



Organic Farming in Banana

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ABSTRACT

A field experiment was conducted to study the impact of in-situ decomposition of farm residue with microbes activators and its effects on yield and quality of banana and soil properties under farming. This experiment was conducted during kharif of 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 at Organic Farm, Navsari Agricultural University, Navsari (Gujarat). The experiment was laid in randomized block design with four replications. The higher bunch weight and yield were found to be highest with application of full dose of nitrogen i.e. 300g/plant through bio compost: castor cake: vermicompost in equal proportion (T_1). Potassium content in banana fruit was significantly higher with treatment T_5 (Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + 2 % Jeevamrut @ 400 L/ha) but was at par with most of the treatments. Significantly higher content of Mn, Cu and Zn was observed in treatment T_3 (Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + 2 % Panchgavya @ 400 L/ha). Addition of farm residue did not change the physical property which is reflected by non significant differences in bulk density but it increased the OC content and improved the available N status of the soil. Available P_2O_5 and K_2O were only affected during 2012-13 and 2013-14, respectively. Significantly higher content of available P_2O_5 was recorded with treatment T_6 (Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + Microbial consortia @ 2 kg/ha) whereas that of lowest in treatment T_1 during 2012-13. Reverse trend was observed in the case of available K_2O during 2013-14.

Keywords: Banana yield, nutrient content, soil properties, organic farming

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INTRODUCTION

All organic residues incorporated into the soil undergo decomposition from the original residues as a result a series of products is formed. As the original material and the initial products undergo further decomposition, they become a brown black organic complex known by the name humus. It is worth noting that nutrient management through organics play a major role in maintaining soil health due to build up of soil organic matter, beneficial microbes and enzymes, besides improving soil physical and chemical properties. To achieve sustainable soil fertility and crop productivity, the role of organic manures and other nutrient management practices like use of fermented organic nutrients viz., Panchagavya, Jeevamrut, Beejamrut, Sasyamrut, Vermiwash etc., are becoming popular among farmers. These fermented liquid organic fertilizers contain in addition to nutrients, numerable microorganism and growth promoting substances which help in improving plant growth, metabolic activity and resistance to pest and diseases [8]. A major objective of organic farming is to encourage a higher level of nutrients and biological activity in the soil, in order to sustain its quality and there by promote metabolic interactions between the soil and plants. For successful organic farming in any crops it is depend upon the availability of nutrients in right time and right amount. Any mismatch in these two may hamper the production. The availability of nutrients from organic manures depends upon the C:N ratio of the manures. Wider the C:N ratio, slower the nutrient release and sometime immobilization is occurred. Therefore, integration of different organic manures to skew down the C:N ratio can increase the rate of decomposition and speed up the nutrient release. Hence, present investigation is intended to evaluate the impact of *in-situ* residue decomposition on yield and quality of banana and soil properties under organic farming.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present experiment was conducted at Organic Farm, Navsari Agricultural University, Navsari during kharif of 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15 to study the impact of *in-situ* residue decomposition on yield and

quality of banana and soil properties under organic farming. The soil of experimental area contained 0.80, 0.75 and 0.78 per cent OC and 263, 254 and 256 kg available N/ ha during 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15, respectively. The experiment was laid out in randomized block design with four replications. Seven treatments viz. **T₁**: 100% N (300 g N/plant) through bio compost (BC): castor cake (CC): vermicompost (VC), **T₂**: Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + 2 % banana pseudostem sap (BPS) @ 400 L/ha, **T₃**: Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + 2 % Panchgavya @ 400 L/ha, **T₄**: Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + 2 % Amrutpani @ 400 L/ha, **T₅**: Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + 2 % Jeevamrut @ 400 L/ha, **T₆**: Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + Microbial consortia @ 2 kg/ha and **T₇**: Farm Residue @ 10t/ha were applied. NADEP compost @ 2.0 kg per pit along with *Azotobacter*, PSB @ 5.0 kg/ha and 0.5% each of *Pseudomonas* and *Trichoderma* were drenched @500ml/plant at the time of planting. Crop residue @10/ ha. was applied in equal two splits after two and four months of planting. Residue was spread on the ridge and applied 2 per cent each of liquid formulation on residue as per treatments and then the residue was covered by thin layer of soil. Observations were recorded on randomly selected five plants from each plot. Soil samples from each plot after harvest of crop were taken and analyzed for physical and chemical properties through standard methods.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Growth and yield

The data pertaining to growth of banana crop (plant height) indicated that nitrogen application through biocompost: castor cake: vermicompost (**T₁**) significantly increased the plant height during all the individual years as well as in pooled analysis, but it was at par with treatment **T₄** (Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + Amrutpani @ 400 L/ha) during the year 2012-13, 2013-14 and in pooled analysis. In the year 2014-15 treatment **T₁** was found at par with treatments **T₂**, **T₃** and **T₄**. Plant height was significantly poor and lower in treatment **T₇** (Farm Residue @ 10t/ha) during all the periods (Table 1). The increase in plant height could be attributed to the higher uptake of nutrients, particularly nitrogen [13]. The lower values for vegetative growth in plant height and dry matter production may be attributed to the shortage/deficiency of nitrogen which might have increased the ABA levels in all parts of the shoot, root and xylem exudates [10] and dropping the gibberellic acid levels of the shoots and decreased in production and export of cytokinins from roots to shoot and leaves ultimately resulting in reduced growth [11]. Bunch weight was also influenced significantly due to residue management and higher bunch weight was recorded with treatment **T₁** during all the year (Table 1). Pooled analysis indicated that application of full dose of nitrogen *i.e.* 300g/plant through biocompost: castor cake: vermicompost (**T₁**) increased the bunch yield by 47.4% compared with yield recorded in treatment **T₇**.

In the case of banana yield (t/ha), similar trend was also observed as observed in case of plant height of the crop. The highest yield of 72.8 t/ha with treatment **T₁** was observed in the pooled analysis (Table 2). Several workers have also reported that application of different organic manures like FYM, neem cake and vermicompost gave higher number of fingers, finger weight and yield in banana plants [5, 9, 1, 3]. Significant improvement in the population of soil microorganisms *viz.*, bacteria, fungi and actinomycetes was noticed, at different crop growth stages of sesame by Ravusaheb *et al.*, [15] when organics (*viz.* compost, vermicompost, GLM) applied in combinations with fermented organics (*viz.* beejamrut, jeevamrut, panchagavya). Higher yield response owing to application of organics ascribed to improved physical, chemical and biological properties of soil resulting in better supply of plant nutrients, which in turn led to good crop growth and yield. In present study periodic application of liquid formulation enhanced the microbial activity which mineralize the farm residue and supply the plant nutrients continuously and thus, harmonized the supply and demand of the nutrients. This in turn would have assisted for the increased yield of banana. This is in confirmation with the findings of Somasundaram *et al.* [16] in banana.

Quality

The quality parameters in terms of nutrient content *viz.* P, K, Na, Ca, Mg, Fe, Zn, Mn and Cu in fruit are reported in table 3 to 6. The results furnished in table 3 revealed that P and K content in fruit were significantly influenced during individual year and in pooled analysis. Significantly higher content of P and K in fruit was observed with treatment **T₆** and **T₅**, respectively but was at par with other treatments, except treatment **T₃** and **T₆** in case of K. With respect to Ca and Mg content in pooled analysis, significantly higher content was evaluated with treatment **T₄** and **T₆**, respectively but was at par with treatment **T₃** and **T₆** in case of Mg content (Table 4). Fe content in fruit was significantly higher compared to other treatments during 2012-13, 2014-15 and in pooled, but was at par with treatment **T₂** (Farm Residue @ 10t/ha + 2 % banana pseudostem sap @ 400 L/ha) while during 2013-14 reverse trend was observed. In contrary to Fe, significantly higher Zn in fruit was observed with application of farm Residue @ 10t/ha + 2 % Panchgavya @ 400 L/ha (**T₃**) during individual year and even pooled analysis also. Significantly

lower content of Fe and Zn were reported with treatment T₇. In the pooled analysis these values were significantly lower in treatment T₇, T₅, T₄ and T₅, respectively but was at par with most of the remaining treatments (Table 5). Table 6 illustrated that significantly higher content of Mn was observed in treatment T₃ during the year 2013-14, 2014-15 and in pooled. In pooled significantly higher content of Mn and Cu was recorded with treatment T₃ but was at par with T₄, T₅ and T₆ in case of Mn, whereas it was at par with treatments T₂, T₄ and T₆ in case of Cu. Application of BC: VC: CC in the proportion of 33.3: 33.3: 33.4 per cent nitrogen along with banana pseudostem sap @ 8 l/plant showed improvement in nutrient content in papaya fruit under organic farming. Apart from essential plant nutrients, pseudostem sap also contains the growth promoting substances like cytokinin, GA₃ *etc.*, which might have exerted beneficial effects on plant growth and ultimately reflected on the nutrient content in papaya [6]. Similar findings in banana have been reported by Bambhaneeya [2] under organic farming.

Soil properties

Application of farm residue did not change the physical conditions in soil which was reflected by non significant differences in bulk density. It may be due to the practicing of organic farming since more than ten years with the continuous addition of organic matter at the experimental area. After the harvest, the soil organic carbon was significantly improved with the application of organic materials. Organic carbon content was influenced during 2012-13 and 2014-15 only and significantly higher content of OC was recorded with treatment T₂ followed by T₁ (Table 7). Combined application of biofertilizers and organic fertilizers increased the soil organic carbon, microbial biomass and dehydrogenase activity [4]. Application of organic residue increased the OC content of the soil and improved the available N status of the soil. Significantly higher content of available N *i.e.* 270 kg/ha (T₁), 279 kg/ha (T₁) and 285 kg/ha (T₅) was recorded during 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15, respectively. The available P₂O₅ and K₂O content in soil was significantly affected during 2012-13 and 2013-14, respectively. Here, significantly higher content of available P₂O₅ was recorded with treatment T₆ whereas that of lowest in treatment T₁ during 2012-13. Reverse trend was observed in the case of available K₂O during 2013-14 (Table 8). Application of 100% RDN through vermicompost+jeevamrut showed higher values of organic carbon, available N, P and K content in soil followed by 100% RDN through vermicompost. The organic carbon, available N, P and K content may be increased due to higher rate of addition and decomposition of organic sources [12]. This result was also in agreement with those reported by Rajulapudi [14] in banana and Jaffar Basha and Basavarajappa [7] in rice.

Table 1: Effect of different treatments on plant height and bunch weight of banana.

Treatments	Plant height (cm)				Bunch weight (kg)			
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled
T ₁	174.2	185.3	223.8	194.4	18.6	20.0	24.3	20.9
T ₂	150.6	164.8	213.8	176.3	15.3	18.0	22.1	18.4
T ₃	157.2	167.5	208.0	177.6	13.4	15.6	19.9	16.3
T ₄	163.0	179.8	210.3	184.3	14.6	15.7	20.0	16.7
T ₅	156.3	164.2	181.0	167.1	13.1	14.5	18.8	15.4
T ₆	150.6	158.0	203.3	170.6	14.3	14.5	18.1	15.6
T ₇	142.3	147.8	182.8	157.6	12.4	12.9	16.0	13.7
<i>S.Em.±</i>	5.55	5.42	9.44	4.0	0.8	1.0	1.21	0.55
<i>C.D. @ 5%</i>	16.48	16.11	28.05	11.4	2.4	3.0	3.59	1.5
<i>C.V. %</i>	7.10	6.51	9.29	8.04	11.2	12.8	12.18	12.2
<i>TxT Int.</i>				<i>NS</i>				<i>NS</i>

Table 2: Effect of different treatments on yield of banana

Treatments	Yield (t/ha)			
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled
T ₁	69.5	74.9	73.8	72.8
T ₂	57.1	67.4	68.7	64.4
T ₃	50.1	58.3	65.1	57.8
T ₄	54.7	58.6	63.1	58.8
T ₅	58.9	54.4	63.2	58.8
T ₆	53.3	54.4	58.6	55.4
T ₇	46.3	48.2	53.4	49.3
<i>S.Em.±</i>	3.0	3.8	3.6	1.96
<i>C.D. @ 5%</i>	9.0	11.3	11.1	5.6
<i>C.V. %</i>	11.1	12.8	11.3	11.8
<i>TxT Int.</i>				<i>NS</i>

Table 3: Effect of different treatments on phosphorus, potassium and sodium content in banana fruit.

Treatments	P (ppm)				K (ppm)				Na (ppm)			
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled
T1	505	520	506	510	3754	4012	4165	3977	146	135	140	141
T2	516	644	628	596	4022	3425	3825	3757	129	124	145	133
T3	671	523	654	616	3385	3775	3698	3619	113	133	135	127
T4	552	512	526	530	3562	4003	3785	3783	137	140	149	142
T5	614	601	602	606	3774	4352	4158	4095	113	132	135	127
T6	545	756	621	641	3836	3356	3462	3551	112	145	139	132
T7	550	560	529	546	3549	4125	3777	3817	160.8	140	146	147
S.Em±	10.5	9.2	2.3	47.9	8.6	76.6	37.4	147.5	0.4	2.7	4.1	6.0
C.D @ 5%	31	27	7	145	25	225	110	447	1.3	8.0	NS	NS
C.V. %	3.8	3.2	0.81	12.1	0.4	4.0	2.0	2.6	1.0	4.0	5.8	4.2
YT				102	-	-	-	145	-	-	-	8.4

Table 4: Effect of different treatments on calcium and magnesium content in banana fruit.

Treatments	Ca (ppm)				Mg (ppm)			
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled
T1	56.7	58.6	55.1	56.8	208	250	227	228
T2	52.7	60.1	55.6	56.1	225	213	246	228
T3	66.7	56.1	60.2	61.0	353	286	306	315
T4	70.2	60.9	62.6	64.5	255	281	281	272
T5	56.9	59.2	55.9	57.3	220	182	212	205
T6	64.2	62.3	60.5	62.3	382	248	321	318
T7	48.6	54.6	53.9	52.3	250	211	240	234
S.Em±	1.01	0.64	1.01	2.01	2.2	3.7	5.0	20.8
C.D @ 5%	2.9	1.9	2.9	6.1	7	11	15	63
C.V. %	3.4	2.2	3.5	3.1	1.7	3.2	3.9	10.8
YT	-	-	-	2.5				40

Table 5: Effect of different treatments on iron and zinc content in banana fruit.

Treatments	Fe (mg/kg)				Zn (mg/kg)			
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled
T1	60.9	59.8	61.7	60.8	1.41	1.59	1.49	1.50
T2	59.9	61.4	59.6	60.3	1.12	1.61	1.53	1.42
T3	57.2	52.4	55.2	54.9	1.93	1.88	1.83	1.88
T4	55.9	57.5	55.6	56.3	1.48	1.53	1.51	1.51
T5	53.1	50.2	52.6	52.0	1.15	1.24	1.30	1.23
T6	55.7	53.2	50.0	53.0	1.33	1.42	1.34	1.36
T7	52.7	51.1	51.0	51.6	1.21	1.25	1.29	1.25
S.Em.±	0.86	0.91	2.47	0.93	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.06
C.D. @ 5%	2.54	2.70	7.33	2.62	0.08	0.12	0.10	0.18
C.V. %	3.15	3.30	8.96	5.77	4.09	5.36	4.71	4.78
TxT Int.				NS				NS

Table 6: Effect of different treatments on manganese and copper content in banana fruit.

Treatments	Mn (mg/kg)				Cu (mg/kg)			
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	Pooled
T1	2.28	1.95	2.20	2.14	1.47	1.55	1.48	1.50
T2	1.60	2.50	2.39	2.16	1.60	1.79	1.60	1.66
T3	2.79	3.57	2.95	3.10	1.90	1.70	1.70	1.77
T4	2.94	2.69	2.55	2.72	1.79	1.82	1.66	1.76
T5	2.24	3.15	2.56	2.65	1.52	1.59	1.64	1.58
T6	2.86	2.79	2.77	2.80	1.68	1.63	1.68	1.66
T7	1.77	2.15	2.65	2.19	1.68	1.57	1.58	1.61
S.Em.±	0.08	0.05	0.11	0.18	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.05
C.D. @ 5%	0.23	0.13	0.33	0.55	0.10	0.08	0.09	0.14
C.V. %	7.0	3.6	8.9	6.8	4.4	3.2	3.7	11.1
TxT Int.				NS				NS

Table 7: Effect of different treatments on bulk density and organic carbon content after harvest.

Treatments	Bulk density (g/cc)			Organic carbon (%)		
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
T ₁	1.41	1.39	1.36	0.92	0.93	1.00
T ₂	1.40	1.40	1.44	0.94	0.92	1.03
T ₃	1.44	1.45	1.39	0.82	0.87	0.93
T ₄	1.45	1.49	1.43	0.79	0.83	0.89
T ₅	1.48	1.44	1.38	0.86	0.90	0.97
T ₆	1.43	1.42	1.45	0.84	0.87	0.92
T ₇	1.43	1.41	1.46	0.77	0.87	0.89
<i>S.Em.±</i>	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.02
<i>C.D. @ 5%</i>	NS	NS	NS	0.03	NS	0.06
<i>C.V. %</i>	4.36	4.38	3.96	2.37	5.26	3.98

Table 8: Effect of different treatments on available N, P₂O₅ and K₂O content after harvest.

Treatments	Available N (kg/ha)			Available P ₂ O ₅ (kg/ha)			Available K ₂ O (kg/ha)		
	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
T ₁	270	279	279	53.5	50.4	46.6	463	483	512
T ₂	263	271	275	56.8	49.4	51.7	400	408	455
T ₃	251	262	266	50.7	51.1	47.9	438	430	420
T ₄	255	263	263	62.7	53.8	52.7	435	450	492
T ₅	266	276	285	53.7	54.7	52.4	434	408	456
T ₆	255	265	266	65.7	52.8	45.9	409	396	385
T ₇	252	258	262	56.6	52.1	48.6	443	454	425
<i>S.Em.±</i>	4.3	4.5	4.7	1.9	2.9	2.4	14.8	16.1	27.7
<i>C.D. @ 5%</i>	13	13	14	5.5	NS	NS	NS	47.8	NS
<i>C.V. %</i>	3.3	3.3	3.5	6.5	11.0	9.6	6.8	7.4	12.3

CONCLUSIONS

Application of full dose of nitrogen *i.e.* 300 g/plant resulted higher bunch weight and yield of banana. Addition of organic materials into the soil with or without liquid formulations and microbes more or less improves the quality of banana fruits. Moreover to this, addition of organic materials improves the soil organic carbon and available nutrients status in the soil. It may due to the decomposition of organic matter which facilitates humus formation and prevents leaching of nutrients. Considering all the aspects from the of the above investigations, addition of organic material could be beneficial for improving yield, quality and soil properties of banana under organic farming in South Gujarat region.

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