97	3.85	69.17	20.75	90.3	25.76	12.86	61.85	45.94

Larval weight (g)

In the experiment, T₅ exhibited the highest larval weights on the 6th day of the 5th instar, with a weight of 52.83g, followed by T₂ with 52.63g. Specifically, among the crops, the fourth crop's T₅ and T₂ treatments displayed the highest larval weights, measuring 56.50g and 56.36g respectively (Table 2). Consistent findings were reported by Sridevi *et al.* [25], Choudhury *et al.* [26], Younus *et al.* [27].

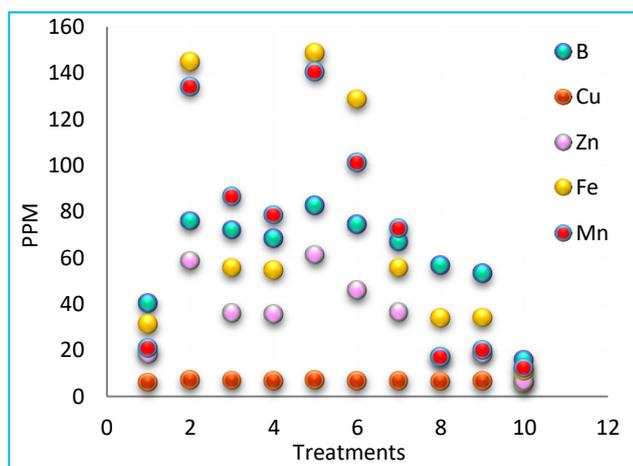
Single cocoon weight (g)

Among the ten nutrient levels tested T₅ followed by T₂ showed significantly higher values in terms of cocoon weight

measuring 2.18g and 2.19g respectively. Among the five crops studied, the third crop T₅ and T₂ treatments exhibited relatively higher cocoon weights, measuring 2.54g and 2.32g, respectively (Table 2) [26-31].

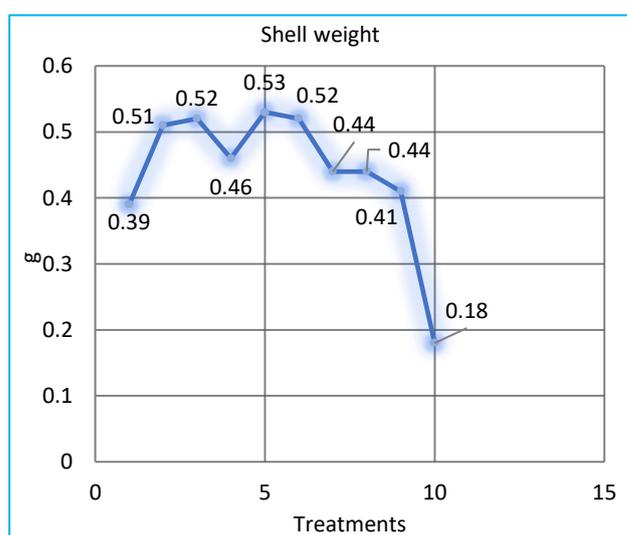
Single shell weight (g)

Among the ten nutrient levels tested (pooled data), T₅ and T₆ showed significantly higher values in terms of single shell weight, measuring 0.53g and 0.52g, respectively. Among the five crops studied, the third crop's T₅ and T₆ treatments exhibited relatively higher single shell weights, measuring 0.62g and 0.58g respectively (Graph 7) [26-31].



Cu-Copper, Zn-Zinc, Fe-Iron, Mn-Manganese, B-Boron

Graph 6 Macro and secondary nutrients composition percentage in tree mulberry leaf influenced by micronutrients



Graph 7 Influence of micronutrients on silkworm shell weight (g)

Table 2 Micronutrients and tree mulberry leaf effect on silkworm economic parameters

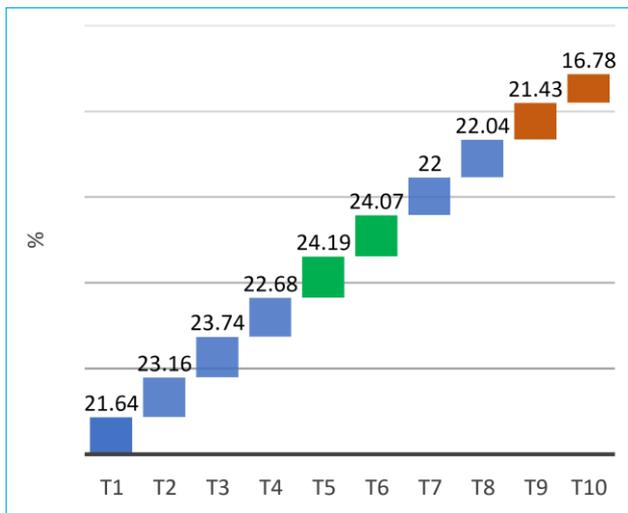
Treatment	Larval weight	Cocoon weight	Shell weight	Pupal weight	Shell ratio	Filament length	Renditta	Denier
			g		%	m	kg	d
T ₁	44.81	1.81	0.39	1.42	21.64	1155	7.1	3
T ₂	52.63	2.19	0.51	1.69	23.16	1310	6.28	2.5
T ₃	52.14	2.19	0.52	1.67	23.74	1268	6.42	2.5
T ₄	51.62	2.01	0.46	1.55	22.68	1259	6.48	2.7
T ₅	52.83	2.18	0.53	1.65	24.19	1328	6	2.5
T ₆	52.24	2.16	0.52	1.64	24.07	1312	6	2.5
T ₇	51.3	1.99	0.44	1.55	22	1233	6.78	2.8
T ₈	50.58	1.98	0.44	1.54	22.04	1236	6.7	2.9
T ₉	50.15	1.93	0.41	1.52	21.43	1197	7	3
T ₁₀	31.27	1.06	0.18	0.88	16.78	809	9.09	3.1

Pupal weight (g)

Among the ten nutrient levels tested, T₂ and T₃ displayed the highest pupal weights, measuring 1.69g and 1.67g, respectively. Specifically, in the third crop T₂ and T₃ again had the highest pupal weights, with values of 1.76g and 1.92g respectively (Table 2) [28-30].

Shell ratio (%)

Among the ten nutrient levels tested, T₅ followed by T₆ showed significantly higher values in terms of shell ratio, measuring 24.19% and 23.07%, respectively. Among the five crops studied, the T₅ and T₆ treatments in the third crop exhibited a relatively higher shell ratio of 24.41% and 24.55% (Graph 8) [29-30].



Graph 8 Influence of micronutrients on silkworm shell ratio (%)

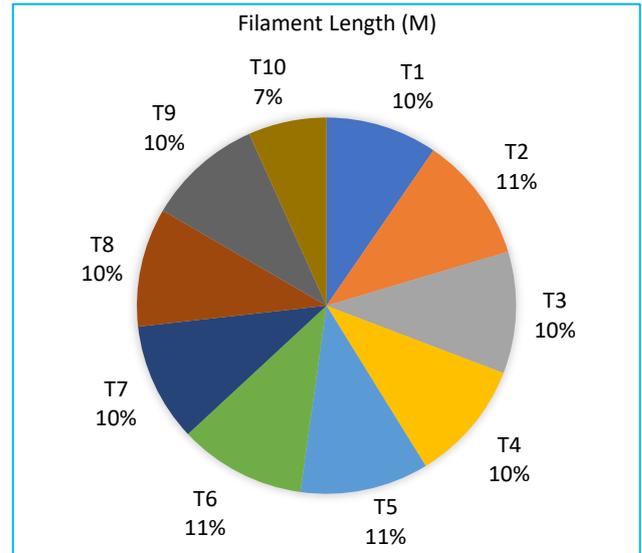
Filament length (m)

Among the ten nutrient levels tested, T₅ followed by T₆ showed significantly higher values in terms of silk filament length, measuring 1328m and 1310m, respectively. Among the five crops studied, the T₅ and T₆ treatments in the third crop exhibited a relatively higher silk filament length of 1489m and 1470m, respectively (Graph 9) [29-30].

Renditta (kg)

In the study, T₅ and T₆ exhibited significantly higher renditta values, measuring 6.28 kg, particularly in the third crop. Conversely, treatments T₂, T₃, T₅ and T₆ had relatively lower renditta values of 6 kg each (Table 2) [29-30].

Denier (%): In the study T₂, T₃, T₅ and T₆ recorded significantly favorable values in denier, measuring 2.5d in both pooled data and third crop (Table 2) [32-34].



Graph 9 Influence of micronutrients on silk filament length (m)

The soil fertility profile of an experimental tree mulberry garden

Similarly, during the before and after experiment, the soil parameters including N, P, K, S, Ca, Mg, Zn, Fe, Mn, Cu, and B were notably higher in the 6'x6' spacing with treatment T₁ to T₉ with the range of available N (364-433 kg/ha), P (38.83-47.37 kg/ha), K (306-356 kg/ha), S (38.61-48.96 ppm), Ca (5.33-10.53 m.eq/100g), Mg (3.03-5.03 m.eq/100g), Cu (0.99-1.01 ppm), Zn (0.41-0.74 ppm), Mn (3.31-4.86 ppm) and B (0.44-0.86 ppm). While T₁₀ recorded lowest in macro nutrients with the range (95, 5.97, 73.10 kg/ha, 1.97 ppm, 2.19 and 0.47 m.eq/100g) and micronutrients with the range (1.02, 0.18, 1.70, 1.53 and 0.18 ppm). Elevated soil pH, EC and organic carbon (OC) levels were observed in tree mulberry with all the treatment between the range (7.6-7.7, 0.64-0.68 dSm/m and 0.62-0.86 %) (Table 3-4).

CONCLUSION

Among the ten treatments T₂, T₃, and T₅ emerged as standout performers with enhanced yield and growth parameters, excluding moisture percentage. Throughout the experiment, both before and after treatment, soil parameters such as N, P, K, S, Ca, Mg, Zn, Fe, Mn, Cu, and B exhibited elevated levels in the 6'x6' spacing with treatments T₁ to T₉. No significant differences were noted among the treatments in terms of mulberry growth and yield parameters except for T₁₀. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the optimal approach for tree mulberry cultivation involves the application of 25 kg of micronutrients along with the recommended dose of

macro fertilizers. The study's results pertaining to silkworm economic parameters revealed positive outcomes for T₅ and T₂ in terms of cocoon weight and for T₅ and T₆ in shell weight,

shell ratio, filament length, renditta, and denier in both the third crop and pooled data. Notably, no significant differences were observed between the treatments except for T₁₀ (control).

Table 3 Soil fertility status of tree mulberry garden as influenced by different nutrient levels (Before experiment)

pH	EC	OC	N	P ₂ O ₅	K ₂ O	Ca	Mg	S	B	Cu	Zn	Fe	Mn
	dSm ⁻¹	%	Kg/ha/year			m.eq/100g		ppm					
7.70	0.67	0.64	260.00	11.23	124.24	4.28	1.22	5.00	0.22	1.11	0.32	2.56	1.85
7.50	0.67	0.66	270.45	11.14	124.00	4.33	1.26	5.75	0.22	1.20	0.32	2.69	1.77
7.70	0.62	0.66	240.56	11.00	120.24	4.45	1.33	5.12	0.22	1.12	0.28	2.56	1.77

pH= negative logarithm of hydrogen; EC= electric conductivity; OC= organic carbon; N, P, K = available nitrogen, phosphorus, potash; S= Sulphur; Ca= exchangeable calcium; Mg= exchangeable magnesium; Cu-copper; Zn-Zinc; Fe-iron and Mn-Manganese

Table 4 Soil fertility status of tree mulberry garden as influenced by different nutrient levels (After experiment)

Treatment	pH	EC	OC	N	P ₂ O ₅	K ₂ O	S	Ca	Mg	B	Cu	Zn	Fe	Mn
		dSm ⁻¹	%	Kg/ha/year			ppm	m.eq/100g		ppm				
T ₁	7.6	0.6	0.7	408.8	40.0	356.1	34.7	5.9	3.3	0.5	1.0	0.4	4.6	3.4
T ₂	7.6	0.6	0.7	421.3	43.7	203.4	49.0	10.5	5.0	0.9	1.0	0.7	8.8	4.9
T ₃	7.6	0.7	0.7	289.6	47.4	262.5	48.9	10.3	3.9	0.9	1.0	0.7	6.9	4.7
T ₄	7.6	0.6	0.7	433.9	29.5	253.5	48.4	10.0	3.7	0.7	1.0	0.6	6.7	4.6
T ₅	7.7	0.7	0.8	415.0	38.3	306.9	34.7	7.4	3.4	0.5	1.0	0.4	4.8	3.5
T ₆	7.6	0.7	0.8	302.1	36.6	260.4	34.8	7.9	3.4	0.5	1.0	0.4	5.0	3.7
T ₇	7.6	0.7	0.8	408.8	28.9	295.7	33.1	5.3	3.0	0.4	1.0	0.4	4.5	3.3
T ₈	7.7	0.7	0.9	421.3	40.6	328.4	38.6	9.3	3.6	0.5	1.0	0.5	6.1	4.3
T ₉	7.7	0.7	0.8	364.9	43.4	284.5	37.6	7.9	3.5	0.5	1.0	0.5	5.6	4.1
T ₁₀	7.7	0.6	0.6	95.0	6.0	73.1	2.0	2.2	0.5	0.2	1.0	0.2	1.7	1.5
F-value	.49	2.62	48.91	496.03	392.60	627.71	828.01	604.91	317.57	1428.34	.28	695.22	216.93	163.17
Sig.	0.86	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.97	0.00	0.00	0.00

Acknowledgement

I express my gratitude to the Central Silk Board and CSR&TI for granting permission to conduct my research and laboratory analyses at the Regional Sericultural Research Station, Salem. I extend my sincere thanks to the staff members who provided valuable assistance, contributing significantly to the successful completion of this research.

Author's contribution

All authors played pivotal roles in contributing their knowledge to carry out the comprehensive set of experiments

and research. The guidance provided by the second and third authors was instrumental in the successful execution of the study.

Author's declaration

As authors of this research paper, we affirm that there are no conflicts of interest to disclose concerning the research, its findings, and the integrity of the work.

Funding statement

Not applicable.

LITERATURE CITED

1. Qader MA. 1991. Varietal differences and correlation studies in the nutritional composition of the mulberry. *Sericologia* 31: 449-453.
2. Sudhakar P, Kiran Kumar KP, Babulal VNB. 2021. Tree mulberry: The future of tropical sericulture farming. *Biotica Research Today* 3(5): 297-302.
3. Magadum S, Aziz F, Lal J, Bala M, Sharma P, Sharma A, Kouser R, Deskit L, Singh S. 2019. Evaluation of effect of different mulberry plantation systems on rearing performance of silkworm (*Bombyx mori* L.). *International Journal of Agriculture Sciences* 11(24): 9354-9357.
4. Mohamed Tom Ahamed Eltayb, EssamEldin Ibrahim Warrag, Ahamed Elhuri Ahamed. 2013. Effect of spacing on performance of *Morus* species. *Jr. Forest Products and Industries* 2(3): 13-23.
5. Yogananda Murthy VN, Ramesh HL, Munirajappa. 2013. Evaluation of mulberry (*Morus*) variety Vishwa for leaf yielding parameters and phytochemical analysis under different spacing system. *Indian Journal of Applied Research* 3(8): 31-33.
6. Nirmal Singh JS, Tara, Sapna Rajput, Suraksha Chanotra, Rakhi Gupta, Mohd. Bashir, Ishfaq Ahmed Dar, Neetu Dhar, Rajat Mohan. 2016. Studies on the mode of plantation of mulberry for Silkworm rearing. *International Journal of Advanced Research* 4(6): 1420-1423.
7. Nambiar KKM, Abrol IP. 1992. Long term fertilizer experiments in India: An overview. *Fertilizer News* 34(4): 11-26.
8. Anil Kumar AS, John PS. 1999. Integrated nutrient management for sustainable mulberry production in humid tropics. Proceedings of National Seminar on organic Farming for sustainable Agriculture, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, India. pp 53-57.
9. Bongale UD. 2000. Productivity alleviation in mulberry cultivation-An appraisal. Lead paper, *National Conference on Stra. Seric. Research* CSRTI, Mysore, India. pp 34-37.

10. Shivaprakash RM, Bongale UD, Dandin SB, Basavaiah, Siddalingaswamy N, Narayana Gowda N. 2000. Nitrogen uptake and shoot yield in three improved variety of Mulberry (*Morus indica* L) under irrigated field condition. *Indian Journal of Sericulture* 39(2): 145-148.
11. Das PC, Choudhury PC, Ghosh A, Katiyar RS, Mathur UB, Datta RK. 1993. Use of Azotobacter biofertilizer in mulberry cultivation. *Indian Silk* 31(10): 43-45.
12. Fotedar RK, Dhar S, Mukherjee P. 1995. Effect of different pruning height on the mulberry yield and silkworm rearing. *Indian Journal of Sericulture* 24(2): 105-109.
13. Bongale UD, Chaluvachari, Narahari Rao BV. 1991. Mulberry leaf quality evaluation and its importance. *Indian Silk* 51-53.
14. Kjeldahl JA. 1983. New method for the estimation of nitrogen in organic compounds. *Journal of Analytical Chemistry* 22: 336-382.
15. Walkley A, Black IA. 1934. An examination of the Degtjareff method for determining soil organic matter, and a proposed modification of chromic acid titration method. *Soil Science* 37: 29-38.
16. Olsen SR, Cole CU, Watanabe FS and Dean LA. 1954. Estimation of available Phosphorus in soils by extraction with sodium bicarbonate. *U. S. Department of Agriculture Circular*. pp 939.
17. Jackson ML. 1973. *Soil Chemical Analysis*. Prentice Hall, New Delhi, India. pp 1-497.
18. Lindsay WL, Norvel WA. 1978. Development of DTPA soil test for Zn, Fe, Mn and Cu. *Soil Science Society of American Journal* 42: 421-428.
19. Krishnaswami S. 1979. Improved method of rearing young age (Chawki) silkworms, *CSRTI, Bullet No.2*.
20. Krishnaswami S. 1979. New technology of silkworms rearing young age (Chawki), *CSRTI, Bullet No. 3*.
21. Dandin SB, Sengupta K. 1988. Mulberry cultivation as high bush and small tree in hilly regions. *Central Silk Board, Bulletin*, Bangalore. pp 1-16.
22. Dasgupta KP. 1961. A comparative analytical study on the effect of feeding with different types of mulberry leaves obtained by different methods of cultivation on silkworm, *Bombyx mori* L. *Indian Silk* 1.4: 5-8.
23. Sudhakar P, Hanumantharayappa SK, Sudhakar Rao P, Jalaja S Kumar, Sivaprasad V. 2018. Tree mulberry Sustainable and economically viable Sericultural farming for southern tropical zones. *International Journal of Applied and Pure Science and Agriculture* 4(6): 13-23.
24. Santoshkumar Magadum, Preeti Sharma, Manju Bala, RukhsanaKouser, Ashima Sharma, Lobzang Deskit, Farzana Aziz, Jeewan Lal, Sardar Singh. 2020. Evaluation of different mulberry plantation systems for leaf yield and yield contributing characters. *International Journal of Current Microbiology and Applied Sciences* 9(12): 3222-3229.
25. Vinod Kumar Yadav M, Noble Morrison, Arunakumar GS, Dhaneshwar Padhan, Praveen Kumar K, Sivaprasad V, Pankaj Tewary 2020. Comparative study on different mulberry spacing and its impact on mulberry leaf yield and silkworm rearing. *Journal of Entomology and Zoology Studies* 8(1): 1110-1115.
25. Sridevi G, Bhaskar RN, Devaiah MC, Govindan R. 2004. Effect of mulberry leaves enriched with medicinal botanical extract on cocoon and reeling parameters of silkworm *Bombyx mori* L. (PM x CSR2). *Environ. Ecology* 22: 689-691.
26. Choudhury P, Ashoka J, Hadimani DK, Sreenivas AG, Sharanagouda H. 2019. Effect of nano micronutrients on mulberry silkworm, *Bombyx mori* L. for larval and cocoon traits. *Journal of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry* 8(6): 509-513.
27. Younus Wani M, Mir MR, Baqual MF, Khanday Mehraj, Bhat TA, Rani S. 2017. Role of foliar sprays in Sericulture industry. *Jr. Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry* 6(4): 1803-1806.
28. Bose PC, Bindroo BB. 2009. Effect of micronutrients on yield of mulberry in subtropical region. *Journal of Crop and Weed* 5(2): 142-143.
29. Shilpashree KG, Subbarayappa CT. 2015. Effect of soil application of micronutrients on quality of mulberry and cocoon production. *Res. Jr. Agri. Science* 6(4): 830-833.
30. Geetha T, Ramamoorthy R, Murugan N. 2017. Effect of foliar spray of micronutrients applied individually and in combination on mulberry leaf production, cocoon productivity and profitability. Chapter 8: Department of Sericulture, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. *Statistical Approaches on Multidisciplinary Research*. Volume I, Surragh Publishers, India.
31. Nazar A, Kalarani MK, Jeyakumar P, Kalaiselvi T, Arulmozhiselvan K, Manimekalai S. 2019. Effect of micronutrients and biofertilizers on growth and yield of mulberry (*Morus indica* L.) and silkworm (*Bombyx mori* L.). *Madras Agric. Journals* 106 (1/3): 69-73. doi:10.29321/MAJ 2019.000224.
32. Thangamani R, Vivekanandan M. 1984. Physiological studies and leaf nutrient analysis in the evaluation of best mulberry variety. *Sericologia* 24: 317-324.
33. Etebari K, Kaliwal B, Matindoost L. 2004. Supplementation of mulberry leaves in sericulture, theoretical and applied aspects. *International Journal of Industrial Entomology* 9: 14-28.
34. Aslam M, Ashfaq M. 2004. Impact on bionomics of *Bombyx mori* L fed on leaves sprayed with mineral sources. *Pakistan Entomology* 26(1): 39-41.