



# **Effect of Different Concentrations of Auxin Hormone (IBA) Upon Promoting Root Development of Stem Cuttings in the ‘Scented Geranium’, *Pelargonium graveolens* L**

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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

The present investigation entitled "Effect of different concentrations of auxin hormone (IBA) upon promoting root development of stem cuttings in the 'Scented Geranium', *Pelargonium graveolens* L" was carried out at Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Research Station, (MAPRS) Rajendranagar, Sri Konda Laxman Telangana State Horticultural University, Hyderabad during December 2022 to February 2023. The experiments were conducted using a Completely Randomized Design (CRD) with three replications under a shade net house. Each replication consisted of seven treatments, which included a control group and six different concentrations of IBA (500 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, 1000 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, 1500 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, 2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, 2500 mg L<sup>-1</sup>, 3000 mg L<sup>-1</sup>). The results indicated, that among the various IBA concentrations tested, specifically IBA @ 2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> for stem cuttings, proved to be more effective than all other treatments in terms of various root parameters. It recorded the minimum days taken for root initiation and also recorded better results for the number of roots per cutting, average length of roots per cutting, length of longest root per cutting, fresh weight of roots per cutting, and dry weight of roots per cuttings.

**Keywords:** *Scented geranium; terminal stem cuttings; different concentrations of IBA and root initiation.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Pelargonium graveolens* is commonly known as rose-scented geranium, as the leaves of the plant produce the fragrance of rose. It belongs to the family Geraniaceae. It originated from the Republic of South Africa in the Mediterranean climate of Cape Province. Geranium is the most important, perennial, high-value aromatic shrub that can reach a height of up to 1.5 m and has a spread of 1m. The leaves are velvety to the touch, green, grey, and intensely smelled of roses. They can be large or little, whole or severely serrated. The five-petalled flowers range in color from whitish to pale pink and vary in size from 0.5 to 4 cm. The plant blooms from August to January. When young, its hairy stems are herbaceous; as they grow in age, they turn woody [1]. The oil derived from this plant contains geraniol and citronellol, both of which contribute to its distinct and robust rose-like fragrance. It has several medicinal and aromatic values of commercial importance [2]. Geranium is now an indispensable aromatherapy oil and is considered as balancing oil for the mind and body [3]. The extracts of *Pelargonium graveolens* are reported to be used as antibacterial and insecticidal agents [4], Rose-scented geranium is propagated vegetatively through rooted terminal stem cuttings of 10-15 cm length having 4-6 leaves. Multiplication of geranium through seed is difficult since there is no seed set under plains or hilly conditions and hence vegetative propagation is the only means of prolongation. In order To get uniform plant material of the desired genetic constitution on a large scale, vegetative propagation is a must.

Auxins (IBA) have a speeding-up effect on rooting percentage and development of cuttings, that's why after preparation of cuttings, they are treated with auxins mostly IBA. Plants produce natural auxin in young shoots and leaves, but synthetic auxin should be used for successful rooting to prevent cutting death [5,6]. Several studies have documented the advantageous impact of auxin application in stimulating the development of adventitious roots in cuttings. Indole butyric acid (IBA) has been successfully used to increase the rooting of *Poinsettia pulcherrima* L. [7] and *Stevia rebaudiana* [8].

This research focused on identifying the most effective growth treatment concentration that would facilitate root development and promote the rooting of cuttings.

**Objective:** To study the effect of IBA concentration on rooting and growth of stem cuttings of geranium.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Experiment was carried out at the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Research Station, (MAPRS) Rajendranagar, Hyderabad. The experimental site falls under a semi-arid tropical climate with an average rainfall of 800 mm per annum located at an altitude of 542.3 m above mean sea level at latitude of 17°19' and longitude of 79°23'. The experiments were conducted using a Completely Randomized Design (CRD) with three replications under a shade net house.

The terminal cuttings of geranium, 10-15 cm in length with 2-4 leaves were taken from the

matured shoots of past seasons' growth. In the various concentrations of IBA (500, 1000, 1500, 2000, 2500 and 3000 mg L<sup>-1</sup>) a rooting hormone was applied to stimulate root development and was prepared by dissolving 0.5, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5 and 3.0 g of each growth regulator in a small quantity of ethanol after dissolving the volume was made up to 1000 ml by adding distilled water to make the exact concentration of IBA. cuttings were dipped in different concentrations of IBA as per treatment for ten minutes. The cuttings under control were dipped in distilled water. Treated cuttings were planted in polybags and the collar region of cuttings were pressed firmly. The cuttings were carefully removed from polybags at 45 and 60 days after planting without damaging the newly developed root system by cutting the polyethylene bags for recording the various parameters i.e., Days taken for root initiation, number of roots per cutting, the average length of roots per cutting, length of longest root per cutting, fresh weight of roots per cutting, dry weight of roots per cutting.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Days taken for Root Initiation

The data recorded on the number of days taken for root initiation as influenced by the different concentrations of IBA are presented in Table 1.

The minimum duration of days (9.81) required for root initiation with the application of T<sub>5</sub>; IBA @2000 ppm followed by T<sub>6</sub>; IBA @2500 ppm (10.47), while the longest time (20.60) was noticed in T<sub>1</sub>; control.

The early rooting in the best treatment (T<sub>5</sub>) might be due to the internal auxin concentration sufficient for root induction of cuttings. Thimann [9] observed that auxin activates the messenger type of RNA, which induces the synthesis of specific enzymes to help in cell wall extension by way of the insertion of new materials into the cell wall. Since IBA increases cell wall elasticity which accelerates cell division and in turn increases root up to a certain level. Similar findings have been reported by Kazankaya et al. [10] in the case of cultivars of rose, Akshay [11] in *Piper nigrum*.

#### 3.2 Number of Roots per Cutting

The data recorded on the number of days taken for root initiation as influenced by the different concentrations of IBA are presented in Table 1.

The data indicated that among different IBA concentrations evaluated, at all the stages of observation, significantly a greater number of roots per cutting (45.68 and 58.40) were observed with application T<sub>5</sub>; IBA @2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> followed by T<sub>6</sub>; IBA @2500 mg L<sup>-1</sup> (42.36 and 55.67) at 45 and 60 DAP respectively, while lowest number was noticed in T<sub>1</sub>; control (11.38 and 19.67) at 45 and 60 DAP respectively.

In general, the endogenous auxins reaching the cambial zone may not be adequate for the initiation of rooting primordia. With the external application of IBA at the optimum level, roots were initiated earlier in larger numbers. The exogenous application has supplemented endogenous auxin levels and brought about certain anatomical and physiological changes in the number of roots or due to enhanced cell divisions, numerous root primordia are formed from root initials [12]. The present investigation lends support to the results obtained by Singh, A. K [13] in (*Jasminum sambac Ait.*) 'Double Mogra', Singh [14] in *Bougainvillea var.* 'Thimma', and Rajashekara [15] in stevia cuttings. Similar findings were reported by Rani et al. [16] in guava.

#### 3.3 Average Length of Roots per Cutting (cm)

The data recorded on the number of days taken for root initiation as influenced by the different concentrations of IBA are presented in Table 1.

Perusal of the data indicated that among different IBA concentrations evaluated, significant maximum average length of roots per cutting (11.46 cm and 13.58 cm) were observed with application T<sub>5</sub>; IBA @2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> at par with T<sub>6</sub>; IBA @2500 mg L<sup>-1</sup> (11.19 cm and 13.25 cm) at 45 and 60 DAP respectively, while least was noticed in T<sub>1</sub>; control (10.17 cm and 12.43 cm) at 45 and 60 DAP respectively.

The presence of externally applied hormones boosts hydrolytic activity, resulting in the development of callus tissue and the transformation of meristematic cells into root primordium, expediting the initiation of root formation. This is subsequently accompanied by an elevated rate of respiration and the accumulation of greater amounts of amino acids at their respective bases. The heightened sensitivity of tissues, brought about by an increase in internal free auxin levels, led to an

increase in both the quantity and size of roots [17]. Similar findings were observed by Sharma et al. [18] in Apple clonal rootstocks and Bharathy et al. [19] in carnation plants. These results are supported by the findings of Gupta et al. [20] in Nerium, Netam et al. [21] in Jasmine, Bosila et al. [22] in Bougainvillea, Susila et al. [23] in Adathoda and Parmar et al. [24] in Bougainvillea.

### 3.4 Length of Longest Root per Cuttings (cm)

The data recorded on the number of days taken for root initiation as influenced by the different concentrations of IBA are presented in Table 1.

The data indicated that among different IBA concentrations evaluated, at all the stages of observation (45 and 60 DAP), significantly maximum length of longest root per cuttings (28.74 cm and 32.00 cm) were observed with application T<sub>5</sub>; IBA @2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> followed by T<sub>6</sub>; IBA @2500 mg L<sup>-1</sup> (25.69 cm and 30.53 cm) at 45 and 60 DAP respectively, while small longest root was noticed in T<sub>1</sub>; control (13.49 cm and 19.74 cm) at 45 and 60 DAP respectively.

Auxin induces the breakdown and movement of carbohydrates and nitrogenous compounds, while also promoting the synthesis of new proteins at the cutting's base. This accelerates the processes of cell elongation and division, ultimately leading to the attainment of maximum root length [25]. Increased levels of growth-promoting substances, the presence of ample auxin in leaves, efficient mobilization of food reserves, and early initiation of rooting may contribute to the production of a higher number of roots and the achievement of maximum root length in terminal cuttings. Similar results were reported by Ullah et al. [26] in African marigold and Kumar et al. [27] in carnation. Dhruve et al. [28] and Siddiqui et al. [29] observed the maximum length of the longest root in dragon fruit cuttings when treated with 6000 and 7000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> respectively.

### 3.5 Fresh Weight of Roots per Cuttings (g)

The data recorded on the number of days taken for root initiation as influenced by the

different concentrations of IBA are presented in Table 1.

The fresh weight of roots per cuttings was significantly higher with the application of T<sub>5</sub>; IBA @2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> at 45 and 60 DAP (0.659 g and 0.806 g respectively), followed by T<sub>6</sub>; IBA @2500 mg L<sup>-1</sup> (0.618 g and 0.765 g) at 45 and 60 DAP respectively, while lowest was recorded in T<sub>1</sub>; control (0.250 g and 0.328 g) at 45 and 60 DAP respectively.

The application of auxin treatment led to an increased quantity of roots, potentially fostering their elongation through cellular division [30]. This, in turn, could explain the greater fresh weight of the roots. Similarly, the highest average fresh weight of root per cutting (0.39 g) was recorded under 5g l<sup>-1</sup> concentration of IBA in Duranta golden reported by Singh et al. [31], Sharma [32] in African marigold, Gowda [33] in carnation and Shahi [34] in magnolia.

### 3.6 Dry Weight of Roots of Rooted Cuttings (g)

The data recorded on the number of days taken for root initiation as influenced by the different concentrations of IBA are presented in Table 1.

At 45 days after planting, the dry weight of roots of rooted cuttings was significantly higher with the application of T<sub>5</sub>; IBA @2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> (0.224 g), followed by T<sub>6</sub>; IBA @2500 mg L<sup>-1</sup> (0.210 g), while the lowest was noticed in T<sub>1</sub>; control (0.085 g).

At 60 days after planting, the dry weight of roots of rooted cuttings was significantly higher with the application of T<sub>5</sub>; IBA @2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> (0.274 g), at par with T<sub>6</sub>; IBA @2500 mg L<sup>-1</sup> (0.260 g), while the lowest was noticed in T<sub>1</sub>; control (0.111 g).

The likely explanation could be attributed to the action of auxin, which initiates the hydrolysis and translocation of carbohydrates and nitrogenous substances at the base of cuttings, subsequently expediting cell elongation and division under conducive conditions [31]. Cell division and cell elongation, consequently, contribute to an increased fresh weight, which in turn results in a higher dry weight of the roots which was reported by Sharma [32] in African marigold, Gowda [33] in carnation and Shahi [34] in magnolia.

**Table 1. Effect of different IBA concentrations on Days taken for root initiation, number of roots per cutting, average length of roots per cutting in stem cuttings of Scented Geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens* L.)**

Treatments	Days taken for root initiation	Number of roots		Average length of roots	
		45 DAP	60 DAP	45 DAP	60 DAP
T <sub>1</sub> - Control	20.60	11.38	19.67	10.17	12.43
T <sub>2</sub> - IBA @500 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	13.55	25.48	39.40	10.40	12.63
T <sub>3</sub> - IBA @1000 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	12.50	29.60	42.53	10.61	12.73
T <sub>4</sub> - IBA @1500 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	11.58	31.88	44.60	10.86	12.86
T <sub>5</sub> - IBA @2000 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	9.81	45.68	58.40	11.46	13.58
T <sub>6</sub> - IBA @2500 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	10.47	42.36	55.67	11.19	13.25
T <sub>7</sub> - IBA @3000 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	11.94	34.09	49.33	10.87	12.96
Mean	12.92	31.49	44.23	10.79	12.92
SE (m) ±	0.18	0.56	0.67	0.19	0.17
CD at 5%	0.56	1.71	2.07	0.58	0.53

**Table 2. Effect of different IBA concentrations on length of longest root per cuttings, fresh weight of roots per cuttings, dry weight of roots per cuttings in stem cuttings of scented geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens* L.).**

Treatments	Length of longest root (cm)		Fresh weight of roots (g)		Dry weight of roots (g)	
	45 DAP	60 DAP	45 DAP	60 DAP	45 DAP	60 DAP
T <sub>1</sub> - Control	13.49	19.74	0.250	0.328	0.085	0.111
T <sub>2</sub> - IBA @500 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	21.25	26.67	0.452	0.586	0.153	0.199
T <sub>3</sub> - IBA @1000 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	22.13	27.88	0.520	0.656	0.177	0.223
T <sub>4</sub> - IBA @1500 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	24.55	29.26	0.540	0.678	0.187	0.230
T <sub>5</sub> - IBA @2000 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	28.74	32.00	0.659	0.806	0.224	0.274
T <sub>6</sub> - IBA @2500 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	25.69	30.53	0.618	0.765	0.210	0.260
T <sub>7</sub> - IBA @3000 mg L <sup>-1</sup>	23.39	28.56	0.568	0.690	0.193	0.234
Mean	22.75	27.81	0.515	0.644	0.176	0.219
SE (m) ±	0.32	0.38	0.010	0.010	0.001	0.003
CD at 5%	0.972	1.16	0.030	0.030	0.004	0.010

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, based on the findings of the study entitled, "Effect of different IBA concentrations on stem cuttings of scented geranium (*Pelargonium graveolens* L.)", it can be concluded that among the various IBA concentrations tested, specifically IBA @ 2000 mg L<sup>-1</sup> for stem cuttings, proved to be more effective than all other treatments in terms of various root, growth and physiological parameters. It recorded minimum days taken for the root initiation and sprouting and also recorded better results for number of roots per cutting, average length of roots per cutting, length of longest root per cutting, fresh weight of roots per cuttings, dry weight of roots per cuttings, plant height, number of fully expanded new leaves per rooted cutting, number of sprouts per cutting, lower mortality rate and high absolute growth rate and crop growth rate.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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