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INTERPLANTATION OF CITRUS CULTIVARS IN DATE PALM FOR BETTER ECONOMIC RETURNS

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ABSTRACT

Date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) is one of the most important palms because of its high nutritive value. The per unit area return from the land occupied by date palm can be increased by interplanting citrus or any other shade loving crops. Date palm trees growing at Regional Fruit Research Station, Abohar planted at a spacing of 22/ X 22/ were interplanted with citrus cultivars, i.e., Lemon and Kagzi lime. The citrus cultivars were planted in the shade of date palm and also in open space for comparison. It was observed that both Lemon and Kagzi lime produced more tree volume, stock girth and scion girth when planted in open as compared to those planted under shade. The average number of fruits per tree was more in open (197.86g) as compared to shade (117.96g) in cv. Lemon. However, the fruit weight (54.28g), fruit length (4.82cm), fruit breadth (4.56 cm) and Juice (40.38%) were more in shade in cv. Lemon. There was not much variation in TSS:Acid ratio in cv. Lemon when planted in shade or open but TSS:acid ratio of cv. Kagzi lime was more in open (1.36) as compared to shade (1.28). Chlorophyll in the leaves of Lemon and Kagzi lime were more in open as compared to shade. Based on these studies it can be concluded that although the yield of citrus cultivars is more if planted in open as compared to those planted under shade of date palm, but the interplanted citrus cultivars add to the economic returns per unit area to the orchardists.