

Impact of Sowing Date and Crop Geometry on Growth and Seed Yield of Fenugreek cv Kasuri (*Trigonella corniculata*)

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ABSTRACT

The present field experiment was conducted at Research Farm, College of Horticulture Mandsaur, RVSKVV, Gwalior (MP) during the year 2021-2022 with three dates of sowing viz., D₁ - 15th October, D₂ - 30th October and D₃ - 15th November and four different plant spacings S₁ (15 × 10 cm), S₂ (20 × 10 cm), S₃ (25 × 10 cm) and S₄ (30 × 10 cm). The result obtained during present investigation to measure the morphology, seed yield and yield attributing parameters were studied. The plant height, number of branches, number of leaves, fresh weight of plant, dry weight of plant, seed yield and yield attributing parameters were found maximum when crop sown on 30th October. The plant height decreased gradually

while other mentioned parameters except seed yield ha⁻¹, biological yield and harvest index increased with wider spacing from 15 cm to 30 cm.

Interaction effect of date of sowing and spacing showed that kasuri methi sown on 30th October with 15 × 10 cm spacing recorded maximum height while 30th October with 30 × 10 cm spacing recorded maximum branches, leaves, weight of plant and yield attributing parameters while 30th October with spacing 25 × 10 cm produced maximum seed yield (6.67 q ha⁻¹).

Keywords Kasuri methi, Date of sowing, Spacing, *Trigonella corniculata*.

INTRODUCTION

Trigonella corniculata L., or kasuri methi belongs to family Leguminaceae and used for its greens and seeds as a condiment, is one of the significant winter season legume crops and one of the primary seed spices farmed in India. It is indigenous to South-Eastern Europe and Western Asia. In general, seed production is taken after 3-4 cuttings, but seed yield obtained without cuttings is superior to seed yield obtained after 2-3 cuttings (Nandre *et al.* 2011). The seeds and tender pods of kasuri methi are used as a spice in pickle making. These are also used in traditional medicine as diuretics, tonics, carminatives, astringents and aphrodisinics (Sharma 2006). Regular consumption of kasuri methi seeds is thought to lower blood glucose levels, total cholesterol and helps in stimulating the secretion of insulin (Babale-

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shawar *et al.* 2020). Kasuri methi is often grown in the winter. Initially, dry, cold temperatures promote vegetative development, while dry, somewhat heated conditions promote seed formation (Al-Dalain *et al.* 2012). Seeding time is critical for vegetative growth and eventual yield manifestation (Aggarwal *et al.* 2013). When growing vegetatively, the crop loves a cool climate, and when mature, it prefers a warm, dry climate (Halesh *et al.* 2000). Crop development, production, and quality may be hampered by early or late sowing. When kasuri methi is planted early, it blooms earlier. Late sowing, on the other hand, had a negative impact on quality, yield and growth (Singh *et al.* 2005). Maximum yield and efficient land use are produced by optimal plant spacing, which ensures optimal plant growth and development. Plant spacing has a significant impact on seed production of kasuri methi.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

During the *rabi* season of 2021-2022, the field experiment was conducted at the "Horticulture Research Farm," College of Horticulture, Mandsaur, Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, Gwalior (MP) in the Factorial Randomized Block Design with three dates of sowing viz., D₁ - 15th October, D₂ - 30th October and D₃ - 15th November and four different plant spacings S₁ (15 × 10 cm), S₂ (20 × 10 cm), S₃ (25 × 10 cm) and S₄ (30 × 10 cm) in three replications. The Akfg-1 variety used in this experiment was obtained from NRCSS, Tabiji Farm, Ajmer (Rajasthan). This variety was developed from a local collection. It is suitable for irrigated cultivation in semi-arid regions. This variety matures in 130 to 150 days and is frost resistant. The seeds were sown to a depth of 2 cm. Furrows were properly covered with a thin layer of soil, and plots were lightly irrigated immediately after sowing. The morphological parameters such as plant height, number of primary branches, number of leaves, fresh weight and dry weight of plant at 30, 60, 90 DAS and at harvest were taken. At 75 and 90 DAS, leaves were cut for herbage yield and the sum of both yields was recorded as the fresh yield of fresh kasuri methi leaves. After both cuttings, the plant was grown solely for seed production and due to both the cuttings, the production of seed was comparatively low.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Effect of date of sowing

All the morphological parameters showed significant variation to different dates of sowing at 30, 60, 90 DAS and at harvest. The maximum plant height (5.07, 18.88, 37.68 and 39.39 cm), number of primary branches (3.51, 10.95, 16.15 and 17.05), number of leaves (10.17, 102.95, 186.80 and 189.70), fresh weight (3.69, 16.54, 39.84 and 55.24 g) and dry weight (0.51, 2.32, 5.40 and 8.58 g) of plant were recorded in main treatment, D₂-30th October while the minimum was recorded in main treatment D₃-15th November as shown in Tables 1-2. This could be because the kasuri methi crop was exposed to conducive environmental conditions throughout its growth after being planted at the appropriate time. Improvements in overall growth, i.e., plant height, number of primary branches per plant, and number of leaves per plant, as a result of optimal sowing date, could have greatly increased plant fresh and dry weight, whereas delayed sowing did not allow enough time for vegetative growth, resulting in a weak plant canopy and a decrease in fresh weight.

The seed yield and yield attributing parameters were significantly influenced by dates of sowing except harvest index by seed and the maximum number of pods plant⁻¹ (364.11), number of seeds pod⁻¹ (5.04), pod length (2.34 cm), seed yield (2.31 g plant⁻¹ and 6.06 q ha⁻¹), test weight of seed plot⁻¹ (1.52 g), biological yield (29.67 q ha⁻¹) and harvest index by seed (20.44%) were found in main treatment D₂-30th October while the minimum were recorded in main treatment, D₃-15th November as shown in Table 3. This may be due to the fact that planting at the proper time can prolong the growth phase, improve reproductive growth and seed filling, and enable the plant to accumulate more heat units by utilizing soil nutrients and moisture, which is reflected in total plant biomass and economic yield. Similar to this, Bhavar *et al.* (2019) demonstrated that choosing the right sowing time increased yield attributes like the number of florets per plant, the number of pods per floret, and the number of seeds per pod, leading to a higher seed yield per plant. Earlier researchers, such as Yousaf *et al.* (2002), Ayub *et al.* (2008) in fennel,

Table 1. Plant height (cm), number of primary branches, number of leaves per plant at different treatments and their interactions.

	Plant height (cm)				Number of primary branches				Number of leaves			
	30 DAS	60 DAS	90 DAS	At harvest	30 DAS	60 DAS	90 DAS	At harvest	30 DAS	60 DAS	90 DAS	At harvest
	Main plot - Date of sowing (D)				Main plot - Date of sowing (D)				Main plot - Date of sowing (D)			
D ₁ (15 th Oct)	4.52	17.07	35.10	36.60	3.07	9.82	15.02	15.92	8.75	78.65	162.05	164.95
D ₂ (30 th Oct)	5.07	18.88	37.68	39.39	3.51	10.95	16.15	17.05	10.17	102.95	186.80	189.70
D ₃ (15 th Nov)	3.95	15.13	32.79	33.89	2.70	8.98	14.17	15.07	8.12	68.08	151.52	154.42
SEm ±	0.04	0.13	0.21	0.20	0.06	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.11	1.54	1.71	1.65
CD at 5%	0.13	0.38	0.62	0.58	0.18	0.38	0.40	0.39	0.32	4.51	5.01	4.84
	Sub plot - Spacing (S)				Sub plot - Spacing (S)				Sub plot - Spacing (S)			
S ₁ (15×10 cm)	5.18	19.17	37.85	39.67	2.63	8.95	14.12	15.04	8.17	68.78	152.18	155.08
S ₂ (20×10 cm)	4.77	17.97	36.34	37.63	2.92	9.54	14.74	15.64	8.62	75.18	159.08	161.98
S ₃ (25×10 cm)	4.23	16.19	34.20	35.57	3.23	10.32	15.52	16.42	9.28	90.33	173.73	176.63
S ₄ (30×10 cm)	3.87	14.78	32.37	33.62	3.60	10.86	16.06	16.95	9.99	98.60	182.16	185.06
SEm ±	0.05	0.15	0.25	0.23	0.07	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.13	1.77	1.97	1.91
CD at 5%	0.15	0.44	0.72	0.67	0.21	0.44	0.46	0.45	0.38	5.20	5.78	5.59
	Interactions (D × S)				Interactions (D × S)				Interactions (D × S)			
D ₁ S ₁	5.21	19.43	37.78	39.87	2.52	9.01	14.21	15.11	7.76	57.77	141.17	144.07
D ₁ S ₂	4.93	18.15	36.87	37.84	2.68	9.41	14.61	15.51	8.13	68.15	151.55	154.45
D ₁ S ₃	4.12	16.54	34.09	35.43	3.44	9.93	15.13	16.03	8.87	86.54	169.94	172.84
D ₁ S ₄	3.84	14.15	31.68	33.27	3.65	10.95	16.15	17.05	10.25	102.12	185.52	188.42
D ₂ S ₁	5.58	20.88	39.57	41.58	2.93	9.48	14.62	15.58	9.21	94.01	177.41	180.31
D ₂ S ₂	5.32	19.57	39.13	40.82	3.61	10.41	15.61	16.51	9.76	94.18	179.41	182.31
D ₂ S ₃	4.95	18.17	37.01	38.91	3.71	11.93	17.14	18.03	10.64	109.37	192.77	195.67
D ₂ S ₄	4.43	16.92	35.01	36.23	3.80	11.99	17.21	18.08	11.07	114.22	197.62	200.52
D ₃ S ₁	4.77	17.21	36.22	37.57	2.43	8.37	13.53	14.43	7.53	54.56	137.96	140.86
D ₃ S ₂	4.08	16.20	33.03	34.25	2.47	8.81	14.01	14.91	7.97	63.22	146.28	149.18
D ₃ S ₃	3.62	13.87	31.51	32.38	2.54	9.09	14.29	15.20	8.33	75.09	158.49	161.39
D ₃ S ₄	3.33	13.25	30.41	31.35	3.34	9.63	14.83	15.73	8.64	79.47	163.32	166.22
SEm ±	0.09	0.26	0.43	0.40	0.12	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.22	3.07	3.42	3.30
CD at 5%	0.25	0.77	1.25	1.16	0.36	0.77	0.80	0.77	0.65	9.01	10.02	9.69

Nandre *et al.* (2011) and Sharangi and Roychowdhury (2014) in coriander found similar results in fenugreek.

Effect of spacing

Significant effect was shown by all the morphological parameters to different spacing at 30, 60, 90 DAS and at harvest. Among spacings, S₁-15 × 10 cm spacing had obtained maximum (5.18, 19.17, 37.85 and 39.67 cm) and S₄-30×10 cm spacing had minimum plant height while maximum number of primary branches (3.60, 10.86, 16.06 and 16.95), number of leaves (9.99, 98.60, 182.16 and 185.06), fresh weight (3.61, 16.40, 39.80 and 54.88 g) and dry weight (0.51, 2.29, 5.40 and 8.55 g) of plant were recorded in sub treatment S₄-30×10 cm spacing while the minimum

were recorded in sub treatment S₁-15 × 10 cm spacing as shown in Tables 1-2. Due to increased plant exploitation for space, sunlight, nutrients, water, and other factors that led to vertical growth of plants rather than horizontal growth, plant height reduction with an increase in row spacing is possible (Ganvit *et al.* 2019). More space between plants allows them to spread, which increases the number of branches, leaves, fresh weight, and dry weight of the plant. These findings support those of Bhadkariya *et al.* (2007), Bagari *et al.* (2010) and Bairagi (2014) in relation to coriander, fennel and fenugreek.

The seed yield and yield attributing parameters were significantly influenced by spacing except harvest index by seed. The maximum number of pods

Table 2. Fresh weight (g plant⁻¹) and dry weight (g plant⁻¹) at different treatments and their interactions.

Treatments	Fresh weight (g plant ⁻¹)			At harvest	Fresh weight (g plant ⁻¹)			At harvest
	30 DAS	60 DAS	90 DAS		30 DAS	60 DAS	90 DAS	
	Main plot - Date of sowing (D)				Main plot - Date of sowing (D)			
D ₁ (15 th Oct)	3.19	14.72	37.10	51.71	0.45	2.06	5.02	8.23
D ₂ (30 th Oct)	3.69	16.54	39.84	55.24	0.51	2.32	5.40	8.58
D ₃ (15 th Nov)	2.99	13.78	35.62	49.97	0.42	1.92	4.82	8.00
SEm ±	0.05	0.11	0.51	0.31	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.04
CD at 5%	0.15	0.33	1.49	0.90	0.02	0.06	0.10	0.11
	Sub plot - Spacing (S)			Sub plot - Spacing (S)				
S ₁ (15×10 cm)	2.97	13.54	34.90	49.24	0.41	1.90	4.71	7.91
S ₂ (20×10 cm)	3.14	14.47	36.80	51.49	0.44	2.03	4.98	8.19
S ₃ (25×10 cm)	3.44	15.65	38.58	53.63	0.48	2.19	5.23	8.43
S ₄ (30×10 cm)	3.61	16.40	39.80	54.88	0.51	2.29	5.40	8.55
SEm ±	0.06	0.13	0.59	0.35	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.04
CD at 5%	0.17	0.38	1.72	1.04	0.02	0.07	0.12	0.12
	Interactions (D × S)			Interactions (D × S)				
D ₁ S ₁	2.77	12.73	34.06	47.67	0.39	1.78	4.59	7.79
D ₁ S ₂	3.00	13.91	36.18	50.27	0.42	1.95	4.89	8.19
D ₁ S ₃	3.34	15.50	38.22	53.56	0.47	2.17	5.17	8.37
D ₁ S ₄	3.67	16.76	39.96	55.36	0.51	2.35	5.42	8.58
D ₂ S ₁	3.49	15.51	38.38	53.78	0.49	2.17	5.20	8.41
D ₂ S ₂	3.55	16.26	39.34	54.74	0.50	2.28	5.33	8.50
D ₂ S ₃	3.84	16.98	40.35	55.75	0.53	2.38	5.47	8.65
D ₂ S ₄	3.89	17.42	41.29	56.69	0.54	2.44	5.61	8.78
D ₃ S ₁	2.67	12.37	32.27	46.27	0.36	1.73	4.35	7.54
D ₃ S ₂	2.87	13.24	34.87	49.46	0.40	1.85	4.71	7.88
D ₃ S ₃	3.15	14.48	37.18	51.58	0.44	2.03	5.04	8.26
D ₃ S ₄	3.26	15.04	38.16	52.58	0.46	2.08	5.17	8.30
SEm ±	0.10	0.22	1.02	0.61	0.01	0.04	0.07	0.07
CD at 5%	NS	0.66	NS	1.80	0.03	0.12	0.20	0.21

plant⁻¹ (383.75), number of seeds pod⁻¹ (5.27), pod length (2.29 cm), seed yield plant⁻¹ (2.53 g plant⁻¹), test weight of seed plot⁻¹ (1.57 g) were found in sub treatment S₄-30×10 cm spacing and the minimum were recorded in sub treatment S₁-15 × 10 cm spacing while the maximum seed yield (5.85 q ha⁻¹), biological yield (29.04 q ha⁻¹) and harvest index by seed (20.15%) were found in sub treatment S₃-25 × 10 cm spacing whereas the minimum were recorded in sub treatment S₁-15 × 10 cm spacing as shown in Table 3. This may be because there was less competition for growth factors at high plant spacing than at low plant spacing, which led to an increase in the number of pods, seed yield per pod, pod length, seed yield per plant and test weight. However, the maximum seed yield per hectare, biological yield and harvest index

by seed was found at spacing of 25 × 10 cm spacing, which may be related to the decrease in the number of plants per unit area at widest spacing combined with low plant-to-plant competition. These findings concur with those of Meena *et al.* (2003) and Nandal *et al.* (2007) in the study of fenugreek and Al-dalain *et al.* (2012) in the study of kasuri methi.

Interaction effect of date of sowing and spacing

With the exception of fresh weight during interaction at 30 and 90 days after sowing, all morphological parameters were significantly influenced by the interaction of different sowing dates and spacing during advancement of crop growth stage as shown in Tables 1- 2. The interaction D₂S₁-30th October with

Table 3. Seed yield and yield attributing parameters at different treatments and their interactions.

Treatments	No. of pods (plant ⁻¹)	No. of seeds (pod ⁻¹)	Pod length (cm)	Seed yield (g plant ⁻¹)	Seed yield (q ha ⁻¹)	Test weight (g)	Biological Yield (q ha ⁻¹)	Harvest index (%) by seed
Main plot - Date of Sowing (D)								
D ₁ (15 th Oct)	322.09	4.82	1.98	1.96	4.97	1.42	24.71	20.12
D ₂ (30 th Oct)	364.11	5.04	2.34	2.31	6.06	1.52	29.67	20.44
D ₃ (15 th Nov)	286.65	4.16	1.81	1.51	4.01	1.31	21.27	18.88
SEm. ±	3.16	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.13	0.02	0.30	0.62
CD at 5%	9.26	0.16	0.08	0.09	0.38	0.07	0.87	NS
Sub plot - Spacing (S)								
S ₁ (15×10 cm)	260.51	3.78	1.80	1.23	4.13	1.24	21.11	19.47
S ₂ (20×10 cm)	306.62	4.48	1.96	1.72	5.27	1.37	26.06	20.13
S ₃ (25×10 cm)	346.25	5.16	2.12	2.23	5.85	1.48	29.04	20.15
S ₄ (30×10 cm)	383.75	5.27	2.29	2.53	4.83	1.57	24.65	19.50
SEm ±	3.64	0.06	0.03	0.04	0.15	0.03	0.34	0.72
CD at 5%	10.69	0.18	0.09	0.10	0.44	0.08	1.00	NS
Interactions (D × S)								
D ₁ S ₁	255.40	3.82	1.67	1.21	3.61	1.24	18.97	19.09
D ₁ S ₂	296.72	4.75	1.85	1.75	5.70	1.39	25.48	20.54
D ₁ S ₃	349.89	5.29	2.05	2.30	6.03	1.49	30.85	19.58
D ₁ S ₄	386.33	5.43	2.37	2.60	4.56	1.55	23.56	19.40
D ₂ S ₁	302.25	4.00	2.17	1.50	5.23	1.26	25.44	20.55
D ₂ S ₂	337.83	4.95	2.27	2.07	6.37	1.46	31.64	20.16
D ₂ S ₃	387.09	5.56	2.40	2.67	6.67	1.57	32.45	22.41
D ₂ S ₄	429.24	5.65	2.50	3.01	5.99	1.77	29.15	20.52
D ₃ S ₁	223.86	3.53	1.55	0.98	3.54	1.21	18.94	18.86
D ₃ S ₂	285.30	3.74	1.76	1.35	3.73	1.26	21.06	17.83
D ₃ S ₃	301.76	4.64	1.92	1.73	4.84	1.37	23.81	20.34
D ₃ S ₄	335.66	4.75	2.01	1.98	3.93	1.39	21.26	18.49
SEm ±	6.31	0.11	0.05	0.06	0.26	0.04	0.59	1.25
CD at 5%	18.51	0.32	0.15	0.18	0.77	NS	1.74	NS

15 × 10 cm spacing was recorded maximum plant height (5.58, 20.88, 39.57 and 41.58 cm) whereas maximum number of branches (3.80, 11.99, 17.21 and 18.08), number of leaves (11.07, 114.22, 197.62 and 200.52), fresh weight (3.89, 17.42, 41.29 and 56.69 g) and dry weight (0.54, 2.44, 5.61 and 8.78 g) per plant showed in D₂S₄-30th October with 30 × 10 cm spacing at 30, 60, 90 DAS and at harvest. The minimum plant height was recorded in treatment D₃S₄-15th November with 30 × 10 cm spacing while number of branches, number of leaves, fresh weight and dry weight per plant was showed in treatment D₃S₁-15th November with 15 × 10 cm spacing. This may be a result of the favorable weather experienced throughout the crop period as well as timely nutrient absorption from wider spacing which reduces competition and

provide sufficient sunlight availability which led to an increase in the number of branches, leaves and weight of plant while closer spacing promotes vertical growth. Similar results in fenugreek and kasuri methi were reported by Nandre *et al.* (2011), Habib *et al.* (2019) and Anupama (2012).

The interaction of the dates of sowing and spacing had a significant impact on yield and yield-attributing parameters such as number of pods plant⁻¹, number of seeds pod⁻¹, pod length, seed yield plant⁻¹ and ha⁻¹ and biological yield, whereas test weight and harvest index by seed showed non-significant variations as shown in Table 3. The maximum number of pods plant⁻¹ (429.24), number of seeds pod⁻¹ (5.65), pod length (2.50 cm), seed yield plant⁻¹ (3.01

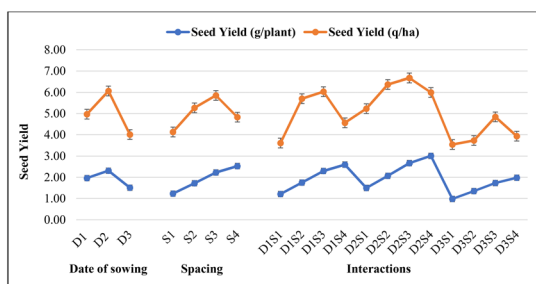


Fig. 1. Seed yield (g plant^{-1} and q ha^{-1}) at different treatments and their interaction.

g) and test weight (1.77 g) were accumulated by the treatment combination D_2S_4 -30th October with 30×10 cm spacing. However, D_2S_3 -30th October with 25×10 cm spacing saw the greatest seed yield ha^{-1} (6.67 q), biological yield (32.45 q ha^{-1}), and harvest index by seed (22.41%). This may be related to improved photosynthetic efficiency and photosynthate transfer from source to sink when crop is sown at the appropriate time which will result in more primary branches per plant, pods per plant, and seeds per pod (Sowmya *et al.* 2017). In contrast to closer spacing, wide spacing produces the more pod plant^{-1} and seed plant^{-1} , but it also results in lower seed yield ha^{-1} as shown in Fig.1 and biological yield due to lower plant-to-plant competition and fewer plants per unit area (Al-dalain *et al.* 2012) also reported by Meena *et al.* (2003) in fenugreek and Nandal *et al.* (2007).

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