

STUDIES ON NATURE OF SALT

TOLERANCE IN OKRA

By

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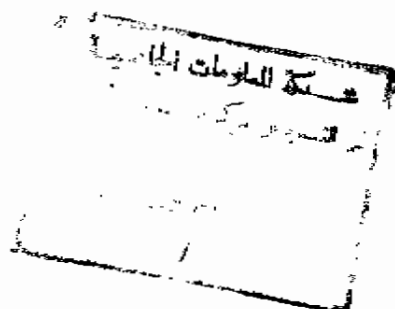
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ABSTRACT

Salt tolerance of four okra cultivars namely: White Velvet; Gold Coast; Balady and Eskandarani, were investigated during three different stages of plant development namely: seed germination, seedling and reproductive stages. At both first and second stages of plant development, various concentrations of sea water (diluted with tap water) were used for irrigation while at the third stage, various saline water with different electric conductivities were used for irrigation.

Results of these studies revealed that salinity reduced and delayed seed germination. At this stage, White Velvet cv. appeared to be tolerant to salinity. At the seedling stage, salinity generally reduced fresh weight of plant for all tested cultivars and Gold Coast was the least affected one. At the reproductive stage, salinity reduced plant growth and total yield/plant but with different degrees depending upon cultivar. In this respect, yield of both Gold Coast and Balady was not greatly reduced at the high level of salinity.

Results of Na, K, K : Na, Cl and amino-nitrogen as contributing factors for salinity tolerance, revealed that high accumulation of Na^+ and Cl^- , slight reduction in K content, low K : Na ratio, and low values of amino-nitrogen were noticed in leaves of both Gold Coast and Balady cultivars under high level of salinity.

The anatomical studies showed that salinity reduced xylem and phloem elements in okra roots depending upon both salinity level and cultivar.

Generally, the obtained results suggest that both Gold Coast and Balady Okra cultivars can be considered as tolerant genotypes to salinity and recommended for cultivation in both arid and semi-arid lands where salinity is considered a potential problem.

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CONTENTS

	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	3
2.1. Effect of salinity on seed germination	3
2.2. Effect of salinity on plant growth	6
2.3. Effect of salinity on yield	9
2.4. Effect of salinity on mineral content of plant ...	11
2.5. Mechanisms of salt tolerance	13
2.5.1. Physiological mechanisms	13
2.5.2. Anatomical structure mechanisms	16
3. MATERIALS AND METHODS	17
3.1. The first experiment	17
3.2. The second experiment	20
3.3. The third experiment	22
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	29
4.1. THE FIRST EXPERIMENT	
" Effect of different levels of diluted sea water on seed germination".....	29
4.1.1. Seed germination percent	29
4.1.2. Germination velocity.....	32
4.2. The SECOND EXPERIMENT	
" Effect of different levels of diluted sea water on seedling growth".....	35

4.3. THE THIRD EXPERIMENT	
" Effect of irrigation with various levels of saline water on growth, yield, plant mineral content, amino-nitrogen and root structure".....	42
4.3.1. Plant growth	42
4.3.1.1. Plant height	42
4.3.1.2. Plant fresh weight	45
4.3.1.3. Plant dry weight	46
4.3.2. Total yield	54
4.3.3. Effect of salinity on mineral content of plant	60
4.3.3.1. Potassium	60
4.3.3.2. Sodium	60
4.3.3.3. Chloride	67
4.3.3.4. Amino-nitrogen	68
4.3.4. Anatomical studies	70
5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	75
6. LITERATURE CITED	81
7. ARABIC SUMMARY	

LIST OF TABLES

No:	Page
A. Chemical analysis of sea water.....	18
B. Physical and chemical analysis of the used soil	18
C. Chemical analysis of tap water.....	18
D. Physical and chemical analysis of the used soil of the experimental form.....	23
E. Chemical analysis of the used irrigation water	25
1. Effect of different levels of diluted sea water on seed germination percentages of four okra cultivars ..	30
2. Effect of different levels of diluted sea water on germination velocity of four okra cultivars	33
3. Growth comparisons of four okra cultivars grown in control and salinized nutrient solution 42 days after salinity treatments (First season)	36
4. Growth comparisons of four okra cultivars grown in control and salinized nutrient solution 42 days after salinity treatments (Second season)	38
5. Vegetative growth of three okra cultivars relative to Balady grown under control conditions and their relative salt tolerance at three salinity levels (average of two seasons)	40
6. Effect of irrigation with various levels of saline water on plant height and fresh weight of leaves, stems and roots of four okra cultivars, 1988 season ..	43

Contin. List of Tables

No:	Page
7. Effect of irrigation with various levels of saline water on plant height, and fresh weight of leaves, stems and roots of four okra cultivars, 1989 season .	44
8. Effect of irrigation with various saline water levels on plant height (Cm) of four okra cultivars (averages of two seasons).....	47
9. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentrations on dry weight of leaves, stems and roots/plant of four okra cultivars, 1988 season.....	49
10. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentrations on dry weight of leaves, stems and roots/plant of four okra cultivars, 1989 season.....	50
11. Salt tolerance of four okra cultivars as affected by irrigation with different levels of saline water, first season	52
12. Salt tolerance of four okra cultivars as affected by irrigation with different levels of saline water, second season	53
13. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentrations on number of fruits/plant, fruit weight and total yield/plant of four okra cultivars, 1988 season.....	55

No.	Page
14. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentrations on number of fruits/plant, fruit weight and total yield/plant of four okra cultivars, 1989 season	57
15. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentrations on potassium, sodium and chloride contents in leaves of four okra cultivars (averages of two seasons)	61
16. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentrations on potassium, sodium and chloride contents in fruits of four okra cultivars (averages of two seasons)	63
17. Potassium : Sodium ratio in leaf and fruit of four okra cultivars as affected by different levels of salinity	66
18. Amino-nitrogen in leaf tissue of four okra cultivars under control and salinized conditions	69
19. Root anatomy of four okra cultivars as affected by different levels of saline irrigation water	72

LIST OF FIGURES

No:	Page
1. Seed germination percentages of four okra cultivars as affected by various levels of salinity	31
2. Germination velocity of four okra cultivars as affected by various levels of salinity	34
3. Fresh weight percentage from control as affected by various levels of salinity for four okra cultivars (First season)	37
4. Fresh weight percentage from control as affected by various levels of salinity for four okra cultivars (Second season)	39
5. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentration on plant height (Cm) of four okra cultivars (averages of two seasons)	48
6. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentrations on total yield/plant, 1988 season	56
7. Effect of irrigation with various saline water concentrations on total yield/plant, 1989 season	58
8. Potassium, sodium and chloride contents in mature leaves of four okra cultivars irrigated by different levels of saline water (average of two seasons)	62
9. Potassium, sodium and chloride contents in fruit of four okra cultivars irrigated by different levels of saline water (average of two seasons)	64

LIST OF PLATES

No:	Page
1. Seedlings growth of four okra cultivars as affected by various concentrations of diluted sea water	41
2. Cross sections in main roots of White velvet, Gold Coast, Balady and Eskandarani okra cultivars as affected by various saline irrigation water	71

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INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

Okra (Abelomoschus esculentus) is an important vegetable crop in many countries. In A.R. Egypt, it is of great importance where it is grown for market and processing. The area devoted to okra in 1991 was 11115 Feddans with an average 5.9 ton/Feddan*.

The increasing demands of the expanding population for food and energy necessitate the increase of arable land by exploiting marginal areas such as arid and semi arid lands. Such areas are characterized by high salinity in the soil and in the major water resources.

The improvement of salt tolerance in agricultural species has been promoted as an agronomic approach to the exploitation of large areas of saline soils and the efficient use of the relatively abundant water supplies that currently have little agricultural value.

Salt tolerance is not a constant character in plants but it varies with environment and plant development.

It can be measured by a number of criteria such as survival at high salt concentrations, the determination of growth response under saline conditions and a relative reduction in yield as a function of increasing soil salinity.

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