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Effect of pre harvest spray of gibberellic acid, calcium nitrate and potassium sulphate on post harvest behaviour of winter guava (*Psidium guajava* L.) fruits

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Abstract

The present investigation was carried out in Instructional cum research fruit orchard and laboratory of Department of fruit science, College of Horticulture Mandsaur (M.P.) during 2015-16 and 2016-17 two successive years. Results of two year pooled data revealed that the minimum physiological loss in weight (PLW) (4.68%), (7.44%) and (12.16%) was recorded in variety Chittidar on 3, 6 and 9 days storage. The maximum fruit length (7.30cm), (7.10cm), (6.66cm) and (6.04cm) was recorded in guava variety Chittidar and maximum fruit diameter (7.80cm), (7.50cm), (7.12cm) and (6.52cm) was recorded in guava variety of Dharidar on 0, 3, 6 & 9 days storage, maximum specific gravity (0.96), (0.94) & (0.91) was recorded in Chittidar on 0, 3 & 6 days storage, however on 9th day at storage specific gravity was found non significant. At 9 days storage, the maximum marketable fruits (47.72%) were obtained in Chittidar.

As regards to plant growth regulator (GA₃) and nutrients (Ca (NO₃)₂) & (K₂SO₄), the minimum physiological weight loss (2.97%), (5.20%), (10.04%) was recorded in T₁₂ which was followed by T₇ (3.70%), (5.46%) & (10.67%) on 3, 6 & 9 days at storage condition respectively. Maximum fruit length and diameter (7.29cm), (7.15cm), (6.83cm) & (6.27cm) and (7.49cm), (7.19cm), (6.87cm) & (6.30cm), maximum specific gravity (1.01), (0.99), (0.97) & (0.95), maximum marketable fruits (72.13%) was obtained in T₁₂ which was followed by T₇ (71.23%) on 9th days at storage. Interaction study revealed that significant variation was noticed for physiological loss in weight in both years of experiment. The minimum physiological loss in weight (PLW) was recorded in (2.96%), (5.09%) & (9.96%) in V₂T₁₂ on 3, 6 and 9 days at storage. Maximum marketable fruits (72.81%) were obtained in V₂T₁₂ on 9th days at storage. However, non significant variations were noticed in fruit size (length & diameter) and specific gravity under the present investigation.

Keywords: Pre harvest spray, gibberellic acid, calcium nitrate, potassium sulphate, *Psidium guajava* L.

Introduction

Guava (*Psidium guajava* L.) is an important fruit crop of India. It is normally consumed fresh as a dessert fruit, or processed into, juice, concentrate, jam, jelly, nector or syrup (Jagtiani *et al.*, 1988) [17]. There is an increasing demand of fruits for fresh as well as processing purpose in domestic and international markets.

Physico-chemical and biochemical changes affect the final texture and quality of fruits during the storage. The effect of elucidating the maintenance of fruit quality has been based on the modifications taking place in the cell wall (Brummell *et al.*, 2004) [5]. Calcium, as a constituent of the cell wall, plays an important role in forming cross-bridges, which influence cell wall strength and regarded as the last barrier before cell separation (Fry 2004) [11].

In recent years plant growth regulators have been used for improving the quality, delaying deterioration in storage and thereby increase the shelf life of various fruit crops including guava. Some chemicals like calcium, potassium and plant growth regulator have been reported to prolong shelf life and improve the quality by affecting the wide range of physiological processes in plants and also inhibit specific aspect of abnormal senescence in numerous fruits (Farag and Kassem, 2000) [12]. Calcium compound have shown promise in the quality retention of fruit also (Huber, 1983) [15]. The choice of different calcium compounds to supply the required calcium is quite confusing, due to mixed report from scientific community about the superiority of one calcium compound of other.

Nutrients and plant growth regulators like GA₃ have been extensively used for improving quality, delaying degradation in storage and thereby, increasing the shelf life of various fruits (Kher *et al.*, 2005) [20]. GA₃ on fruits and plants acts as an anti-senescence agent (Ahmed *et al.* 2001) [1]. Potassium is a unique mineral element in plant biology. It has a pertinent role in

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many metabolic processes, like carbohydrate synthesis and development of meristematic tissues, as well as encourages lignifications and regulates water absorption and transpiration. Guava is a perishable fruit and highly prone to bruising and mechanical injuries. Due to such perishability, control of fruit ripening is fundamental and this generates the necessity to search for new technologies to increase shelf life, reach distant markets and thus improve the marketing process (Mitra *et al.*, 2012) [23]. A very little information is available, particular response of plant growth regulator (GA₃) and nutrients {Ca (NO₃)₂} & K₂SO₄. Keeping these points in mind, the present investigation was, therefore, undertaken to study the effect of pre harvest spray of GA₃, calcium nitrate and potassium sulphate on post harvest behaviour of guava (*Psidium guajava* L.) fruits of Dharidar and Chittidar.

Material and methods

The present experiment was carried out at the Instructional cum research fruit orchards Department of Fruit Science KNK College of Horticulture Mandasaur (M.P.), during the two successive years i.e. 2015-16 and 2016-17. Randomly distributed plants of guava fruits cv. Dharidar and Chittidar of uniform age and vigour were selected. The experiment consisted of three replications and 26 treatments with randomized block design in factorial concept. The investigation consisted of treatments *viz.*, T₁- GA₃ @ 50 ppm, T₂- GA₃ @ 100 ppm, T₃- Calcium nitrate @ 1%, T₄- Calcium nitrate @ 2%, T₅- Potassium sulphate @ 1%, T₆- Potassium sulphate @ 2%, T₇- GA₃ @ 100 ppm+ Calcium nitrate @ 2%, T₈- GA₃ @ 100 ppm+ Potassium sulphate @ 2%, T₉- GA₃ @ 50 ppm+ Calcium nitrate @ 1%+ Potassium sulphate @ 1%, T₁₀- GA₃ @ 50 ppm+ Calcium nitrate @ 2%+ Potassium sulphate @ 2%, T₁₁- GA₃ @ 100 ppm+ Calcium nitrate @ 1%+ Potassium sulphate @ 1%, T₁₂- GA₃ @ 100 ppm+ Calcium nitrate @ 2%+ Potassium sulphate @ 2% including control treatment i.e. water spray with two varieties i.e. Dharidar and Chittidar. All treatments were applied as foliar spray. At the optimum horticultural maturity, uniform sized fruits harvested after 20 days of foliar spray and stored up to 9 days.

These fruits were analysed for various physico-chemical characters like physiological loss in weight (PLW), fruit size (length & diameter), specific gravity, marketable fruits (%). Physiological loss in weight (PLW) of fruit was determined with formula given by Srivastava and Tandon (1968) [30] on the basis of initial weight of the fruit and loss in weight that occurred and were expressed in per cent. Fruit size was measured with the help of vernier callipers. Water replacement method was advocated for specific gravity and marketable fruits were calculated by number of fruits retained after decay loss on per cent basis.

Results and Discussion

Physiological loss in weight

A perusal of data in Table 1 shows that per cent PLW was influenced significantly by varieties, plant growth regulator & nutrients and their interactions under the ambient storage conditions at 3 days intervals up to 9th day storage. The weight loss increased gradually and progressively with advancement in storage period. The minimum loss in physiological weight (4.68%), (7.44%) and (12.16%) was recorded on 3rd, 6th and 9th days respectively in guava variety of Chittidar fruits stored at ambient condition. Plant growth regulator and nutrients (GA₃, calcium nitrate and potassium sulphate) had significantly increased the loss in physiological

weight as the storage period advanced irrespective of any treatments. T₁₂ (GA₃ @100ppm + calcium nitrate @ 2% + potassium sulphate @ 2%) recorded the minimum loss in physiological weight (2.97%, 5.20% & 10.04%) which was followed by T₇ (3.70%, 5.46% & 10.67%) and T₁₀ (3.89%, 5.73% & 11.01%) on 3rd, 6th and 9th days at storage respectively. However, maximum loss in physiological weight was recorded in control treatment. As regards to interaction study of gibberellic acid (GA₃), calcium nitrate {Ca (NO₃)₂} & potassium sulphate (K₂SO₄) with Dharidar & Chittidar varieties of guava fruits revealed that significant variation was noticed for physiological loss in weight, treatment V₂T₁₂ recorded minimum loss in physiological weight (2.96%, 5.09% & 9.69) on 3rd, 6th and 9th days storage respectively which was followed by V₁T₁₂ (2.98%, 5.31% and 10.12%) and V₂T₇ (3.56%, 5.37% & 10.16%) on 3rd, 6th & 9th days of storage respectively. However, maximum losses in physiological weight (8.50%, 15.69% and 24.06%) were recorded in V₁T₀. Higher concentration, Ca (NO₃)₂ showed lowest weight loss this might be due to role of calcium on altering the membrane permeability of cell wall and thereby limiting the rate of respiration (Bengerth, 1979) [3]. Prolongation of fruit life due to growth regulators is probably due to effectiveness of these chemical in retardation of ripening and senescence and reduction in weight loss (Huang, 1974) [14]. Effectiveness of GA₃ in maintaining fruit firmness may be due to the reason that might reduce various physiological activities related with softening of fruits (Rees 1975) [25]. Many workers, Singh (1998) [27], Aly and Ismail (2000) [2], Mahajan *et al.* (2011) [22] in guava, Jakhar and Pathak (2016) [16] in mango, Deepthi *et al.* (2016) [9] in guava and Singh *et al.* (2014) [28] in aonla also reported calcium nitrate and GA₃ had effectively reduce the weight loss during storage.

Fruit Size (length and diameter)

The fruit size (diameter and length) decreases with the increase in storage period as given in Table 2. However, the treated fruits maintained higher values of fruit size as compared to control. The reduction in fruit size during storage period may be due to shrinking of fruits caused by transpiration. Application of chemicals might have decreased the rate of transpiration and physiological loss in weight resulting in retention of better size fruits during storage.

At the end of the storage the minimum reduction in fruit size i.e. length was recorded in variety Chittidar & diameter in variety Dharidar. Application of plant growth regulator (GA₃) and nutrients alone & in conjunction had influenced the length and diameter of the fruits. The maximum fruit length (6.27 cm) and maximum diameter (6.30 cm) was recorded in T₁₂ (GA₃ @ 100ppm + calcium nitrate @ 2% + potassium sulphate @ 2%). It might be due to the ant senescent action of GA₃ and cell degradation was prevented by Ca (NO₃)₂ which in turn facilitated the reduced moisture loss and lesser respiratory gas exchange, hence delay in ripening and lower the shrinkage percentage. The effect of higher concentration of calcium compound and GA₃ on guava fruits was also supported by Lal *et al.* (2011) [21] in Apricot cv. Harcot, Bisen *et al.* (2014) [4] in guava, Kirmani *et al.* (2013) [18] in Plum and Manivannan *et al.* (2015) [24] in guava cv. L-49.

Specific gravity

Specific gravity of guava varieties was significantly influenced by plant growth regulator & nutrients during both year of experiment. Chittidar variety had recorded maximum

specific gravity (0.91) on 6th day of storage. Specific gravity on 9th day of guava fruits storage was found non significant. As regards to gibberellic acid (GA₃), calcium nitrate {Ca (NO₃)₂} & potassium sulphate (K₂SO₄) alone and in combination T₁₂ (GA₃ @100ppm + calcium nitrate @ 2% + potassium sulphate @ 2%) treatment recorded maximum specific gravity (0.97) and (0.95) on 6th days and 9th day at storage condition which was followed by T₇ (0.95) & (0.93) on 6th days and 9th day at storage condition. The gradual decrease in specific gravity in both years of calcium treated fruits could possibly be due to slow reduction in weight and volume of the fruit because of the retarding effect of calcium on ripening process, such findings also been reported by Chundawat *et al.* (1978) [6], Singh (1980) [26], kher *et al.* (2005) [20] in guava, Kazemi *et al.* (2011) [19] in Kiwifruit, Bisen, *et al.* (2014) [4] in guava and Desai *et al.* (2017) [10] in sapota.

Marketable fruits

Among two variety of guava, Dharidar variety of guava had obtained maximum marketable fruits (47.72%) on 9th days at

storage condition. Application of plant growth regulator and nutrients revealed that significant variations were noticed for marketable fruit percentage in two year experiments. Maximum marketable fruits (72.13%) were obtained in T₁₂ which was the statistically superior compare to other treatments. As regards to interaction study of gibberellic acid (GA₃), calcium nitrate {Ca (NO₃)₂} & potassium sulphate (K₂SO₄) with Dharidar & Chittidar varieties of guava fruits, maximum marketable fruits (73.19%) were obtained under V₂T₇ followed by V₂T₁₂ (72.81%) and V₁T₁₂ (71.44%) on 9th days storage. However, the minimum marketable fruits (8.78%) were obtained in V₂T₀. The increase in fruit marketability might be due to decrease in production of ethylene which is responsible for the fast ripening of fruits, improved fruit colour development and appearance (Cheour *et al.*, 1990) [7]. Singh (1998) [27] and Singh *et al.* (2007) [29] also found that calcium treated guava fruits rated higher score and optimum marketable quality for longer period. Almost similar results were also obtained by Goutam *et al.* (2010) [13] in guava, Chouhan *et al.* (2015) [8] in Mango cv. Dashehari and Vishwakarma *et al.* (2017) [31] in mango cv. Amrapali.

Table 1: Effect of pre harvest spray of GA₃, calcium nitrate and potassium sulphate on physiological loss in weight (%) and marketable fruits (%) at 3 days intervals up to 9 days storage

Treatments	Physiological loss in weight (%)				Marketable fruits (%)			
	0 day	3 days	6 days	9 days	0 day	3 days	6 days	9 days
Varieties								
V ₁	0.00	5.05	7.90	13.25	100	100	83.28	46.39
V ₂	0.00	4.68	7.44	12.16	100	100	84.62	47.72
S. Em. ±	0.00	0.009	0.006	0.006	0.00	0.00	0.011	0.017
CD (at 5%)	0.00	0.026	0.015	0.016	0.00	0.00	0.030	0.048
Plant growth regulator and nutrients								
T ₀	0.00	8.03	14.52	21.43	100	100	35.31	9.10
T ₁	0.00	5.23	8.32	13.08	100	100	80.47	40.31
T ₂	0.00	5.10	8.09	12.44	100	100	85.95	43.50
T ₃	0.00	4.90	7.62	11.86	100	100	89.49	49.17
T ₄	0.00	4.59	6.88	11.65	100	100	96.26	55.89
T ₅	0.00	5.86	8.95	14.11	100	100	58.34	17.62
T ₆	0.00	5.66	8.86	14.01	100	100	59.04	18.17
T ₇	0.00	3.70	5.46	10.67	100	100	100.00	71.23
T ₈	0.00	4.97	7.88	12.27	100	100	86.51	47.01
T ₉	0.00	4.21	6.18	11.31	100	100	100.00	59.37
T ₁₀	0.00	3.89	5.73	11.01	100	100	100.00	66.56
T ₁₁	0.00	4.15	6.01	11.25	100	100	100.00	61.63
T ₁₂	0.00	2.97	5.20	10.04	100	100	100.00	72.13
S.Em.±	0.00	0.024	0.014	0.014	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.04
CD (at 5%)	0.00	0.067	0.039	0.040	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.12
Interactions								
V ₁ T ₀	0.00	8.50	15.69	24.06	100	100	34.29	9.42
V ₁ T ₁	0.00	5.46	8.36	13.26	100	100	79.27	39.17
V ₁ T ₂	0.00	5.25	8.16	12.68	100	100	83.91	43.69
V ₁ T ₃	0.00	4.96	7.93	12.10	100	100	88.73	48.33
V ₁ T ₄	0.00	4.82	6.73	12.02	100	100	95.53	55.03
V ₁ T ₅	0.00	6.42	9.13	15.00	100	100	58.05	17.16
V ₁ T ₆	0.00	6.09	9.05	14.95	100	100	58.71	17.83
V ₁ T ₇	0.00	3.84	5.55	11.17	100	100	100.00	69.26
V ₁ T ₈	0.00	5.01	7.90	12.47	100	100	84.21	46.92
V ₁ T ₉	0.00	4.20	6.48	11.60	100	100	100.00	59.85
V ₁ T ₁₀	0.00	3.93	6.03	11.22	100	100	100.00	64.24
V ₁ T ₁₁	0.00	4.15	6.34	11.54	100	100	100.00	60.69
V ₁ T ₁₂	0.00	2.98	5.31	10.12	100	100	100.00	71.44
V ₂ T ₀	0.00	7.57	13.36	18.79	100	100	36.33	8.78
V ₂ T ₁	0.00	5.00	8.29	12.90	100	100	81.67	41.46
V ₂ T ₂	0.00	4.95	8.02	12.20	100	100	87.99	43.30
V ₂ T ₃	0.00	4.83	7.31	11.62	100	100	90.25	50.01
V ₂ T ₄	0.00	4.35	7.03	11.29	100	100	96.98	56.75
V ₂ T ₅	0.00	5.31	8.78	13.22	100	100	58.64	18.09

V ₂ T ₆	0.00	5.23	8.68	13.08	100	100	59.37	18.51
V ₂ T ₇	0.00	3.56	5.37	10.16	100	100	100.00	73.19
V ₂ T ₈	0.00	4.93	7.86	12.08	100	100	88.78	47.09
V ₂ T ₉	0.00	4.22	5.88	11.01	100	100	100.00	58.89
V ₂ T ₁₀	0.00	3.84	5.44	10.79	100	100	100.00	68.88
V ₂ T ₁₁	0.00	4.16	5.68	10.95	100	100	100.00	62.57
V ₂ T ₁₂	0.00	2.96	5.09	9.96	100	100	100.00	72.81
S.Em. ±	0.00	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.06
CD (at 5%)	0.00	0.09	0.05	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.17

Table 2: Effect of pre harvest spray of GA₃, calcium nitrate and potassium sulphate on fruit diameter (cm) and fruit length (cm) at 3 days intervals up to 9 days storage

Treatments	Fruit diameter (cm)				Fruit length (cm)			
	0 day	3 days	6 days	9 days	0 day	3 days	6 days	9 days
Varieties								
V ₁	7.80	7.50	7.12	6.52	6.94	6.77	6.36	5.72
V ₂	6.86	6.57	6.19	5.53	7.30	7.10	6.66	6.04
S.Em. ±	0.006	0.004	0.006	0.005	0.007	0.004	0.005	0.003
CD (at 5%)	0.017	0.012	0.016	0.015	0.020	0.012	0.015	0.009
Plant growth regulator and nutrients								
T ₀	7.19	6.89	6.36	5.66	6.93	6.69	6.18	5.44
T ₁	7.27	6.97	6.59	5.92	7.04	6.86	6.37	5.71
T ₂	7.27	6.98	6.62	5.97	7.06	6.87	6.41	5.77
T ₃	7.31	7.02	6.66	6.05	7.10	6.92	6.50	5.87
T ₄	7.34	7.04	6.69	6.09	7.13	6.96	6.55	5.94
T ₅	7.21	6.93	6.45	5.76	7.00	6.76	6.26	5.57
T ₆	7.23	6.94	6.47	5.77	7.02	6.78	6.30	5.59
T ₇	7.46	7.17	6.85	6.27	7.29	7.11	6.78	6.21
T ₈	7.29	6.99	6.63	5.98	7.09	6.89	6.44	5.80
T ₉	7.38	7.09	6.75	6.15	7.17	7.01	6.62	6.04
T ₁₀	7.43	7.15	6.82	6.22	7.23	7.10	6.73	6.15
T ₁₁	7.41	7.12	6.78	6.19	7.21	7.05	6.68	6.09
T ₁₂	7.49	7.19	6.87	6.30	7.29	7.15	6.83	6.27
S.Em.±	0.015	0.011	0.014	0.013	0.018	0.011	0.01	0.008
CD (at 5%)	0.043	0.031	0.040	0.037	0.050	0.031	0.04	0.024

Table 3: Effect of pre harvest spray of GA₃, calcium nitrate and potassium sulphate on specific gravity at 3 days intervals up to 9 days storage

Treatments	Specific gravity			
	0 day	3 days	6 days	9 days
Varieties				
V ₁	0.92	0.91	0.90	0.88
V ₂	0.96	0.94	0.91	0.88
S.Em. ±	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.004
CD (at 5%)	0.009	0.009	0.008	NS
Plant growth regulator and nutrients				
T ₀	0.91	0.87	0.86	0.82
T ₁	0.92	0.90	0.87	0.85
T ₂	0.92	0.91	0.89	0.86
T ₃	0.93	0.92	0.89	0.87
T ₄	0.95	0.93	0.90	0.88
T ₅	0.89	0.88	0.86	0.84
T ₆	0.90	0.88	0.86	0.84
T ₇	0.99	0.97	0.95	0.93
T ₈	0.92	0.91	0.89	0.87
T ₉	0.96	0.94	0.93	0.90
T ₁₀	0.97	0.96	0.95	0.92
T ₁₁	0.97	0.95	0.94	0.91
T ₁₂	1.01	0.99	0.97	0.95
S.Em.±	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.009
CD (at 5%)	0.023	0.87	0.022	0.025

Conclusion

The results obtained from present two years investigation concluded that the guava variety Chittidar performed well in relation to physiological weight in loss, fruit length, specific gravity and marketable fruits; however variety Dharidar performed well in relation to fruit diameter. As regards to plant growth regulator (GA₃ @ 100 ppm) & nutrients Ca (NO₃)₂ @ 2% & K₂SO₄ @ 2%, the minimum physiological

weight in loss, maximum fruit size, specific gravity and marketable fruits were recorded in T₁₂. In interaction study, minimum physiological weight in loss & maximum marketable fruits was obtained in V₂T₁₂. However, in interaction study non significant variations were noticed with fruit size (length & diameter) and specific gravity under the present investigation.

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