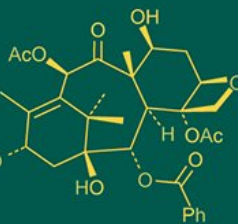
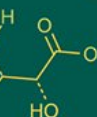
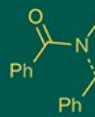


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## Effect of micro nutrients on growth and flower yield of *Lisianthus (Eustoma grandiflorum)* under Prayagraj-agro climatic conditions

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### Abstract

An experiment was conducted to assess the differential responses of Boron and Calcium on the growth and flowering of *Lisianthus* during the period from January to May 2024 at Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh, India. The experiment was conducted with a Complete Randomized Design (CRD) with three replications. Collected data on growth and flower yield attribute parameters showed significant variations. According to the results, the maximum plant height (17.54 cm), stem length (42.7 cm), Number of leaves (77.33), Stem diameter (2.19 cm), Plant spread (23.89 cm), Number of branches (3.00), leaf area (12.76 cm<sup>2</sup>), SPAD value (67.50), Number of days to taken initiation (123), bud no./plant (11.00), Bud length (2.39 cm), Stalk length (19.44 cm) and number of flower per plant (3.61) were found from the Ca treated plants. The treatment T<sub>8</sub> - Calcium @100 ppm was found superior among other treatments.

**Keywords:** *Lisianthus*, boron and calcium, growth yield and flower yield attribute

### 1. Introduction

*Lisianthus* is becoming one of the most highly ranked cut flowers in the floriculture market. It is mainly due to its rose like flowers, excellent postharvest life and blue / purple colour. *Lisianthus (Eustoma grandiflorum)* belongs to the family Gentianaceae is an ornamental cut flower native to the southern parts of United States particularly to the eastern slope of Rocky Mountains, USA where it is known as the prairies gentian. *Eustoma* is named after the two Greek words Eu (beautiful, good, well), and stoma (mouth). It is a moderately cold-tolerant annual or biennial plant. There are many cultivars of the well-liked *lisianthus* that are grown for the cut flower industry.

*Lisianthus (Eustoma grandiflorum)* is becoming one of the most highly ranked cut flowers in the international market. Propagation by seeds is complicated and difficult exercise due to slow germination and growth and seedling populations are disadvantageously variable with respect to flowering time, stem length and flower qualities. Vegetative propagation of selected cultivars might provide a useful alternative to seed propagation as the limited availability of cuttings from each stock resulting in apical dieback is a major setback. Therefore, micro propagation serves as potent tool to develop a method of rapid propagation of selected/ elite genotypes of *lisianthus*. The clonal multiplication of *lisianthus* especially through tissue culture might provide a useful alternative to seed propagation, thus resulting in to production of better quality planting stock. *In vitro* multiplication of elite plant genotypes offers immense opportunities to multiply large number of disease free, healthy and vigorous planting material in shortest possible time.

The commercial cultivars of *lisianthus* are available in blue, purple, plum, white and pink colours including bicolor. Therefore, being a valuable flower for cut flower production, it is very much suitable for commercialization in temperate and tropical regions of the world. The recent annual increase in production of *lisianthus* can be attributed to progress in breeding with new flower colours, diverse forms, excellent vase life and availability of flowers all-round the year. Several researchers have attempted to improve the agronomic characters of *lisianthus* through genetics, propagation and field cultures, etc. The propagation of *lisianthus* through seeds has emerged as a great challenge, as it is a very much complicated and difficult process due to slow germination and growth. Moreover, the seedling populations

exhibit high variability with respect to flowering time, stem length and flower qualities besides other traits of commercial importance (Ordogh *et al.*, 2006) [23]. In India and Tamil Nadu, lisianthus is a newly emerging cut flower crop, with the production being concentrated in limited areas in the hilly tracts of Ooty and Kodaikanal. Any attempt made to encourage cut flower production in the hilly regions of Tamil Nadu would not only help the florists and consumers to get fresh and quality cut flowers regularly, but will also help the small and marginal farmers to improve their economic status.

In late decades, raises have built up an assortment of cultivars concerning numerous attributes, for example, uniform flowering consistently, the absence of rosetting, warm resistance, flower shading, and flower size and frame, including twofold flowers, and so forth. (Harbaugh, 2007) [6]. *Eustoma grandiflorum* is generally proliferated by seed or cutting. An expansive number of seedlings can be delivered by seed propagation; however, the quality is not uniform because of varieties in flowering time, plant tallness and the number of flowers. In a few cultivars, for example, those with peripheral variegation, these seedlings demonstrate an extensive variety of variety in view of their heterozygous character.

Lisianthus has the characteristics of a "perfect cut flower" (alluring flowers and long vase life) and should keep on increasing in prominence all through the following century. Smaller scale propagation has been widely utilized for the fast generation of many plant species and cultivars.

The techniques for miniaturized scale propagation of *Eustoma grandiflorum* have been produced and many plants were recovered from stem, leaf and meristem explants. The increase of those clones through biogenetic aseptic culture ought to be important in Lisianthus as it empowers the massive scale augmentation of those singular plants having attractive attributes, for example, high profitability, predominate propensity, sickness resistance or quicker development rate. The achievement of the smaller scale proliferation strategy relies upon a few factors like genotype, media, plant development regulators and kind of explants, which ought to be seen amid the procedure. The most much of the time utilized development regulators for micropropagation of decorative plants by organogenesis, embryogenesis, and axillary expansion are naphthalene acetic acid (NAA), and benzyl adenine (BA) (Jain and Ochatt, 2010) [24]. Kinetin (KIN) has been connected for small scale proliferation of many plants. The target of the present experiments was to assess the impacts of various centralizations of KIN and NAA on recovery of shoot and root in *Eustoma grandiflorum*.

Lisianthus is a seed-produced pot plant used in floristry. Its blossoms resemble tulip flowers quite a little. The palette consists of pink, white, and purple. The stem forks apically and is monopodial at the base. The majority of commercially available cultivars have stem lengths ranging from 500 to 750mm. A plant can be in bloom for up to 5 weeks as a whole and individual flowers can endure for 2 weeks.

## 2. Materials and Methods

The experiment was conducted during rabi season of the year 2024 at Horticulture Research Farm, Department of Horticulture, Naini Agricultural Institute, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture Technology and

Sciences, Prayagraj. The experimental site is located in the sub-tropical region which is located at 25°. 27<sup>1</sup> N latitude, 81°. 56<sup>1</sup> E longitude and 98 m above the mean sea level.

**Table 1:** Details of Treatment Combinations

| Treatment Symbol | Treatment Combinations |
|------------------|------------------------|
| T <sub>0</sub>   | Control                |
| T <sub>1</sub>   | Boron @25 ppm          |
| T <sub>2</sub>   | Boron @50 ppm          |
| T <sub>3</sub>   | Boron @75 ppm          |
| T <sub>4</sub>   | Boron @100ppm          |
| T <sub>5</sub>   | Calcium@25 ppm         |
| T <sub>6</sub>   | Calcium@50ppm          |
| T <sub>7</sub>   | Calcium @75 ppm        |
| T <sub>8</sub>   | Calcium @100 ppm       |

## 3. Results and Discussion

Plant spread (cm) at harvest stage, there was significant difference between the treatments and the maximum plant spread (23.89 cm) was observed the applications of T<sub>8</sub>-Calcium @100 ppm, followed by the treatment T<sub>4</sub> (Boron @100ppm) whereas the minimum plant spread (20.28 cm) was observed in treatment T<sub>0</sub> (Control). Plant Height (cm) at harvest stage, there was significant difference between the treatments and the maximum plant height (17.54 cm) was observed the applications of T<sub>8</sub>-Calcium @100 ppm, followed by the treatment T<sub>4</sub> (Boron @100ppm) whereas the minimum plant height (11.48 cm) was observed in treatment T<sub>0</sub> (Control). The increased plant spread, plant height and number of leaves, might be due to the fact that weekly application of water soluble fertilizer at the root zone of crop improved the nutrient uptake thereby promoting the synthesis of growth promoting substances which eventually led to increased vegetative growth. The increased plant height with more number of leaves was a result of maintenance of favorable soil moisture in the root zone. Similar findings were reported by Chaudhary *et al.* (2018) [25] in rose, Sreekanth *et al.*, (2006) [26] in tuberose in African marigold, Nirala *et al.*, (2018) [27] in carnation Singh and Kumar (2017) [9].

Among the treatments, more numbers of leaves was observed at T<sub>8</sub> -Calcium @100 ppm (77.33), T<sub>4</sub> -Boron @100ppm (71.89) and T<sub>7</sub> -Calcium @75 ppm) (64.00) at vegetative stage, bud emergence stage and harvesting stage respectively which were on par with T<sub>3</sub>, T<sub>6</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> treatments at vegetative stage, respectively. The less numbers of leaves was recorded at T<sub>1</sub> (Control) (46.94) at vegetative stage to harvesting stage. The number of branches per plant for the various treatments ranged between 1.72 to 3.0 harvest time. At the stage of harvest time, there was significant difference between the treatments and the maximum plant number of branches per plant (14.15) was observed the applications of T<sub>8</sub>-Calcium @100 ppm, followed by the treatment T<sub>4</sub> (Boron @100ppm) whereas the minimum number of branches per plant (1.72) was observed in treatment T<sub>0</sub> (Control).

The increase in number of leaves could be the result of stimulation of cell division, which improved vegetative growth and biomass. Therefore, the accumulation of carbohydrates created as a result of photosynthesis helped in the expansion of plants and their constituent parts. The results of present investigation are in agreement with the findings of Kakade *et al.* (2009) [8] in china aster and Kendra *et al.* (2013) [28] in chrysanthemum. The increase in the number of branches per plant may be due to the production

of tryptophan which might have been extended by Boron and Calcium. As a result, the synthesis of micronutrients was increased the vegetative growth, which increased longitudinal growth and the number of shoots. Seydmohammadi *et al.* (2019) [18] discovered comparable outcomes in *Eustoma grandiflorum* after treating plant samples with 9 mg/L nano zinc. Hassanein *et al.* (2021) [7] reported that 10 ppm nano zinc increased the number of branches which supported the findings of the present study. The maximum chlorophyll content in leaves was observed in T<sub>8</sub>-Calcium @100 ppm (67.50 mg g<sup>-1</sup>) at vegetative stage to harvesting stage, which was on par with T<sub>4</sub> -Boron @100ppm (65.93 mg g<sup>-1</sup>) and T<sub>7</sub> -Calcium @75 ppm (62.00 mg g<sup>-1</sup>) at harvesting stage, while the minimum chlorophyll content in leaves was observed at T<sub>0</sub> (Control) (56.07 mg g<sup>-1</sup>) at harvesting stage.

The maximum stem diameter was observed at T<sub>8</sub> -Calcium @100 ppm (2.19 cm), followed by T<sub>4</sub> (Boron @100ppm (2.11 cm) and T<sub>7</sub> -Calcium @75 ppm (2.09 cm) and all these treatments were on par with each other. The minimum stem diameter was observed at T<sub>0</sub> (Control) (1.83 cm). The yield parameters like number of flower buds per plant and flower stems per unit area were significantly influenced by the fertigation dose. also pointed out that fertigation at every irrigation (two-day intervals) up to 115 days resulted in significant higher yield of chrysanthemum. Obviously, the diameter of flower is contributed by number of petals, petal length and width of flower. This is well supported by Ashok (1998) [28] in rose, in anthurium. Similar results were found by Amin, *et al.*, 2015 in gerbera, Kumar *et al.*, (2017) [9] in calendula and Madhuri *et al.*, (2014) [30] in carnation.

**Table 2:** Effect of Micronutrients on growth parameter of Lisianthus

| Treatment                         | Plant Spread (cm) | Plant height (cm) | Number of leaves | Number of Branches per Plant | Chlorophyll content (spad value) | Stem Diameter (cm) |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
|                                   | At Harvest        |                   |                  |                              |                                  |                    |
| <b>T<sub>0</sub> (Control)</b>    | <b>20.28</b>      | <b>11.48</b>      | <b>46.94</b>     | <b>1.72</b>                  | <b>56.07</b>                     | <b>1.83</b>        |
| T <sub>1</sub> (Boron @25 ppm)    | 20.37             | 14.86             | 53.56            | 2.22                         | 59.03                            | 1.93               |
| T <sub>2</sub> (Boron @50 ppm)    | 21.25             | 15.07             | 57.83            | 2.33                         | 60.97                            | 2.01               |
| T <sub>3</sub> (Boron @75 ppm)    | 22.03             | 16.57             | 62.28            | 2.5                          | 61.87                            | 2.08               |
| T <sub>4</sub> (Boron @100ppm)    | 23.42             | 16.92             | 71.89            | 2.83                         | 65.93                            | 2.11               |
| T <sub>5</sub> (Calcium@25 ppm)   | 20.5              | 14.94             | 56.78            | 2.28                         | 60                               | 1.94               |
| T <sub>6</sub> (Calcium@50ppm)    | 21.64             | 15.67             | 59.72            | 2.39                         | 61.13                            | 2.03               |
| T <sub>7</sub> (Calcium @75 ppm)  | 22.08             | 16.72             | 64               | 2.5                          | 62                               | 2.09               |
| T <sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) | 23.89             | 17.54             | 77.33            | 3                            | 67.5                             | 2.19               |
| F test                            | S                 | S                 | S                | S                            | S                                | S                  |
| S.E. (m) (±)                      | 0.43              | 0.57              | 3.07             | 0.12                         | 1.14                             | 0.03               |
| C.D <sub>0.05</sub>               | 0.19              | 0.28              | 1.38             | 0.05                         | 0.51                             | 0.02               |
| C.V Value                         | 5.97              | 11.77             | 15.06            | 15.15                        | 5.54                             | 4.88               |

### 3.1 Growth and flower attributes

The maximum leaf area was recorded at T<sub>8</sub> -Calcium @100 ppm (12.76 cm<sup>2</sup>) at vegetative stage to harvesting stage respectively which was on par with T<sub>4</sub> -Boron @100ppm (12.61) and T<sub>7</sub> -Calcium @ 75 ppm (12.42) at vegetative stage. The minimum leaf area was recorded at T<sub>0</sub> (Control) (11.01cm<sup>2</sup>) at vegetative stage and at harvesting stage, respectively. The maximum stalk length was observed at T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) (19.44 cm) followed by T<sub>4</sub> (Boron @100 ppm) (19.39cm) while the minimum stalk length was observed at T<sub>0</sub> (Control) (16.11 cm) followed by T<sub>1</sub> (Boron @25 ppm) (16.67 cm) in showed the table. Physiological parameters such as leaf area and chlorophyll content were found significant. The balanced dose of fertilizer application increased the activity of meristematic tissue and promote synthesis of many growth promoting hormones which were involved in the increase of various physiological parameters such as leaf area, total dry matter production shoot to root ratio, RWC and chlorophyll content. Corroborative evidence could be obtained from the results of Ingle *et al.* in chrysanthemum, in calendula, and Singh and Uma (1996) in tuberose.

The maximum bud length was observed at T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) (2.39 cm) followed by T<sub>4</sub> (Boron @100 ppm) (2.35 cm) while the minimum bud length was observed at T<sub>0</sub> (Control) (1.98 cm) followed by T<sub>1</sub> (Boron @25 ppm) (2.03 cm) in showed the table. The maximum number of bud per plant was observed at T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) (11.00) followed by T<sub>4</sub> (Boron @100 ppm) (10.67) while the minimum bud length was observed at T<sub>0</sub> (Control) (7.78)

followed by T<sub>1</sub> (Boron @25 ppm) (8.00) in showed the table. The number of days taken for first flower bud emergence significantly differed among the treatments (Table 4.11). The less number of days taken for first flower bud emergence was recorded at T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) (123.00 days), while the more number of days taken for first flower bud emergence was recorded at T<sub>0</sub> (Control) (128.50 days) followed by T<sub>7</sub> (Calcium @75 ppm) (123.72 days). The maximum number of flowers per plant was observed at T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) (3.61) followed by T<sub>4</sub> (Boron @100ppm) (3.22) and T<sub>7</sub> (Calcium @75 ppm) (2.94) and all these treatments were on par with each other, while the less number of flowers per plant was recorded at T<sub>1</sub> (Control) (2.28).

In the present investigation, optimum nutrition was balanced through fertigation. This might have influenced flower quality parameters like flower diameter and flower length, flower stalk length and stalk girth of flowers and duration of flowering and vase life was recorded in T<sub>4</sub> treatment which might be due to the reason that, this treatment resulted in good vegetative growth in all stages of plant growth thereby resulting in improved quality of flowers. The results are in agreement with. The yield parameters like number of flower buds per plant and flower stems per unit area were significantly influenced by the fertigation dose. also pointed out that fertigation at every irrigation (two-day intervals) up to 115 days resulted in significant higher yield of chrysanthemum. Obviously, the diameter of flower is contributed by number of petals, petal length and width of flower. This is well supported by Ashok (1998) [31] in rose,

in anthurium. Similar results were found by Amin, *et al.*, 2015<sup>[32]</sup> in gerbera, Kumar *et al.*, (2017)<sup>[9]</sup> in calendula and Madhuri *et al.*, (2014)<sup>[30]</sup> in carnation.

This increment in bud diameter might be due to increased glucose formation which promotes cell division and increases bud diameter. The findings of the present investigation are in confirmation with the work of Shaheen *et al.* (2015)<sup>[20]</sup> in oriental lily who reported that with application of 6 mg zinc sulphate per kg of soil media. The increased floral parameters might be due to the application of micronutrients through fertigation because these are being a constituent of proteins, amino acids, nucleic acid, various enzymes and coenzymes which are associated with the increased shoot length and leaf area resulted in more photosynthesis and thus increased the transformation of manufactured food material from source (leaf) to sink (flower bud). This was in conformity with the findings of

Beniwal *et al.*, (2005)<sup>[33]</sup> in chrysanthemum. Similar results were also obtained by Potti and Arora (1986), in chrysanthemum, in Blanket flower and Mukherjee *et al.* (1994)<sup>[34]</sup> and Sharma and Singh (2002)<sup>[12]</sup> in gladiolus. Moreover, another possible reason that could have been attributed to early flowering is the abundant availability of phosphorus which promote root growth resulted in efficient absorption of available nutrients from the soil this in turn increase the vegetative growth that would have led to the induction of early flowering. This was confirmed by the reports of Beniwal *et al.* (2005)<sup>[33]</sup> in chrysanthemum. Crop yield is the reflection of the cumulative effect of all the biotic and the abiotic factors exist and experienced during its different stages of crop growth and development. Higher level of water soluble fertilizers might have served as optimum dose in lisianthus thereby promoting maximum and good yield.

**Table 3:** Effect of Micronutrients on growth and flower yield of Lisianthus

| Treatment                         | Leaf Area (cm <sup>2</sup> ) | Stalk Length(cm) (60 DAP) | Bud length (cm) | Number of Bud per Plant | Number of Days Bud Initiation | Number of Flowers per Plant |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| T <sub>0</sub> (Control)          | 11.01                        | 16.11                     | 1.98            | 7.78                    | 128.5                         | 2.28                        |
| T <sub>1</sub> (Boron @25 ppm)    | 11.58                        | 16.67                     | 2.03            | 8                       | 126.44                        | 2.5                         |
| T <sub>2</sub> (Boron @50 ppm)    | 11.99                        | 17.39                     | 2.08            | 9                       | 125.28                        | 2.72                        |
| T <sub>3</sub> (Boron @75 ppm)    | 12.26                        | 18.67                     | 2.21            | 10.33                   | 124.11                        | 2.89                        |
| T <sub>4</sub> (Boron @100ppm)    | 12.61                        | 19.39                     | 2.35            | 10.67                   | 123.56                        | 3.22                        |
| T <sub>5</sub> (Calcium@25 ppm)   | 11.63                        | 17.28                     | 2.05            | 8.44                    | 126.11                        | 2.56                        |
| T <sub>6</sub> (Calcium@50ppm)    | 12.15                        | 17.56                     | 2.09            | 9.39                    | 124.89                        | 2.83                        |
| T <sub>7</sub> (Calcium @75 ppm)  | 12.42                        | 19                        | 2.21            | 10.5                    | 123.72                        | 2.94                        |
| T <sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) | 12.76                        | 19.44                     | 2.39            | 11                      | 123                           | 3.61                        |
| F test                            | S                            | S                         | S               | S                       | S                             | S                           |
| S.E. (m) (±)                      | 0.25                         | 0.41                      | 0.05            | 0.41                    | 0.62                          | 0.13                        |
| C.D <sub>0.05</sub>               | 0.13                         | 0.18                      | 0.02            | 0.18                    | 0.31                          | 0.06                        |
| C.V Value                         | 6.69                         | 6.86                      | 7.14            | 12.89                   | 1.58                          | 21.75                       |

### 3.2 Economics of Lisianthus flower

The common cost of cultivation of the Lisianthus was recorded Rs. 142200. The maximum cost of production of Lisianthus flower was recorded under T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) i.e. ₹144380/ha whereas minimum recorded in T<sub>0</sub> (Control) with ₹142200/ha. The maximum gross return was found in (Rs. 1246666.66/ha) T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) and

lowest in (Rs 901500.003/ha) T<sub>0</sub> (Control). The net return was recorded under T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) i.e. Rs. 11002286.67/ha whereas minimum recorded in T<sub>0</sub> (Control) with Rs. 759300.00/ha. Higher B:C Ratio was recorded under T<sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) i.e. 7.63 meanwhile minimum B:C Ratio recorded in T<sub>0</sub> (Control) with 5.34.

**Table 4:** Economics of Lisianthus flower

| Treatment                         | Cost of Cultivation (Rs./ha) | Yield (Number of flower /ha) | Gross Return(Rs./ha) | Net return(Rs./ha) | Benefit Cost Ratio |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| T <sub>0</sub> (Control)          | 142200.00                    | 45075.00                     | 901500.00            | 759300.00          | 5.34               |
| T <sub>1</sub> (Boron @25 ppm)    | 143500.00                    | 54000.00                     | 1080000.00           | 936500.00          | 6.53               |
| T <sub>2</sub> (Boron @50 ppm)    | 143860.00                    | 55666.00                     | 1113333.00           | 969473.00          | 6.74               |
| T <sub>3</sub> (Boron @75 ppm)    | 144200.00                    | 56916.00                     | 1138333.00           | 994133.00          | 6.89               |
| T <sub>4</sub> (Boron @100ppm)    | 144060.00                    | 59416.00                     | 1188333.00           | 1044273.00         | 7.25               |
| T <sub>5</sub> (Calcium@25 ppm)   | 143750.00                    | 54416.00                     | 1088333.00           | 944583.00          | 6.57               |
| T <sub>6</sub> (Calcium@50ppm)    | 143845.00                    | 56500.00                     | 1130000.00           | 986155.00          | 6.86               |
| T <sub>7</sub> (Calcium @75 ppm)  | 144190.00                    | 57333.00                     | 1146666.00           | 1002476.00         | 6.95               |
| T <sub>8</sub> (Calcium @100 ppm) | 144380.00                    | 62333.00                     | 1246666.00           | 1102286.00         | 7.63               |

### Conclusion

The present investigation, it is concluded that among the different treatments, the treatment T<sub>8</sub> - Calcium @100 ppm was found superior among other treatments in terms of Plant height, Plant spread, Number of leaves, stem diameter, leaf area, bud length, number of buds per plant, stalk length, Number of flowers per plant, number of branches per plant and chlorophyll content, minimum number of days for bud initiation, Flower yield per plant, benefit cost ratio.

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