



Effect of Different Sources and Levels of Sulphur in Sesame on Yield, Nutrient Uptake and Soil Fertility in Acid Alfisols of Odisha, India

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aims: To examine the impact of different sources and levels of Sulphur on yield and oil content of sesame in acid Alfisols of Dhenkanal district of Odisha.

Study Design: Randomized Block Design with three replications.

Place and Duration of Study: During 2018 and 2019, this experiment was carried out at the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology's Regional Research and Technology Transfer Station, which is located in Mahisapat, Dhenkanal district, Mid Central Table Land Zone, Odisha.

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Methodology: The treatments were T₁- STBFR (S control), T₂- STBFR + 30 kg ha⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate, T₃- STBFR + 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate, T₄- STBFR + 30 kg ha⁻¹ S from Gypsum, T₅- STBFR + 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from Gypsum, T₆- STBFR + 30 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP, T₇- STBFR + 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP.

Results: Among seven treatments, T₇ (STBFR along with 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP) was superior among all the sources and doses w.r.t. yield components and yield. The quality parameters like oil content under different sulphur fertilization was found to be maximum with STBFR along with 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP. Highest total nutrient uptake in terms of N, P, K and S of 55, 26, 37 and 5 kg/ha was recorded with the same treatment.

Conclusion: Sulphur fertilization (T₇) in the acid *Alfisols* of Odisha exhibited improved yield, oil content and nutrient uptake in sesame.

Keywords: STBFR; nutrient uptake; harvest index; oil content.

1. INTRODUCTION

As the "Queen of oilseeds," sesame (*Sesamum indicum* L.) is one of the earliest oil seed crops that humans have ever encountered and utilized [1]. According to Raza et al. [2] sesame has the greatest oil content of any oilseed crop, ranging from 42–50%, and a protein content of 25%. Its seed is rich in unsaturated fatty acids, including oleic and linoleic acids, which are primarily responsible for the oil's quality. Additionally, essential antioxidants like sesamol and sesamol found in sesame oil stop rancidity. Because of its high methionine content, sesame cake, also known as meal, which is a by-product of the oil processing trade, is used as an element in chicken feed. It is high in protein, carbohydrates, nutrients, and minerals and makes a good feed for animals [3]. The cake can be utilized as manure and has a composition of 6.0–6.2% N, 2.0–2.2% P, and 1.0–1.2% K [4]. India is the world's top producer of sesame, both in terms of production volume and area. With a total yield of 0.8 million tonnes, it is grown on 1.77 million hectares [5]. A well-managed crop of sesame can yield 1200 - 1500 kg/ha under irrigated and 800 - 1000 kg/ha under rainfed conditions. The crop is grown in almost all parts of the country. More than 85% production of sesame comes from West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana" [6]. Even though Odisha is one of the states that produces the most sesame, not much is produced there. Poor management and development on the margins and outside of regions with rainfed, input-starved conditions are the main reasons for Sesame's low productivity. The most crucial element influencing sesame production among management techniques is nutrient management. Crop quality and seed yield are enhanced by sulphur application [7].

Sulphur (S) is important for cell development, essential oil synthesis, plant metabolism, and the production of chlorophyll. Given its low availability in different soils, sulphur is regarded as the fourth primary plant nutrient after nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. This results in an intrinsic sulphur shortage. Widespread S shortage and altered soil Sulphur budget are the results of ongoing sulphur removal from soils by plant uptake [8]. India's soils are becoming more and more deficient in sulphur, particularly the coarse-textured alluvial soils, the red and lateritic soils, the leached acidic soils, and the soils with low organic matter content. Reduced S inputs from the atmosphere and fertilizers (DAP replacing SSP), low soil organic matter content, insufficient addition of organic manures after crop removal with high yielding varieties and intensive perturbation, and adsorption of Sulphur in acid soils are the main causes of this occurrence [9].

Among the sulphur supplying sources, gypsum and elemental sulphur are being abundantly used in sulphur deficient soils. The response of sesame to sulphur for producing higher yield was up to 40 kg ha⁻¹ according to Nagawani *et al.*, (2001) and Kathiresan (2002).

Sulphur application not only improved the grain yield but also improved the quality of crops. Use of high analysis sulphur free fertilizers, heavy sulphur removal by the crops under intensive cultivation and neglect of sulphur replenishment contributed to widespread sulphur deficiencies in arable soils. Hence, this study was attempted to study the importance of sulphur in realizing the better growth, yield and quality of sesame crops

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

During 2018 and 2019, a field experiment was carried out at the Odisha University of Agriculture

and Technology's Regional Research and Technology Transfer Station, which is located in Mahisapat, Dhenkanal district, Mid Central Table Land Zone, Odisha. The farm is situated between the latitudes of 20°-3' and 21°-16' North and the longitudes of 84° and 86°-6' East. Alluvial (Entisol), black (Vertisol), red-laterite (Alfisol), and lateritic (Oxisol) soil categories are the most significant ones in the zone. The available N (268 kg ha⁻¹), available P (12.5 kg ha⁻¹), available K (174 kg ha⁻¹) and available S (7.6 kg ha⁻¹) in the red, sandy loam soil at the study site reacted acidically (pH=5.6). Three replications and seven treatments were used in the RBD design of the experiment. The therapies' specifics are listed below. Types of experiments: T₁- STBFR (control) [Soil Test Based Fertilizer], T₂-STBFR + 30 kg ha⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate, T₃-STBFR + 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate, T₄-STBFR + 30 kg ha⁻¹ S from Gypsum, T₅-STBFR + 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from Gypsum, T₆-STBFR + 30 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP, and T₇-STBFR + 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP. The cultivar known as Sesamum Smarak was used as a test subject. In the first week of July sowing of the sesame crop done. Every inter experimental plot had a plant geometry maintained at a spacing of 30x10 cm. The crop was fertilized with NPK at 37.5:25:20 kg ha⁻¹ based on soil tests using urea, DAP, and MOP. At the time of seeding, the basal doses of 50% N, 100% P, and 100% K were administered. During the first hoeing up and weeding operations, an additional 50% dose of N was applied. While seeds were being sown, levels and sources of sulphur were applied as single super phosphate, ammonium phosphate sulphate, and gypsum in accordance with the treatments. No urea or DAP was used in the treatment when ammonium phosphate sulphate was used as the S source; only MOP was used. The following are the specifics of the levels and sources used:

Gypsum: @30 kg ha⁻¹ - 143 kg ha⁻¹ and @ 40 kg ha⁻¹-190 kg ha⁻¹

Ammonium phosphate sulphate: @ 30 kg ha⁻¹-231 kg ha⁻¹ and @ 40 kg ha⁻¹-308 kg ha⁻¹

Single super phosphate: @30 kg ha⁻¹-250 kg ha⁻¹ and @ 40 kg ha⁻¹-333 kg ha⁻¹

After full maturity (90-95 days), the crop was cut and silique was collected from representative plots after maturity. The cumulative yield was recorded as final yield. Five randomly chosen plants in every plot were dug up from the base, and a dry sample of the plant and silique were taken out, sorted by treatment. The current market prices in the area were used to calculate the economics of agriculture. Using Randomized Block Design (RBD), the recorded data was statistically analysed by Gomez and Gomez [10].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Impact of Various Sulphur Sources and Concentrations on Yield Characteristics

The data related to biometrical observation (no. of capsules, seeds/ capsule and 1000 seed weight(g) have been presented in Table-2. Number of capsules varied significantly between 20.67 to 30.10, seeds/capsule varied significantly between 60.6 to 79.8, 1000 seed weight varied from 2.51 to 2.88. Lowest result found with T₁ control with no sulphur application and highest with treatment T₇ (STBFR + 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP). The bioactivity of sulphur may have had a significant impact on enhancing yield characteristics such as the number of capsules per plant and seeds per capsule, which in turn augmented the number of seeds and stalks produced by each plant. Raja et al. [11] and Patel et al. [12] both published this finding. S nutrition-induced increases in the number of capsules per plant are associated with increased plant metabolic energy [13,14].

Table 1. Initial Soil Properties

Sl. No.	Parameter	Test Value		
		Sand %	silt %	clay%
1	Soil Type	79.2	6.1	14.7
2	Texture	Sandy loam		
3	pH	5.6		
4	EC (dSm ⁻¹)	0.029		
5	O.C (g kg ⁻¹)	6.0		
6	Available N (kg ha ⁻¹)	268		
7	Available P (kg ha ⁻¹)	12.5		
8	Available K (kg ha ⁻¹)	174		
9	Available S (mg/kg)	7.6		

Table 2. Effect of sources and levels of sulphur on plant characters of Sesame

Treatment No.	Treatments	No. of capsules	Seeds/capsule	1000 seed wt. (g)
T ₁	STBFR (S control)	20.67	60.60	2.51
T ₂	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate	25.33	70.40	2.75
T ₃	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate	27.07	71.53	2.80
T ₄	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Gypsum,	22.20	65.67	2.60
T ₅	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Gypsum	23.80	66.47	2.70
T ₆	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from SSP	28.53	72.93	2.85
T ₇	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from SSP	30.10	79.80	2.88
SEM (±)		0.29	0.33	0.013
CD (P=0.05)		0.90	1.02	0.04

3.2 Effect of Different Sources and Levels of Sulphur on Yield

The seed and stalk yield of sesame as an influence by sources and levels of S is presented in Table 3. Among the different sources of S, application of S from SSP, only exhibited a significant increase in seed yield (910 kg ha⁻¹) and the gain was in the tune of 26.6% with 30 kg S ha⁻¹ and 34.4 % with 40 kg S ha⁻¹ over the control (677 kg ha⁻¹). The stalk yield, on the other hand, increased significantly in all the plots applied with S (+19.6% to 33.7%) over the control (2007 kg ha⁻¹). The elevation in stalk yield was in the tune of 19.6% to 29.2% with 30 kg S ha⁻¹ and 24.2% to 33.7% with 40 kg S ha⁻¹. The stalk yield, however, was not affected significantly with different S sources. The maximum amount of stalk yield was noted in the treatment applied with 40 kg S ha⁻¹ from SSP (2683 kg ha⁻¹). Venkatesh *et al.* [15] and Verma *et al.* [16] found that SSP outperformed the other sulphur carriers in terms of yield attributes, possibly because of its higher solubility, which is linked to better sulphur availability to plants at different crop growth stages. S treatment may enhance the growth and ultimately the biological yield of sesame because it improves nutrient uptake and chlorophyll levels [17]. Improved leaf area index (LAI), increased photosynthate translocation towards capsule and seed, and increased chlorophyll content synthesis could be the cause of the increase in seed resulting from S fertilization. This might be ascribed to adequate and ready supply of sulphur that resulted in higher production of photosynthates which ultimately increased the plant growth and growth attributes. Another reason for enhancement of growth parameters might be due

to increased uptake of nitrogen, sulphur and phosphorus which have resulted into larger photosynthesizing surface and accelerated the process of formation and translocation of photosynthates and hence overall development of the plant was also reported by Kumar *et al.* [18].

The harvest index and oil content of sesame as an influence by sources and levels of S is presented in Table 4. Sulphur application in the current study did not have any effect on the harvest index (HI). The oil content of sesame as influenced by different sources and levels of S is presented in Table 4. Application of S for two years in a row, significantly elevated the oil content of sesame and gain was in the tune of 8.9 % to 14.1 % over the control (36.1%). Different sources and levels of S did not exhibit any significant variation in the oil content of sesame. The maximum oil content of 41.2 % was observed from the plot applied with 40 kg S ha⁻¹ from SSP.

3.3 Effect of Different Sources and Levels of Sulphur on Nutrient Uptake

The total nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulphur uptake of sesame under different sources and levels of S is presented Table 5. Highest total N, P, K and S uptake of 55.7, 26.18, 37.09 and 5.36 kg ha⁻¹ were recorded with T₇ (STBFR + 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP) followed by T₆ (STBFR + 30 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP). Lowest uptake of all the nutrients were recorded in control where no sulphur was applied. There was no significant difference in uptake of nutrients when S was applied @30 kg ha⁻¹ and @40 kg ha⁻¹ from different sources. The total N, P, K and

S uptake were observed in the treatments under SSP 40 kg ha⁻¹ as S sources (42.1 %, 45.3%, 40.7% and 55.3%) respectively over control. The higher total N uptake with S fertilisation, in the present study, is ascribed to the synergistic interaction of N and S and hence application of S increases the concentration and uptake of nitrogen [19,20]. The amounts of sulphur had a substantial impact on the uptake of P and K by seeds and stalks as well as the overall uptake by sesame. This could be because higher biomass production results in a larger uptake of nutrients from the soil [21]. There is no doubt about the fact that when fertilizers are added, the plant draws out more nutrients from the soil. Furthermore, extensive root and vegetative growth brought about by S fertilization triggered the soil's ability to absorb S. The outcome

concur with the research conducted by Singh and Singh [22] and Ramakrishna et al. [23].

3.4 Effect of Different Sources and Levels of Sulphur on Available Nutrient Status

The pH, SOC (g kg⁻¹, Avl. N, Avl. P, Avl. K and Avl. S kg ha⁻¹, of post-harvest soils under different sources and levels of S is presented in the Fig. 1. The pH of the soils did not exhibit any significant variation among origins and concentrations of sulphur. In general, the pH ranged between 5.43 to 5.58 in the soils applied with 30 kg S ha⁻¹, whereas, it varied between 5.31 to 5.53 with 40 kg S ha⁻¹. However, a declining trend in pH was observed in soils under S fertilization. It might be related to the acidifying

Table 3. Impact of varying S levels and sources on yield of sesame

Treatment No.	Treatments	Stalk Yield (kg ha ⁻¹)	Seed Yield (kg ha ⁻¹)	% Increase in seed Yield over control
T ₁	STBFR (S control)	2007	677	-
T ₂	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate	2400	743	9.74
T ₃	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate	2493	787	16.24
T ₄	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Gypsum,	2400	710	4.87
T ₅	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Gypsum	2500	760	12.25
T ₆	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from SSP	2593	857	26.58
T ₇	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from SSP	2683	910	34.41
SEM (±)		120	45	-
CD (P=0.05)		370	137	-

S1: Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate (S-13%), S2: Gypsum (S-23%), S3: SSP (S-16%)

Table 4. Effect of different sources and levels of S on Harvest Index and Oil content of Sesame

Treatment No.	Treatments	Oil Content	Harvest Index (%)
T ₁	STBFR (S control)	36.1	25.4
T ₂	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate	39.9	23.7
T ₃	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate	40.6	24.1
T ₄	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Gypsum,	39.3	22.8
T ₅	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Gypsum	40.0	23.3
T ₆	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from SSP	40.4	24.9
T ₇	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from SSP	41.2	25.4
SEM (±)		0.88	1.63
CD (P=0.05)		2.71	NS

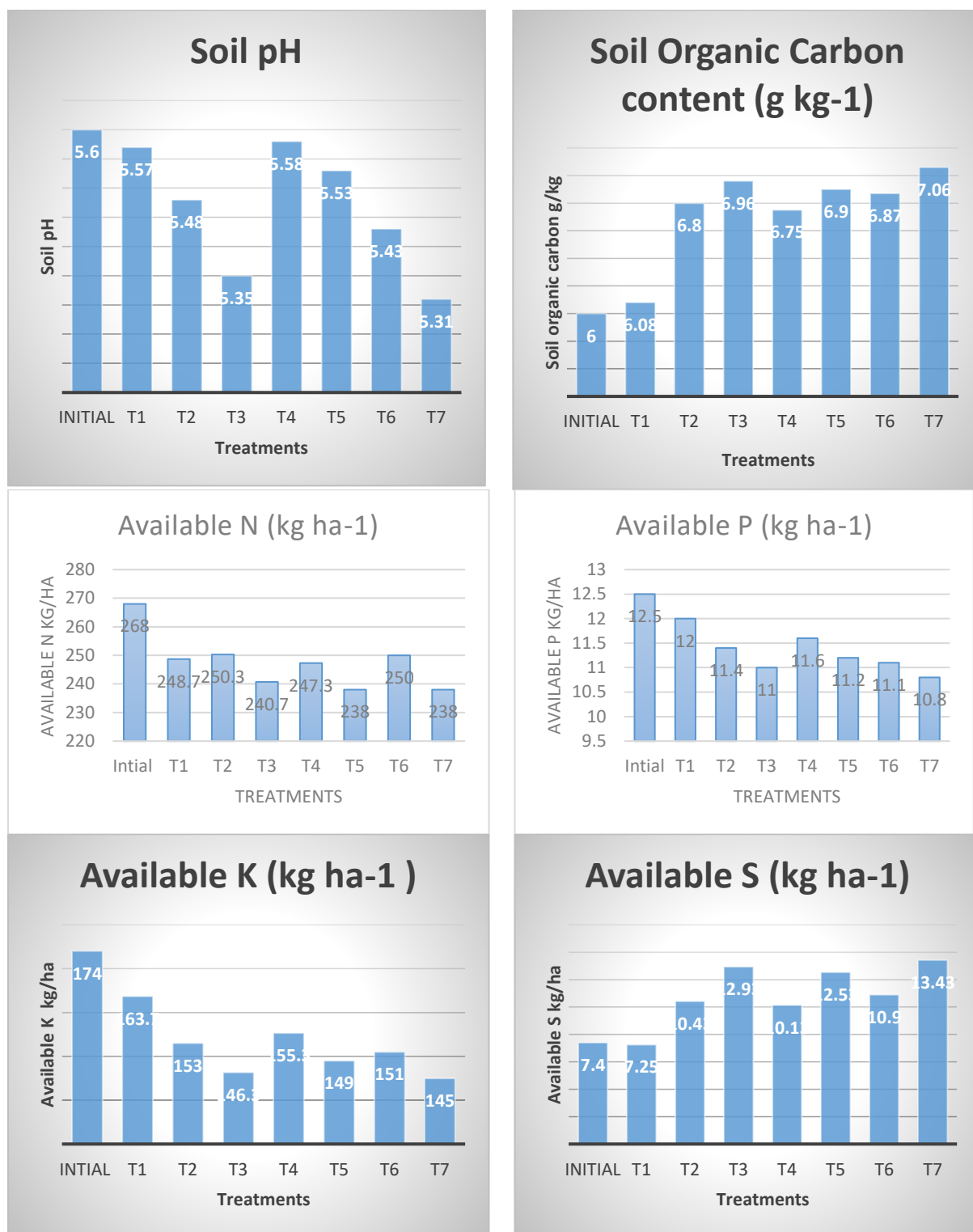


Fig. 1. Effect of different sources and levels of Sulphur on available nutrient status

effect of sulphur sources [24]. Sulphur application in the soil resulted in significant build-up of SOC and the gain was in the tune of 11 % to 13 % with 30 kg S ha⁻¹ and 13.5 % to 16.1 % with 40

kg S ha⁻¹ over the control (6.08g kg⁻¹). Application S fertilizers along with FYM resulted in the build-up of SOC which is related to the stimulating effect of SOM on growth and activity

Table 5. Effect of different sources and levels of S on nutrient uptake of Sesame

Treatment No.	Treatments	Total N (kg ha ⁻¹)	Total P (kg ha ⁻¹)	Total K (kg ha ⁻¹)	Total S (kg ha ⁻¹)
T ₁	STBFR (S control)	39.24	18.02	26.36	3.45
T ₂	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate	46.64	21.15	31.63	4.47
T ₃	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Ammonium Phosphate Sulphate	49.96	22.75	33.57	4.84
T ₄	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Gypsum,	45.29	20.39	31.49	4.37
T ₅	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from Gypsum	48.86	22.13	33.39	4.76
T ₆	STBFR + 30 kg ha ⁻¹ S from SSP	52.40	24.30	35.20	4.96
T ₇	STBFR + 40 kg ha ⁻¹ S from SSP	55.77	26.18	37.09	5.36
SEM (±)		1.477	0.867	1.175	0.148
CD (P=0.05)		4.55	2.67	3.62	0.46

of microorganisms resulting in improved root and shoot growth of the crop [25]. Various origins and degrees of S did not exhibit any significant change in the available N, P and K content of the soils. It ranges from 247.3 to 250.3 kg ha⁻¹ in the soils applied with 30 kg S ha⁻¹ and 238 to 240.7 kg ha⁻¹ with 40 kg S ha⁻¹. The available P ranged from 11.1 to 11.6 kg ha⁻¹ in the soil-applied with 30 kg S ha⁻¹ and from 10.8 to 11.2 kg ha⁻¹ with 40 kg S ha⁻¹ as against the initial contents of 12.5 kg ha⁻¹. Soils fertilized with 40 kg S ha⁻¹ exhibited greater decline (14.4 % to 16.7 %) as compared to those with 30 kg S ha⁻¹ (10.7 % to 13.2 %) over the initial status. However, the available N, P and K content of the soils decreased over the initial status (268 kg ha⁻¹) irrespective of different treatments. The obtainable N, P and K of soils diminished progressively with increased levels of S, indicating higher uptake of these nutrients. The results of the present investigation are in conformity with the observations of Ramakrishna *et al.* [23].

Soils fertilized with S exhibited significant elevation in available S contents and the gain was in the tune of 39.7 % to 50.3 % with 30 kg S ha⁻¹ and 72.8 % to 85.2 % with 40 kg S ha⁻¹ over the control (7.25 kg ha⁻¹). The available S in soil has been increased significantly with the application of sulphur that might be ascribed to adsorption of part of applied sulphur on soil organic matter, resulting in reduced leaching loss of sulphur [24,23]. Raza *et al.* [2] also have reported that increasing supply of any nutrient increases its availability.

4. CONCLUSION

Among seven treatments, T₇ (STBFR along with 40 kg ha⁻¹ S from SSP) was superior among all the sources and doses w.r.t. yield components and yield. The yield and oil content of the sesame crop are increased in this experiment by applying SSP at a rate of 40 kg S ha⁻¹ in conjunction with fertilizer recommendations based on soil tests. Highest total nutrient uptake in terms of N, P, K and S of 55, 26, 37 and 5 kg/ha were recorded with the same treatment. Sulphur fertilization (T₇) in the acid *Alfisols* of Odisha exhibited improved yield, oil content and nutrient uptake in sesame. Only major nutrient application causes the deficiency of secondary and micronutrients. Enhancing the yield and oil content of oilseed crops, such as sesame, and maintaining the health of the soil are critical functions of sulphur fertilization in intensive cropping systems.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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