

## Testing Alfalfa for Phosphorus, Potassium, Sulfur and Boron Nutrient Deficiencies

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### SUMMARY

Phosphorus, potassium, sulfur and boron are all essential for good alfalfa growth and quality. They are commonly deficient elements in alfalfa grown in Serbia. Soil tests are not useful in determining sulfur and boron levels and are only good at predicting growth responses from applied P and K when test levels are very low. Plant tissue test have been very reliable for boron and sulphur regardless of growth stage, but have not been as reliable in predicting P and K responses with alfalfa sampled from early bud to 1/10 bloom.

The samples were collected at three stages of growth: early bud, full bud and at the beginning of flowering - 10% of bloom). 40-60 stems including leaves were collected from at least 30 plants. Stems cut into three sections of equal length and discard the bottom third, the top third and the middle third.

The samples were dried and leaves were separated from stems in middle third by rubbing between hands. Top third samples were analyzed for boron, leaves from the middle third were analyzed for sulfur and the stems from middle third were analyzed for phosphorus and potassium. Results of investigation showed that alfalfa top had sufficient amount of boron and sulphur in the first stage of growth, but it was deficient in those elements at full bud stage. Alfalfa was sufficient in phosphorus and potassium at all investigated stages of growth.

**Key words:** alfalfa, boron, phosphorus, potassium, sulphur

## INTRODUCTION

Mineral concentrations in forages vary greatly, and are affected by soil mineral level, soil pH, plant species, stage of forage maturity, and application of fertilizers or waste materials.

Forage mineral concentrations are of limited value in assessing mineral status of ruminants, because little is known regarding availability and factors affecting availability of minerals in ruminants fed forage diets.

Providing an adequate supply of nutrients is important for alfalfa production and is essential to maintain high and profitable yields. However, proper plant nutrition can be a complex and often difficult management process.

All nutrients must be available to the plant in adequate quantities throughout the production season. The nutrients that are most commonly needed are sulphur, followed closely by phosphorus, than potassium and boron (Meyer et al., 2011).

Determination of critical concentration of essential plant nutrients is useful for an early diagnosis of their deficiency in soils for undertaking corrective measures

(Meyer et al., 2011).

before growing of crops. Such critical limits of phosphorus, potassium, sulphur and boron in soils for deficiency of various crops were reported by different researchers around the globe (Cox and Barnes, 2002; Slaton et al., 2005; Bado et al., 2007; Sarkar et al., 2008; Zbiral, 2016; Kumari et al., 2018).

Due to the economic and agronomic importance of alfalfa, a considerable amount of inorganic fertilizer is applied to this crop (Koenig et al., 1999; Gardner et al., 2000). Determining when applications of phosphorus, potassium, sulphur and boron are needed is important to insure adequate alfalfa yield and quality. Therefore, some form of soil and tissue testing program must be used to identify deficiencies and monitor the nutrient status of alfalfa over time (Mortvedt et al., 1996; Koenig et al., 2001; 2002).

Improvements in forage production have the potential to increase income and significantly reduce livestock production costs.

Rotating forages with annual grain crops can increase grain yields, reduce weeds, improve soil quality, and reduce system energy requirements (Entz et al., 2002).

Soil fertility is important for forage production, stand health/longevity, and forage quality.

The nutritional element concentrations in the different organs of a plant reflect nutrient uptake and utilization efficiency during plant growth and play a significant role in the maintenance.

The aim of this investigation was to determine the level of phosphorus, potassium, sulfur and boron in the soil and in the same time to investigate the levels of those nutrients in the different parts of alfalfa samples taken at the different growth stage. These data should

be used as tool for fertilizer application if it is necessary for achieve high yield and forage quality.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The experiment was designed with three replications according to a randomized complete block. Alfalfa was grown at the experimental field of Institute for forage crops, Kruševac - R Serbia (21° 19' 35" E, 43° 34' 58" N). The study area was situated at altitude of 166 m above sea level in Central Serbia.

Soil and plant material were sampled in May 2015, which was the second production year of alfalfa. In pre-arranged field preparation, NPK 15:15:15 fertilizer was broken up in an amount of 300 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>. Soil samples were collected in disturbed state using agricultural probe from 0-30 cm depth. One composite soil sample consisted of 15-20 individual samples. The collected samples were air-dried and grinded to particle size < 2 mm according to SRPS / ISO 11464:2004.

Soil pH was determined by potentiometric method according to ISO 10390:2005. Total nitrogen in soil was determined by Khejldal method. Extraction of available phosphorus and potassium from the soil was carried out with a mixture of ammonium lactate (0.1 M), acetic acid (0.3 M) and ammonium acetate (0.1 M) according to the AL method. In this way phosphorus and potassium were simultaneously extracted. Potassium was determined by flame emission on AAS PERKIN ELMER 1100 B, and phosphorus was measured on a HALO RB.10 spectrophotometer at a wavelength of 580 nm. Humus content in soil was determined according to Tjurin method. Calcium carbonate content in soil was determined by volumetric method according to ISO 10693:1995. The soil samples for boron determination was extracted with hot water. The suspension

(21° 19' 35" E, 43° 34' 58" N).  
166 m  
2015  
NPK 15:15:15  
300 kg ha<sup>-1</sup>.  
0-30 cm  
15-20  
<2 mm  
SRPS / ISO 11464: 2004.  
PH  
ISO  
10390: 2005.  
Khejldal.  
(0,1 ),  
(0,3 ) (0,1 )  
AL.  
AAS PERKIN ELMER  
1100 B,  
HALO RB.10  
580 nm.  
ISO  
10693:1995.

450 °  
 0.5 N  
 HALO RB-10  
 585 nm.  
 Jakovljevi et al. (1985).  
 (*Medicago sativa* L.) -  
 K 28,  
 - 20  
 ( 21 ),  
 32 -10%  
 29 - 42  
 40 60  
 ISO 6491

was filtered. The aliquot part of the filtrate was evaporated on an aqueous bath or heated plate with the addition of a sodium hydroxide solution and burnt in a furnace at a temperature of 450° C to destroy the nitrates and the organic substance. The residue was dissolved in 0.5N hydrochloric acid. In the aliquot part of this solution, a colored complex of boron with carmine was developed. The carmine solution in concentrated sulfuric acid is red and, in the presence of boron, turns into a purple-blue color. The color intensity is measured on a HALO RB-10 spectrophotometer at a wavelength of 585 nm. Sulphur was determined gravimetrically according method by Jakovljevi et al. (1985).

Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa* L.) – cv K 28 selected at Institute for forage crops, Kruševac was sampled at three stages of maturity – early bud (harvested on the 04<sup>th</sup> May – 20 days of vegetation), late bud (harvested on the 21<sup>st</sup> May – 32 days of vegetation) and beginning of flowering – 10% of flowering (harvested on the 29<sup>th</sup> May – 42 days of vegetation). 40 to 60 stems from at least 30 plants in each of the parcels were collected. Different plant parts were analysed for different nutrients.

Each sample was cut into three sections of equal length. The bottom third was discarded, and the top one third was placed in one paper bag and the middle one third in another. The samples were dried in a warm oven. After drying, leaves were separated from stems in the middle one third sample by rubbing the samples between hands. Leaves and stems were put into separate bags. Top third samples were analysed for boron, leaves from the middle third were analysed for sulphur, and the stems from middle third for phosphorus and potassium.

The total phosphorus in the plant was determined according to the standard method ISO 6491 with a molybdenum-vanadate reagent, spectrophotometrically.

766 nm, AAS PERKIN ELMER 1100B. Sari et al. (1967).  
 RB-10 HALO 585 nm.  
 (ANOVA).  
 LSD  
 ( $p < 0,05$ ) F

Potassium was determined from the solution by direct measurement of the intensity of the emission at a wavelength of 766 nm, using AAS PERKIN ELMER 1100B. Sulphur in the plant was determined gravimetrically according to the method by Sari et al. (1967). The determination of boron in plant samples with carmine was based on the formation of a complex boric acid ester with carmine which was purple blue color. The color intensity was measured on a HALO RB-10 spectrophotometer at a wavelength of 585 nm.

Study data were processed by the methods of descriptive statistics. Significance of differences between treatments was tested by analysis of variance (ANOVA). The significance of differences between arithmetic means was tested by Fisher's LSD test. Effects were considered different based on significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) F ratio.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Soil tests provide an estimate of nutrient availability for uptake by plants and are most useful for assessing the fertility of fields prior to planting. The content of available nutrients in the experimental soil site is presented in the Table 1. The results of investigation showed that soil was mild acidic in reaction (pH in suspension of 1N KCl: 5.96); with middle level of total nitrogen (0.170%); low in available phosphorus (4.40 mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup>); medium in available potassium (18.58 mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup>) and low in humus content. The soil was high in available S (35.66 mg kg<sup>-1</sup>) and B (2.75 mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup>). In general, the fertility status of the experimental site was optimum with few limitations.

1.  
 (1 N KCl: 5,96);  
 (0,170%);  
 mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup>);  
 100 g<sup>-1</sup>)  
 (35,66 mg kg<sup>-1</sup>) B (2,75 mg 100 g<sup>-1</sup>).



|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | <p>Concentration of top alfalfa boron decreased from early bud to late bud stage of growth, but with plant development and growth boron content increased. The boron content was above on established sufficiency range only at the first stage of development, and at the second and the third stage of growth boron content was below the established sufficiency range (Table 4).</p> |
| <p>( 4).</p>  | <p>Boron deficiency in alfalfa results in shorter internodes and bunching of top leaves that are typically yellow-reddish. Application of boron on soils with less than 2% organic matter is recommended for areas of high alfalfa production.</p>   |
| <p>2%</p> <p>PK (Fernandez and Hoeft, 2011).</p> <p>3.55 g kg<sup>-1</sup></p> <p>1.55 g kg<sup>-1</sup> DM</p> | <p>To make application easier, boron can be added to the P-K fertilizer (Fernandez and Hoeft, 2011). Content of sulfur in the middle alfalfa leaves ranged from 3.55 g kg<sup>-1</sup> DM at the early bud stage to 1.55 g kg<sup>-1</sup> DM at the early bloom stage of growth.</p>  |
|   | <p>The lowest sulfur content in the middle alfalfa leaves was recorded at the late bud stage, and with further plant growth and development, content of this element increased. It is important to mention that only in the early bud stage of growth sulfur content in alfalfa leaves was adequate, and at the others stages of growth it was defficient (Table 2).</p>                 |
|   | <p>( 2).</p> <p>Sulfur is an important component of several amino acids and has been shown to influence the yield, protein content, stand density and stand life of alfalfa. Marginal content of phosphorus in the middle alfalfa stems was detected at all stages of development.</p>   |
| <p>2.47 g kg<sup>-1</sup></p> <p>2.11 g kg<sup>-1</sup></p> <p>(23,23 g kg<sup>-1</sup> ),</p>                  | <p>Phosphorus concentration declined from 2.47 g kg<sup>-1</sup> DM at the early bud stage to 2.11 g kg<sup>-1</sup> DM at the early bloom stage of growth. The highest content of potassium in the middle alfalfa stem was recorded at the late bud stage of growth (23.23 g kg<sup>-1</sup> DM), and at he other investigated stages</p>   |



(  
3).  
,  
(Wang et al., 2015).  
Markovi et al. (2009) ,  
- ,  
2.70, 2.06 2,39 g kg<sup>-1</sup> ,  
- ,  
Halgerson et al. (2004),  
,  
- ,  
,

of growth potassium concentration was high (sufficiency levels of nutrients of alfalfa are presented in the Table 3).  
-  
- The mineral concentrations generally changed with plant growth as the plant differs in photosynthetic capability and nutrition requirement at different growth stage (Wang et al., 2015). Markovi et al. (2009) indicated that in the second development stage of alfalfa, phosphorus concentration in leaves, stems and whole plant were significantly higher than in the first stage of development, but in the third stage of growth content of phosphorus declined and were 2.70, 2.06 and 2.39 g kg<sup>-1</sup> DM, in leaf, stem and the whole plant, respectively. Those authors also concluded that leaves had higher concentrations of minerals than stems, except for potassium. This agrees with Halgerson et al. (2004), who reported that concentrations of most minerals were greater in leaves than in stems, but who also found potassium concentration to be greater in stems than in leaves.  
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-  
-  
-  
-  
-

### 3.

, %

**Table 3. Plant tissue value, %**

| P         |         | deficient | marginal  | adequate  | high      |
|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Early bud |         | < 0.26    | 0.27-0.29 | 0.30-0.39 | > 0.39    |
| Late bud  |         | < 0.23    | 0.24-0.25 | 0.26-0.34 | > 0.34    |
| 10%       | / bloom | < 0.20    | 0.21-0.22 | 0.23-0.30 | > 0.30    |
| K         |         | < 0.91    | 0.92-1.24 | 1.25-1.60 | 1.60-3.42 |
| Early bud |         | < 0.87    | 0.88-1.19 | 1.20-1.53 | 1.53-3.27 |
| Late bud  |         | < 0.80    | 0.81-1.09 | 1.10-1.40 | 1.40-3.00 |
| 10%       | / bloom | < 0.80    | 0.81-1.09 | 1.10-1.40 | 1.40-3.00 |
| S         |         | < 0.23    | 0.23-0.26 | 0.27-0.35 | > 0.47    |
| Early bud |         | < 0.22    | 0.22-0.24 | 0.25-0.33 | > 0.44    |
| Late bud  |         | < 0.20    | 0.20-0.22 | 0.23-0.30 | > 0.40    |
| 10%       | / bloom | < 0.20    | 0.20-0.22 | 0.23-0.30 | > 0.40    |

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\*Steve Orloff, Dan Putnam, Chris De Ban, Andre Biscaro, Rob Wilson. Making Sound Alfalfa Fertilizer Decisions. UC Cooperative Extension, Siskiyou Country, UC Davis and Los Angeles Country.

4.  
– 15 cm, (Meyer et al., 2011)

**Table 4. Sufficiency levels of nutrient, top alfalfa – 15 cm, (Meyer et al., 2011)**

| Nutrient                   | Low     | Sufficient  | High    |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Boron, mg kg <sup>-1</sup> | < 25.00 | 25.00-60.00 | > 60.00 |

## CONCLUSIONS

- Determining when applications of sulfur, potassium, phosphorus and boron are needed is important to insure adequate alfalfa yield and quality.
- Different soils respond differently to fertilization in terms of the initial and long-term impacts on soil test levels and crop response.
- The soil and tissue test information presented in this paper should be viewed as a guideline to be refined for specific soil types and alfalfa production systems.
- According to the results obtained in this investigations we can conclude that alfalfa was defficient in boron content at late bud and early bloom stage of growth and defficient in sulfur content at late bud stage.

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## Reseeding Solutions for Improving Degraded Grasslands Related to Stationary Area Conditions

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### SUMMARY

The technological solutions and technical equipment for improving the permanent grasslands by total renovation, presented in this paper, respond to the objective regarding the adaptation of the permanent grassland reseeding technologies, specific to each stationary area conditions and promotion of some specific equipment for mechanization the technological sequences in grassland farming.

To decide the appropriate improvement solutions and technologies, the causes of the degradation of permanent grassland must be previously determined, because the application of any solution to improve the sward without removing the degradation causes, leads to some good results, valid only on short time.

The promotion of the most suitable technological sequences for improving the grasslands is based on establishing a favourable interaction between the

- grassland ecosystems improved by total renovation and the animal breeding systems, with good results of natural resource utilization.

- It is also intended that the proposed technological solutions eliminate or limit the effect of external restrictive factors so as to ensure a high feed production and a high feed value.

- The grasslands taken in experiment were located in 3 different areas in terms of stationary conditions and the endowment level of farm with agricultural equipment. Determinations regarding the feed production and quality over a period of three years were made.

- The results presented in this paper and the statistical calculation of data from experimental fields show the superiority of putting into practice of improvement technologies by total reseeding, both of the nutritional value and production of the forages obtained, compared with the control variant.

- **Key words:** technology, improvement, grassland, total reseeding, feed quality, production

## INTRODUCTION

- Due to the fact that the grasslands are located under very varied stationary area conditions, usually occupying the surfaces unsuitable for other crops, either due to the deficient physical-chemical properties of the soil, or due to the terrain orography and other causes, their productivity is closely influenced both to the conditions of environment where they are and the activities of man and his animals. On the other hand, grassland productivity is directly influenced by the action of biotic and anthropogenic factors such as abandonment and improper use, water imbalance, pollution etc. (Mocanu et al., 2015, Mocanu et al., 2018).

- The main measures to increase

(Mocanu et al., 2015, Mocanu et al., 2018).

- quantitatively and qualitatively the
- grassland production are based on
- removing or diminishing the effect of
- limiting factors of their productivity.

To establish the adequate improvement measures and technologies, the causes of the degradation of the respective grass must be determined in advance, because the application of any measure to improve the vegetal carpet without eliminating the degradation causes leads to some good results, only valid in the short term (Ene et al., 2014, Mocanu et al., 2017).

et al., 2014, Mocanu et al., 2017).

- The purpose of the technological
- solutions and the technical means of
- improving the permanent grasslands
- through total renovation method consist of
- (Mocanu et al., 2015, Mocanu et al., 2018):

(Mocanu et al., 2015, Mocanu et al., 2018):

- -suitability of reseeding
- technologies, specific to each stationary
- area condition, for establishing the
- sustainable agricultural systems, with
- minimal effects caused by climate change
- and the economic optimization of the
- technological sequences for obtaining and
- exploiting the grassland fodders;

- -increasing the grass nutritional
- value, that will ensure a balanced and
- efficient animal feeding, especially of the
- bovine and sheep species, in order to
- obtain healthy zoo technical products and
- animal welfare;

- -the promotion of some equipment
- for mechanization the grassland farming,
- in particular the technological sequences
- to improve the grasslands by reseeding
- method.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

- In the paper are presented
- technological solutions and technical
- equipment for improving the permanent
- grasslands by total renovation from three



1. , ,  
 1, , ,  
 , 0-10 cm  
 , K, P  
 10-20 cm , K.  
 P K.  
 1.

The main agrochemical properties of soil from experimental field Dr gu are presented in Table 1.

From the data presented in table 1 it follows that the soil on which the experimental site was placed, in the 0-10 cm profile, is moderately acidic, very poorly supplied in P and medium supplied in K, and in the area 10-20 cm is weakly acidic, very poorly supplied in P and medium supplied in K.

**Table 1. The main agrochemical properties of soil from experimental field Dr gu**

| Current number | Sampling area | pH (H <sub>2</sub> O) | P-AL | K-AL  |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|------|-------|
|                |               |                       | ppm  | ppm   |
| 1              | 0-10 cm       | 5,7                   | 6,0  | 114,0 |
| 2              | 10-20 cm      | 5,9                   | 3,0  | 51,0  |

- :  
 - ( 2, );  
 - ( 2, b);  
 ( 2, c);  
 - , 2 ( 2, d);  
 ( 2, e);  
 - ( 2, f);  
 g);  
 - N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub> ( 2, h).

- The performed technological  
 - sequences for the total renovation consisted in:  
 - autumn plowing (Figure 2,a);  
 - soil cultivation with heavy disc harrow (Figure 2,b);  
 - liming with 8.0 t/ha of CaCO<sub>3</sub> (Figure 2,c);  
 - seedbed preparation with lightweight disc harrow, 2 passes (Figure 2,d);  
 - rolling before sowing (Figure 2,e);  
 - sown with the cereal seed drill (Figure 2,f);  
 - rolling after sowing (Figure 2,g);  
 - fertilizing with N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub> (Figure 2,h).





**. 2.**

- ; b-
- d- ; c- 8,0 t/ha CaCO<sub>3</sub>;
- ; f-
- g- ; h- N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub>.
- i-

**Fig. 2. Aspects with technological sequences of Dr gu experimental field.**

a-autumn plowing; b-soil cultivation with heavy disc harrow; c-liming with 8,0 t/ha of CaCO<sub>3</sub>;  
 d-seedbed preparing with the lightweight disc harrow, 2 passes;  
 e-rolling before sowing; f-sown with the cereal seed drill;  
 g-rolling after sowing; h-annually fertilising with N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub>.  
 i- feed with a high nutritional value.

2015.,  
 5... 20%,  
 ( 1, b):  
 V1 -  
 ( );  
 V2 -  
 30-32 t /ha  
 ( gulle)  
 V3 -  
 30-32 t/ha  
 ( gulle) ;  
 N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub>.

:  
 -  
 ( ) ( 3, );  
 - MSPFP-2,5,  
 RDIG,  
 ( ) ( 3, b);  
 - 5 t/ha  
 87,34%, ( 3,c);  
 -  
 ( gulle), 30-32 t/ha ( 3.d).

The experience located at VI deni was established in 2015 on a field with a slope between 5...20 %, with three variants, in four replications (Figure 1,b):

V1- permanent grassland without intervention (control plot);

V2- permanent grassland improved by total reseeded, fertilized with 30-32 t/ha liquid organic fertilizer (gulle type) after emergence of the plants;

V3- permanent grassland improved by total reseeded, fertilized with 30-32 t/ha liquid organic fertilizer (gulle type) after sowing; and fertilised annually on spring with N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub>.

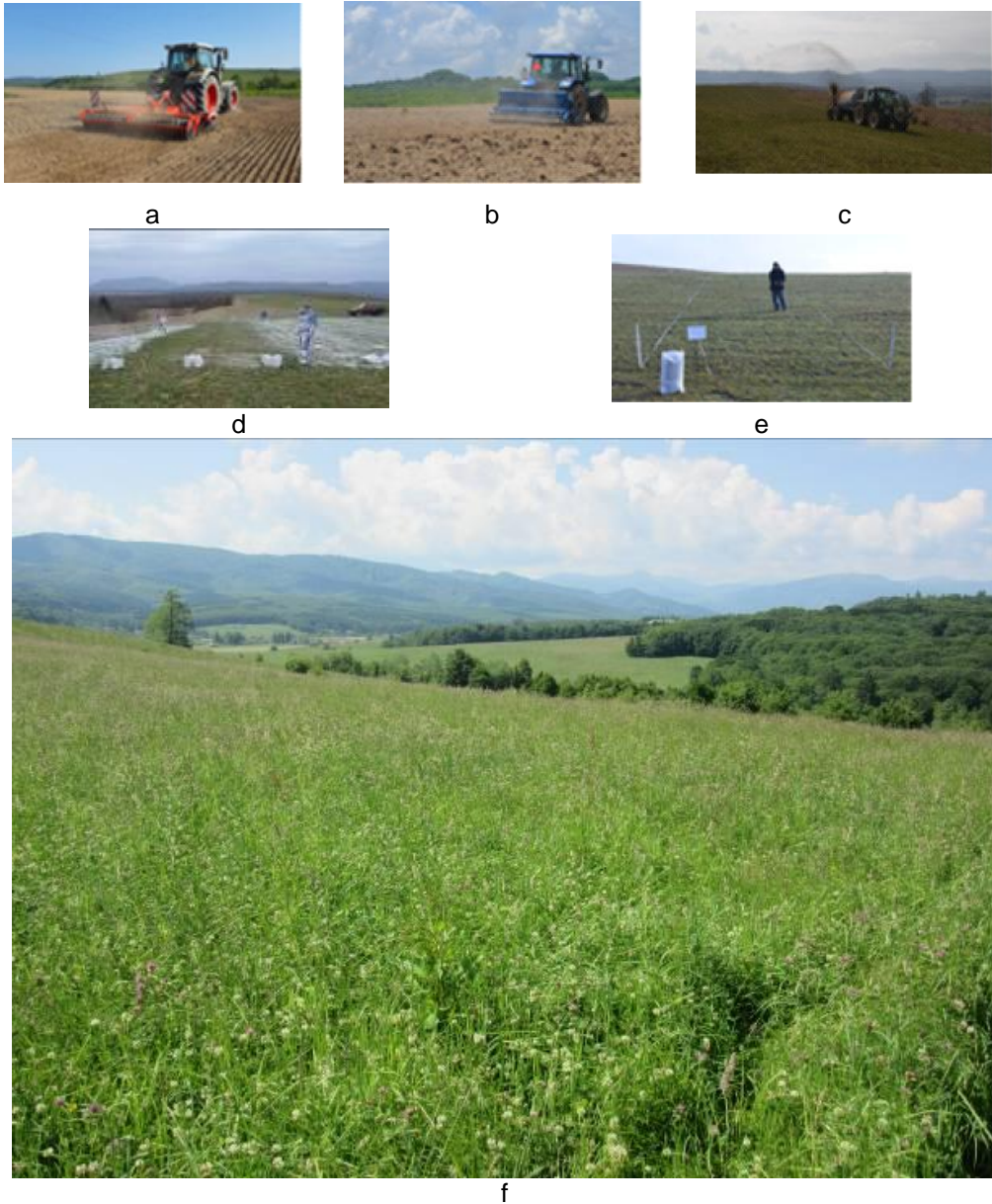
The performed technological sequences for the total reseeded consisted in:

- seedbed preparing by two perpendicular middleweight harrow passes (the last one in the same sense as the sowing direction) (Figure 3,a);

- sowing with MSPFP-2,5 seeder, RDIG type, which performs successively three operations in a single passing (rolling before, sowing, rolling after) (Figure 3,b);

- liming with 5 t/ha of hydrated lime, with a free CaO content of 87.34 %, (Figure 3,c);

- fertilization with liquid organic fertilizer (gulle type), 30-32 t/ha (Figure 3.d).



. 3.

-  
 b- MSPFP-2,5, RDIG Brasov;  
 c- ( gulle); d- 5,0 t/ha CaO;  
 - N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub>; f-

**Fig. 3. Aspects with technological sequences of VI deni experimental field:**

a-seedbed preparing by two perpendicular passes with heavy disc harrow;  
 b- sowing with MSPFP-2,5 seeder, RDIG Brasov type;  
 c- fertilization with liquid organic fertilizer (gulle type); d- liming with 5,0 t/ha of CaO;  
 e- annually fertilising with N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub>; f- feed with a high nutritional value.

2. , ,  
2, , ,  
, 0-10 cm P  
, K,  
10-20 cm P K.  
2.

The main agrochemical soil properties of experimental field VI deni are presented in Table 2.

From the data presented in Table 2, the soil on which the experimental site is located, in profile 0-10 cm, is strongly acidic, poorly supplied in P and medium supplied in K, and in the area 10-20 cm is moderately acidic, very poorly supplied in P and medium supplied in K.

**Table 2. The main agrochemical soil properties of experimental field VI deni**

| Current number | Sampling area | pH (H <sub>2</sub> O) | P-AL | K-AL  |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|------|-------|
|                |               |                       | ppm  | ppm   |
| 1              | 0-10 cm       | 5,0                   | 13,5 | 128,0 |
| 2              | 10-20 cm      | 5,1                   | 7,0  | 84,0  |

, 2016 .,  
0-5%,  
( 1, c):  
V1 -  
( );  
V 2 -  
N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub>.  
:  
- ( 4, );  
- ( 4, b);  
( 4, c);  
-  
( 4, d);  
-  
( 4. );  
-  
( 4, f).

The experience located at Tis u was established in 2016 on a field with a slope between 0-5 %, with two variants, in four replications (Figure 1,c):

V 1- permanent grassland without intervention (control plot);

V 2 - permanent grassland improved by total reseeded, fertilised annually on spring with N<sub>50</sub>P<sub>50</sub>K<sub>50</sub>.

The technological sequences performed for the total reseeded consisted in:

- autumn plowing (Figure 4,a);
- seedbed preparing with rotary miller (Figure 4,b);
- manually or self-propelled seed drill (Figure 4,c);
- soil cultivation using traditional harrows operated with working animals (Figure 4,d);
- rolled manually or with self-propelled farm equipment, after sowing or after fertilizing (Figure 4.e);
- fertilized manually or with tools manually operated (Figure 4,f).



a



b



c



d



e



f



g

. 4.

- ; b- ;  
 c- ; d- ;  
 f- ; g-

**Fig. 4. Aspects with technological sequences of Tis u experimental field.**

a-plowing operated with working animals; b-seedbed preparing by rotary miller;  
 c-manually or self-propelled seed drill; d-soil cultivation using traditional harrows operated with working animals; e- manually rolling or with self-propelled farm equipment, after sowing or after fertilizing;  
 f-fertilized manually or with tools manually operated; g- feed with a high nutritional value.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

: *Festuca pratensis* 19%;  
*Festuca arundinacea* 23%; *Dactylis glomerata* 19%;  
*Phleum pratense* 12%; *Trifolium pratense* 16%;  
*Trifolium repens* 5% *Lotus corniculatus* 6%.

3

2016, 2017 2018)  
(V1, V2 V3).

4,18 t/ha

V1 2018 ., 14,68 t/ha  
V3 2017 .

In the experience located at Dragus, a suitable seed mixture was used for a mixed utilization, consisting of: *Festuca pratensis* 19 %; *Festuca arundinacea* 23 %; *Dactylis glomerata* 19 %; *Phleum pratense* 12 %; *Trifolium pratense* 16 %; *Trifolium repens* 5 % and *Lotus corniculatus* 6 %.

In Table 3, the annual production (t/ha DM, years 2016, 2017 and 2018) of different variants (V1, V2 and V3) are presented. It shows different value from 4,18 t/ha DM, variant V1 in 2018, to 14,68 t/ha DM, variant V3 in 2017.

### 3. (t/ha )

**Table 3. The annual production (t/ha DM) from experimental field Dr gu**

| Variant | / Year |       |       |
|---------|--------|-------|-------|
|         | 2016   | 2017  | 2018  |
| V1      | 6,72   | 6,22  | 4,18  |
| V2      | 8,95   | 9,56  | 8,02  |
| V3      | 9,10   | 14,68 | 10,05 |

3  
2016 ., V2 V3,  
33%, 35%  
V1,  
2017 . V2 V3  
53%, 136%  
V1,  
, V2 V3, V3,  
54%. 2018 .,  
V2 V3  
92%, 142% V1,  
, V2 V3, V3,  
26%.  
4

From Table 3 it is observed that, in 2016, at V2 and V3 variants dry matter production increases of 33 %, respectively 35 % compared to V1, the control variant, unimproved permanent grassland. In 2017, at variants V2 and V3 have been obtained dry matter production increases of 53 %, respectively 136 % compared to V1, the control variant. Comparing the two variants of improved grassland, V2 and V3, to the V3 variant, the fertilized variant annually, we have a production increase of 54 %. In 2018, on V2 and V3 variants has been obtained 92 % increase in dry matter production, respectively 142 % compared to V1, the control variant. Comparing the two variants, V2 and V3, at V3 variant, the annually fertilized variant, it has obtained a production increase of 26 %.

Table 4 shows the dry matter and some elements regarding the quality of the forages from the Dr gu experimental field, for all variants (V1, V2 and V3) and

(V1, V2 V3) (2016, 2017 2018).  
 V2 V3  
 V1  
 2016 .,  
 2017 .,  
 - 2016 .  
 ;  
 - 2017 .

years (2016, 2017 and 2018).

We can see that both variants V2 and V3 compared to control variant V1, give differences statistically insured for crude protein content, both in 2016 and in 2017, as follows:

-in 2016, the differences are very significant;

- in 2017, the differences are significant.

4.

**Table 4. Dry matter and some elements regarding the quality of the forages from the Dr gu experimental field**

| Year      | Variant | DM [t/ha] | CP [%]  | CA [%] | CF [%]              | ADF [%]           | ADL [%] | NDF [%]            | DMD [%] | OMD [%] |
|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|--------|---------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| 2016      | V1      | 6.72      | 8.8     | 6.9    | 38.8                | 42.3              | 5.7     | 58.3               | 44.2    | 40.4    |
|           | V2      | 8.95**    | 15.2*** | 9.6*** | 33.4 <sup>000</sup> | 38 <sup>00</sup>  | 4.9     | 50.7 <sup>00</sup> | 61.8*** | 58.1*** |
|           | V3      | 9.10***   | 16.3*** | 9.7*** | 32.6 <sup>000</sup> | 38.8 <sup>0</sup> | 5.2     | 52.4 <sup>0</sup>  | 63.2*** | 58.0*** |
| 2017      | V1      | 6.22      | 14.0    | 10.5   | 34.0                | 38.9              | 5.6     | 59.6               | 52.8    | 53.0    |
|           | V2      | 9.56***   | 16.1*   | 10.6   | 30.7 <sup>00</sup>  | 34.9 <sup>0</sup> | 6.3     | 50.5 <sup>00</sup> | 55.7    | 49.5    |
|           | V3      | 14.68***  | 15.8*   | 10.1   | 31.9                | 36.5              | 6.4     | 54.3 <sup>0</sup>  | 54.1    | 48.0    |
| 2018      | V1      | 4.18      | 13.0    | 9.2    | 34.2                | 35.4              | 5.5     | 55.0               | 61.5    | 50.6    |
|           | V2      | 8.02***   | 14.1    | 9.7    | 32.3                | 35.1              | 4.9     | 56.3               | 61.6    | 54.4    |
|           | V3      | 10.05***  | 14.0    | 10.1*  | 31.3 <sup>0</sup>   | 38.0              | 5.5     | 60.2 <sup>0</sup>  | 59.4    | 52.5    |
| LSD 5 %   |         | 1.26      | 1.52    | 0.86   | 2.19                | 3.01              | 1.02    | 4.69               | 4.47    | 5.22    |
| LSD 1 %   |         | 1.72      | 2.13    | 1.20   | 3.07                | 4.22              | 1.43    | 6.57               | 6.27    | 7.33    |
| LSD 0.1 % |         | 2.34      | 3.01    | 1.70   | 4.34                | 5.97              | 2.02    | 9.29               | 8.87    | 10.35   |

LSD 5 % = 5.22      LSD 1 % = 7.33      LSD 0.1% = 10.35

DM- Dry Matter; CP- Crude Protein; CA- Crude Ash; CF- Crude Fiber; ADF-acid detergent fiber; ADL-acid detergent lignin; NDF-neutral detergent fiber; DMD-dry matter digestibility; OMD-organic matter digestibility

5  
 A - , B - ( ),  
 5  
 V2 V3  
 V1,  
 :  
 - V2 -  
 33,2% 91,9%

In Table 5 the results of the student test (factor A - variant, factor B - year), performed on the productions obtained in the Dr gu experimental field are presented.

From Table 5 we it can see that both variant V2 and V3 give production increases net superior to control variant V1, regardless of the experimental year, as follows:

-V2 variant - each experimental year gives increases from distinctly significant to very significant, the increases are between 33.2 % and 91.9 %

-V3 variant, regardless of the experimental year, the increase is very significant, being between 35.4 % and 140.4 %

In the experimental site located at VI deni, for a mixed utilization (haymaking, grazing), a suitable seed mixture was used, consisting of: *Festuca pratensis* 12%; *Festuca arundinacea* 24%; *Lolium perenne* 28%; *Dactylis glomerata* 9,5%; *Phleum pratense* 7%; *Trifolium pratense* 7,5%; *Trifolium repens* 6% *Lotus corniculatus* 6%.

-V3 variant, regardless of the experimental year, the increase is very significant, being between 35.4 % and 140.4 %

In the experimental site located at VI deni, for a mixed utilization (haymaking, grazing), a suitable seed mixture was used, consisting of: *Festuca pratensis* 12 %; *Festuca arundinacea* 24 %; *Lolium perenne* 28 %; *Dactylis glomerata* 9,5 %; *Phleum pratense* 7 %; *Trifolium pratense* 7,5 %; *Trifolium repens* 6 % and *Lotus corniculatus* 6 %.

## 5.

**Table 5. Results of the student test from experimental field Dr gu**

| B – Factor B – Year | Factor A – variant       | Dry Matter, |       | Difference, [t/ha] | Significations |
|---------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------|--------------------|----------------|
|                     |                          | [t/ha]      | %     |                    |                |
| b1 – 2016           | a1 – v1 (control plot)   | 6.72        | 100   | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                  | 8.95        | 133.2 | 2.23               | **             |
|                     | a3 – v3                  | 9.1         | 135.4 | 2.38               | ***            |
| b2 – 2017           | a1 – v1 ( /control plot) | 6.22        | 100   | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                  | 9.56        | 153.7 | 3.34               | ***            |
|                     | a3 – v3                  | 14.68       | 236.0 | 8.46               | ***            |
| b3 – 2018           | a1 – v1 ( /control plot) | 4.18        | 100   | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                  | 8.02        | 191.9 | 3.84               | ***            |
|                     | a3 – v3                  | 10.05       | 240.4 | 5.87               | ***            |

LSD 5% = 1.26 t/ha

LSD 1% = 1.72

LSD 0.1% = 2.34

6 (t/ha , 2016, 2017 2018) (V1, V2 V3). 3,34 t/ha ( V1 2018 .) 11,92 t/ha ( V3 2017 .).

In Table 6, the annual production (t/ha DM, years 2016, 2017 and 2018) of different variants (V1, V2 and V3) are presented. Regarding the DM production, different values from 3,34 t/ha DM (variant V1 in 2018) to 11,92 t/ha DM (variant V3 in 2017) are included.

## 6.

(t/ha )

**Table 6. The annual production (t/ha DM) from experimental field VI deni**

| Variant | Year |       |      |
|---------|------|-------|------|
|         | 2016 | 2017  | 2018 |
| V1      | 3,49 | 5,77  | 3,30 |
| V2      | 6,76 | 8,08  | 6,00 |
| V3      | 7,13 | 11,92 | 7,40 |



V3 2016 . V2  
 104% 94%,  
 V1,  
 V3, 2017 ., V2  
 40%, 107%  
 V1,  
 , V2 V3, V3  
 , 47%;  
 V2 V3 2018 .,  
 120% V1, -  
 80%,  
 V2  
 V3, V3 ,  
 23%. 7 -  
 (V1, V2 V3) (2016, 2017  
 2018). ,  
 V2 V3,  
 V1,  
 , 2016 .,  
 2017 ., :  
 - 2016 .  
 ;  
 - 2017 .

From Table 6, in 2016, on variants V2 and V3 have obtained dry matter production increases of 94 %, respectively 104 % compared to V1, the control variant.

In 2017, on V2 and V3 variants have obtained the dry matter production increases of 40 %, respectively 107 %, compared to V1, the control variant, unimproved permanent grassland. Comparing the two variants of improved grassland, V2 and V3, to the V3 variant, the fertilized variant annually, we have a production increase of 47 %; In 2018, the variants V2 and V3 obtained dry matter production increases of 80 %, respectively 120 % compared to V1, the control variant. Comparing the two variants of improved grassland, V2 and V3, on V3 variant, the fertilized variant annually, it has obtained a production increase of 23 %.

In Table 7 the DM productions and some elements regarding the quality of the forages from the experimental field VI deni, on variants (V1, V2 and V3) and years (2016, 2017 and 2018) are presented. It can see that both variants, V2 and V3, compared to control variant V1, give differences statistically insured for crude protein content, both in 2016 and in 2017 year, as follows:

- in 2016, the differences are very significant;
- in 2017, the differences are significant.

7.

**Table 7. Dry matter and some elements regarding the quality of the forages from the VI deni experimental field**

| Year      | Variant | Dry Matter [t/ha] | Crude Protein [%] | Ash [%]  | Crude Fiber [%]     | ADF [%]              | ADL [%]            | NDF [%]             | DMD [%] | OMD [%] |
|-----------|---------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------|---------|
| 2016      | V1-mt   | 3.49              | 10.80             | 6.40     | 38.7                | 46.87                | 7.0                | 67.9                | 49.6    | 38.6    |
|           | V2      | 6.76***           | 15.40***          | 9.13**   | 31.8 <sup>000</sup> | 38.53 <sup>000</sup> | 6.3                | 56.4 <sup>000</sup> | 68.8*** | 60.4*** |
|           | V3      | 7.13***           | 16.13***          | 9.40***  | 32.0 <sup>000</sup> | 38.23 <sup>000</sup> | 6.0 <sup>0</sup>   | 55.6 <sup>000</sup> | 72.6*** | 64.6*** |
| 2017      | V1-mt   | 5.77              | 10.30             | 6.20     | 36.8                | 45.87                | 7.1                | 65.8                | 46.6    | 37.6    |
|           | V2      | 8.08***           | 15.10***          | 9.53***  | 32.1 <sup>000</sup> | 38.20 <sup>000</sup> | 6.3 <sup>0</sup>   | 56.3 <sup>000</sup> | 67.8*** | 59.7*** |
|           | V3      | 11.92***          | 15.10***          | 8.80**   | 31.7 <sup>000</sup> | 38.10 <sup>000</sup> | 5.8 <sup>00</sup>  | 55.9 <sup>000</sup> | 69.6*** | 64.3*** |
| 2018      | V1-mt   | 3.30              | 11.10             | 6.50     | 37.6                | 44.70                | 7.5                | 65.2                | 45.4    | 36.4    |
|           | V2      | 6.00***           | 16.23***          | 10.27*** | 28.5 <sup>000</sup> | 33.17 <sup>000</sup> | 4.3 <sup>000</sup> | 55.0 <sup>000</sup> | 64.0*** | 63.0*** |
|           | V3      | 7.40***           | 15.67***          | 9.87***  | 30.2 <sup>000</sup> | 35.30 <sup>000</sup> | 4.2 <sup>000</sup> | 60.2 <sup>00</sup>  | 62.0*** | 60.5*** |
| LSD 5 %   |         | 0.80              | 1.66              | 1.41     | 2.20                | 1.85                 | 0.75               | 2.89                | 7.02    | 10.77   |
| LSD 1 %   |         | 1.17              | 2.32              | 1.98     | 3.08                | 2.59                 | 1.05               | 4.05                | 9.84    | 15.10   |
| LSD 0.1 % |         | 1.75              | 3.29              | 2.80     | 4.36                | 3.66                 | 1.49               | 5.72                | 13.91   | 21.34   |

LSD 5 % = 10.77

LSD 1 % = 15.10

LSD 0.1 % = 21.34

8

A - , B - ( ) .

In Table 8 there are presented the results of the student test (factor A - variant, factor B - year), performed on the productions obtained in the VI deni experimental field.

8.

**Table 8. Results of the student test from experimental field VI deni**

| B – Factor B – Year | Factor A – variant      | Dry Matter |       | Difference, [t/ha] | Significations |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|-------|--------------------|----------------|
|                     |                         | t/ha       | %     |                    |                |
| b1 – 2016           | a1 – v1 ( control plot) | 3.49       | 100   | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                 | 6.76       | 193.7 | 3.27               | ***            |
|                     | a3 – v3                 | 7.13       | 204.3 | 3.64               | ***            |
| b2 – 2017           | a1 – v1 ( control plot) | 5.77       | 100   | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                 | 8.08       | 140.0 | 2.31               | ***            |
|                     | a3 – v3                 | 11.92      | 206.6 | 6.15               | ***            |
| b3 – 2018           | a1 – v1 ( control plot) | 3.30       | 100   | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                 | 6.00       | 181.8 | 2.70               | ***            |
|                     | a3 – v3                 | 7.40       | 224.2 | 4.10               | ***            |

8 , V2, V3 -

From the data in Table 8 it is shown that both the V2 and the V3 variants give production increases significantly higher

V1, V2 -

- 93,7% 2016 .;
- 40% 2017 .;
- 81,8% 2018 .

V3,

- 104,3% 2016 .;
- 106,6% 2017 .;
- 124,2% 2018 .

9 (t/ha , 2016, 2017 2018) (V1, V2 V3).

2,94 t/ha ( V1 2016 .) 13,05 t/ha ( V2 2017 .).

than the control variant, V1, regardless of the experimental year, as follows:

- V2 variant - each experimental year gives very significant increases:

- 93.7% in 2016;
- 40% in 2017;
- 81.8% in 2018.

- V3 variant, regardless of the experimental year, the increase is very significant:

- 104.3% in 2016;
- 106.6% in 2017;
- 124.2% in 2018.

In the experimental field, located at Tis u, a suitable seed mixture for haymaking has used, consisting of: *Festuca pratensis* 18 %; *Festuca arundinacea* 22 %; *Festuca rubra* 9 %; *Dactylis glomerata* 13 %; *Lolium perenne* 11 %; *Trifolium pratense* 11 %; *Trifolium repens* 4,5 %; *Lotus corniculatus* 7 % and *Medicago sativa* 4,5 %.

In Table 9, the annual production (t/ha DM, years 2016, 2017 and 2018) of different variants (V1, V2 and V3) are presented. Regarding the DM production, different values from 2,94 t/ha DM (variant V1 in 2016) to 13,05 t/ha DM (variant V2 in 2017) are included.

### 9. (t/ha )

**Table 9. The annual production (t/ha DM) from experimental field Tis u**

| Variant | / Year |       |      |
|---------|--------|-------|------|
|         | 2016   | 2017  | 2018 |
| V1      | 2,95   | 4,21  | 6,23 |
| V2      | 4,63   | 13,19 | 8,97 |

9 V2 66% 2016 .

V1, - ;

2017 . V2 209%

V1, ; 2018 ., V2 92%

From Table 9 it is shown that, in 2016, on V2 variant has obtained a 66 % increase in dry matter production, compared to V1, the control variant, unimproved permanent grassland; in 2017, on V2 variant has obtained a 209 % increase in dry matter production, compared to V1, the control variant; In 2018, on V2 solution has achieved a 92 % increase in dry matter production

V1, 10  
 (2016, 2017, 2018).  
 V2, V1,  
 2016, 2017, 2018 :  
 - 2016 ;  
 - 2017 ;  
 - 2018 .

compared to the V1, the control variant.

In Table 10 the DM productions and some elements regarding the quality of the forages from the experimental field Tisau, on variants (V1, V2) and years (2016, 2017 and 2018).

It can see that V2 variant, compared to control variant V1, give differences statistically insured for crude protein content, both in 2016, 2017 and in 2018 year, as follows:

- in 2016, the differences are very significant;
- in 2017, the differences are very significant;
- in 2018, the differences are very significant.

## 10.

**Table 10. Dry matter and some elements regarding the quality of the forages from the Tisau experimental field**

| Year      | Variant | Dry Matter [t/ha] | Crude Protein [%] | Ash [%]  | Crude Fiber [%]     | ADF [%]              | ADL [%]             | NDF [%]              | DMD [%]              | OMD [%]  |
|-----------|---------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| 2016      | V1      | 2.95              | 13.3              | 8.77     | 28.9                | 34.97                | 5.57                | 56.47                | 53.27                | 48.67    |
|           | V2      | 4.63*             | 21.4***           | 11.70*** | 17.8 <sup>000</sup> | 22.83 <sup>000</sup> | 2.30 <sup>000</sup> | 41.13 <sup>000</sup> | 77.27 <sup>000</sup> | 73.43*** |
| 2017      | V1      | 4.21              | 9.5               | 7.70     | 37.2                | 41.20                | 4.13                | 66                   | 51.87                | 49.17    |
|           | V2      | 13.19***          | 15.7***           | 9.82***  | 30.3 <sup>000</sup> | 34.35 <sup>00</sup>  | 4.28                | 54.80 <sup>000</sup> | 60.52 <sup>00</sup>  | 57.03*   |
| 2018      | V1      | 6.23              | 9.3               | 7.50     | 37.4                | 41.07                | 4.30                | 66.20                | 51.70                | 49.00    |
|           | V2      | 8.97**            | 17.5***           | 10.40*** | 28.8 <sup>000</sup> | 33.37 <sup>000</sup> | 4.13                | 52.30 <sup>000</sup> | 63.77 <sup>000</sup> | 58.57**  |
| LSD 5 %   |         | 1.29              | 1.43              | 0.80     | 2.45                | 3.25                 | 0.93                | 3.90                 | 5.26                 | 6.10     |
| LSD 1 %   |         | 1.88              | 2.08              | 1.16     | 3.56                | 4.72                 | 1.36                | 5.67                 | 7.66                 | 8.87     |
| LSD 0.1 % |         | 2.83              | 3.12              | 1.75     | 5.36                | 7.10                 | 2.04                | 8.52                 | 11.50                | 13.33    |

LSD 5 % = 6.10    LSD 1 % = 8.87    LSD 0.1 % = 13.33

11  
 A - , B - ( ),  
 8 ,  
 V2  
 V1  
 2017, 2018 ,  
 :

In Table 11 there are presented the results of the student test (factor A - variant, factor B - year), performed on the productions obtained in the Tisau experimental field.

From the data in table 8 it is shown that variant V2 compared to control variant V1, from point of view of dry matter production, give differences statistically insured both in 2017 and 2018 year, as follows:

- 2017 ;
- 2018 .

- in 2017, the differences are very significant;
- in 2018, the differences are significant.

11.

**Table 11. Results of the student test from experimental field Tis u**

| B – Factor B – Year | Factor A – variant      | Dry Matter |       | Difference, [t/ha] | Significations |
|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|-------|--------------------|----------------|
|                     |                         | [t/ha]     | %     |                    |                |
| b1 – 2016           | a1 – v1 ( control plot) | 2.95       | 100   | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                 | 4.63       | 156.9 | 1.68               | *              |
| b2 – 2017           | a1 – v1 ( control plot) | 4.21       | 100.0 | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                 | 13.19      | 313.3 | 8.98               | ***            |
| b3 – 2018           | a1 – v1 ( control plot) | 6.23       | 100.0 | -                  |                |
|                     | a2 – v2                 | 8.97       | 144.0 | 2.74               | **             |

**CONCLUSIONS**

- The rejuvenation of degraded
- grasslands by reseeding variants create
- the premises for obtaining large quantities of feed with a high nutritional value (Figure 2,i; Figure 3,g and Figure 4,g).

2,i; 3,g 4,g). ( 2016, 2017 2018 .

- The differences in DM production and feed quality, in the three years 2016, 2017 and 2018, between the variants improved by reseeding and the control variants are distinct or very significant in all the three experimental area sites located in different stationary area conditions in Romania.

These results will lead to higher yields of conversion into healthy animal products and at the same time an animal welfare.

- The degraded pastures, located in different stationary area conditions, can be improved by total renovation by execution of some improvement operations that will diminish or annihilate the effect of limiting factors of fodder production and quality, using mixtures of grasses and perennial forage legumes, suitable for the area and different utilization ways, promoting conservation biodiversity and environmental protection.

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## pH

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### Effect of pH Medium on Germination and Seedling Growing on Some Perennial Grasses

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Original scientific paper

#### SUMMARY

pH

- seed germination of important grasses  
- were evaluated in our laboratory of  
- breeding and genetic resources. The  
germination and initial seedling  
development were assessed on different  
pH levels: 2.0, 4.0, 5.0, 6.0, 8.0, 10.0. The  
species are *Dactylis glomerata*, *Festuca  
arundinacea*, *Phleum pratense*, *Lolium  
perenne* and *Phalaris arundinacea*, each  
represented by 2 or 3 Romanians  
varieties. Germination capacity was  
inhibited on the lowest acidic medium (pH  
2) at *Dactylis glomerata*, *Phleum pratense*  
and *Phalaris arundinacea*. *Lolium  
perenne* and *Festuca arundinacea* has  
good germination percentage on all the  
pH mediums. The length of shoots and of  
roots was measured on each variety, on  
the six pH levels.

(pH 2) *Dactylis  
glomerata*, *Phleum pratense* *Phalaris  
arundinacea*. *Lolium perenne* *Festuca  
arundinacea*

pH

5,0 6,0 pH

6,0 pH

5,0

They have a good development on the 5.0  
and 6.0 pH medium at all the grasses.  
Inhibition of root elongation and shoots  
length was the most sensitive response of

- all five species to low pH level.

- Statistical analyses showed there were significant differences regarding germination and seedling development between varieties of the same species on pH medium.

**Key words:** growing medium PH, grasses, germination, root elongation, shoot length

**INTRODUCTION**

Development of acid soils and associated infertility and mineral toxicity is an increasing process and comprise large agricultural areas especially in mountains and hills regions which are mainly covered with pastures (Popa et al., 2008). The important role as main source of food especially for cattle and sheep should focus on sustenance of pasture persistence, sward density and botanical composition. Where soils are extremely acidic in the subsoil the best strategy for a cropping or pasture program is to use crops/pastures with varieties that have excellent tolerance to low pH and high aluminium (Freebairn, 2019). Traditionally soil acidity is corrected by liming and organic fertilizing, but this approach is useful only for the superficial layer, the subsoil remaining with high acidity, limiting yield. Applications of lime is also difficult on slopes were most of the pastures are found, thus the development of cultivars adapted to acid soil are more economical and ecological. (Popa et al., 2008).

The reaction of different perennial grasses to high levels of soil acidity is important to be known for selection of useful genotypes for breeding programs.

In this aim, a first experiment was carried out to estimate the effect of pH on germination and initial seedling development of some grass species with high importance in forage production of grasslands. The knowledge of the optimal pH for plant seed germination is important

- all five species to low pH level.

- Statistical analyses showed there were significant differences regarding germination and seedling development between varieties of the same species on pH medium.

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al., 2011).  
 (Deska et al., 2011).  
 (Finch-Savage and Leubner-Metzger, 2006).  
 pH  
 (Singh et al, 1975; Ryan et al., 1974; Voigt and Tischler, 1997; Deska et al., 2011).

- in the case of species sown in mixtures  
 - and particularly on grasslands (Deska et al., 2011). Seed germination is considered to be the most vulnerable and crucial phase in a plant life cycle (Finch-Savage and Leubner-Metzger, 2006). There were reported differences within grass species concerning the effect of pH on seed germination (Singh et al, 1975; Ryan et al., 1974; Voigt and Tischler, 1997; Deska et al., 2011).

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

pH  
 : *Lolium perenne* (Mara, M gura and Timis-81 varieties), *Festuca arundinacea* (Brio and Adela varieties), *Dactylis glomerata* (Magda, Intensiv and Regent varieties), *Phleum pratense* (Tirom and Alpina varieties) and *Phalaris arundinacea* (Premier and Minier).  
 6  
 : 2.0, 4.0, 5.0, 6.0, 8.0 10.0.  
 pH  
 (H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>)  
 (NaOH)  
 3  
 4%  
 (NaClO).  
 50  
 pH  
 7  
 14

- A laboratory experiment was conducted to determine the impact of pH on seed germination and initial seedling development on five perennial grass species: *Lolium perenne* (Mara, M gura and Timis-81 varieties), *Festuca arundinacea* (Brio and Adela varieties), *Dactylis glomerata* (Magda, Intensiv and Regent varieties), *Phleum pratense* (Tirom and Alpina varieties) and *Phalaris arundinacea* (Premier and Minier varieties).  
 - In the experiment 6 levels of pH: 2.0, 4.0, 5.0, 6.0, 8.0 and 10.0 were used.  
 - The range of pH was established by adding sulfuric acid (H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>) or sodium hydroxide (NaOH) to distilled water. To prevent fungal infections, the seeds were sterilized by soaking for 3 minutes in a 4% solution of sodium hypochlorite (NaClO).  
 - Disinfected seeds were washed several times with distilled water and placed in an amount of 50 pieces per one sterilized petri dish on filter paper. Three replications of each variety from each species in each of the six pH solutions were used. The pH values were maintained constant during the experiment.  
 - The germinated seeds were counted first at 7 days and than, after 14 days from the initiation of the experiment. The germination capacity was determined and the length of shoots and of roots of each variety, on the six pH

levels were measured.

- Analysis of variance was performed using standard techniques and differences between the means were compared through Duncan's test.

Duncan.

pH

pH,

pH2

*Phleum pratense* *Phalaris arundinacea*,

*Lolium perenne*, *Festuca arundinacea* *Dactylis glomerata*.

pH

pH

( 1).

levels were measured.

- Analysis of variance was performed using standard techniques and differences between the means were compared through Duncan's test.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All the species tested in the present experiment germinated on all range of pH medium, with differences depending on pH level, on species and in some cases between the varieties of the same species.

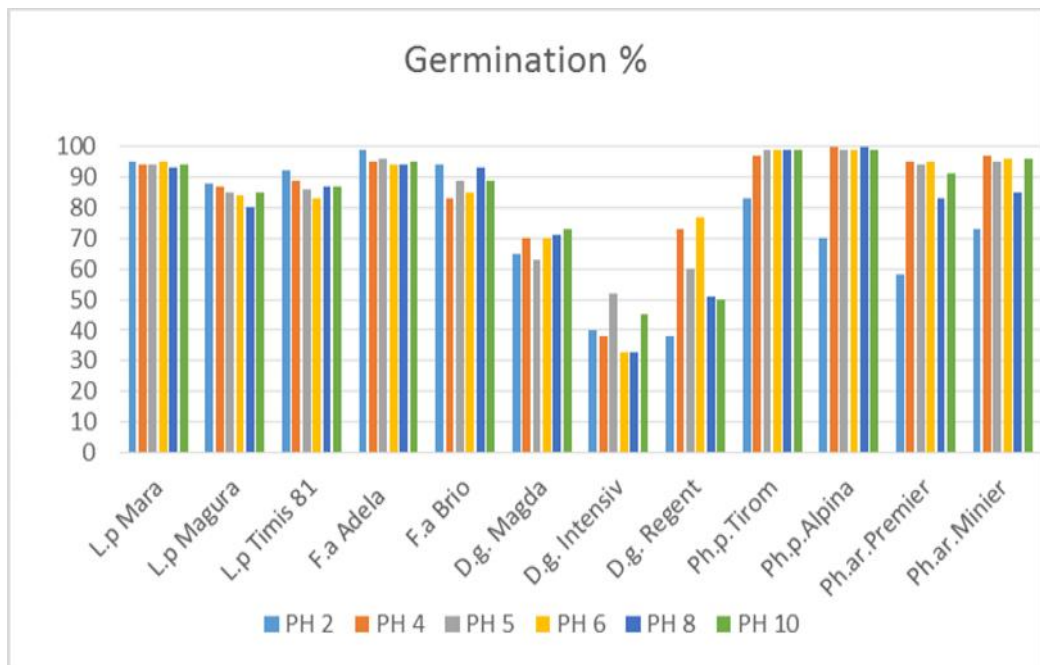
The solution with pH2 influenced negatively the germination of *Phleum pratense* and *Phalaris arundinacea* but had not a depressive effect on germination of *Lolium perenne*, *Festuca arundinacea* and *Dactylis glomerata*. Increasing the pH value no significant differences were noted. The greatest percent of germination for all the species occurred at pH near neutrality, with the highest values on pH=5 (Table 1).

1. 6 pH  
**Table 1. Germination characteristic of seeds of studied grasses at all six pH mediums**

| Species<br>pH | <i>Lolium perenne</i> | <i>Festuca arundinacea</i> | <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> | <i>Phleum pratense</i> | <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> |
|---------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| pH10          | 89.50 CDE             | 92.00 ABCDE                | 59.00 GH                  | 99.00 AB               | 93.50 ABCD                  |
| pH8           | 86.50 DE              | 93.50 ABCD                 | 52.00 H                   | 99.50 A                | 84.00 EF                    |
| pH6           | 89.50 CDE             | 89.50 CDE                  | 51.50 H                   | 99.00 AB               | 95.50 ABC                   |
| pH5           | 89.50 CDE             | 92.50 ABCDE                | 57.50 GH                  | 99.00 AB               | 94.50 ABCD                  |
| pH4           | 90.50 BCDE            | 89.00 CDE                  | 54.00 H                   | 98.50 AB               | 96.00 ABC                   |
| pH2           | 91.50 ABCDE           | 96.50 ABC                  | 52.50 H                   | 76.50 F                | 65.50 G                     |
| DL 5% = 8.75% |                       |                            |                           |                        |                             |

Reffering to the germination reaction of each species, *Lolium perenne* showed the highest germination rate on all the pH medium, the best results being recorded by Mara variety (95%), followed by Timis-81 (87%) and Magura (84%) (Figure 1).

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. 1.

**Fig. 1. Relation between acidity and rate of germination of grasses varieties**

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <p><i>Festuca arundinacea</i></p> <p>(95.5%)</p> <p>(88.8%).</p> <p>(85%)</p> <p>(94%)</p> <p>(1).</p> | <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>pH=6.</p> <p>(1).</p> | <p><i>Festuca arundinacea</i> showed also a high germination capacity, with better results of Adela variety (95,5%) compared with Brio (88,8%). The difference is due to the lower germination of the Brio variety (85%), compared to the Adela variety (94%) on the solution with pH=6 (Figure 1).</p> |
| <p><i>Dactylis glomerata</i></p> <p>(1).</p> <p>pH</p> <p>(1).</p>                                     | <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>pH</p> <p>-</p>       | <p><i>Dactylis glomerata</i> had the lowest germination rate compared to the other grass species, but there were not differences depending on pH medium. (Table 1). However it was highlighted the Magda variety compared with Intensiv and Regent.</p>   |
| <p><i>Phleum pratense</i></p> <p>(99%),</p> <p>=2,</p> <p>76.5% (1),</p> <p>(1).</p>                   | <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>(1).</p>              | <p><i>Phleum pratense</i> had the best germination (99%), except the medium with pH=2, in which case the percent was 76,5% (Table 1) and between Tirom and Alpina varieties didn't exist significant differences (Figure 1).</p>  |
| <p><i>Phalaris arundinacea</i></p> <p>2,</p> <p>pH=8,</p>  | <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>-</p> <p>pH=8,</p>             | <p><i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> except pH2 medium, had good germination, with a slow decrease at pH=8, and increase</p>  |

( 1 ) ( 1 )

14

(pH2) , - pH

*Dactylis glomerata* (0.7 cm)  
*Phleum pratense* (0.35 cm),  
*Lolium perenne* (2.0), *Festuca arundinacea*  
(1.9 cm *Phalaris arundinacea* (1.0 cm)  
( 2, 2).

pH 10 again at pH10 (Table 1) for the both varieties (Premier and Minier) (Figure 1).

- The influence of pH on initial seedling development was considered by measuring the length of the radicles and shoots after 14 days from the starting of the experiment.

- Regarding the roots development, the lowest pH of the medium (pH2), had a negative effect on the roots growth, particularly on *Dactylis glomerata* (0.7cm) and *Phleum pratense* (0.35 cm) , followed by *Lolium perenne* (2.0), *Festuca arundinacea* (1.9cm and *Phalaris arundinacea* (1.0cm) (Table 2, Figure 2).

2.  
pH=2 pH=10

**Table 2. Statistical characterisation of studied features of seedling at pH=2 to pH=10**

| pH   | <i>Lolium perenne</i> |                      | <i>Festuca arundinacea</i> |                      | <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> |                      | <i>Phleum pratense</i> |                      | <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> |                      |
|------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
|      | Length of root (cm)   | Length of shoot (cm) | Length of root (cm)        | Length of shoot (cm) | Length of root (cm)       | Length of shoot (cm) | Length of root (cm)    | Length of shoot (cm) | Length of root (cm)         | Length of shoot (cm) |
| pH10 | 4.5 BC                | 6.0 A                | 3.2 C                      | 5.6 AB               | 4.5 A                     | 4.4 A                | 2.4 C                  | 4.2 B                | 3.2 A                       | 5.3 A                |
| pH8  | 4.7 B                 | 5.6 A                | 4.2 B                      | 5.3 AB               | 4.0 B                     | 3.9 B                | 3.1 AB                 | 4.6 A                | 2.8 AB                      | 4.9 A                |
| pH6  | 3.9 C                 | 5.6 A                | 4.0 B                      | 5.6 AB               | 3.9 B                     | 4.1 AB               | 3.4 A                  | 4.6 A                | 3.1 A                       | 4.9 A                |
| pH5  | 5.3 A                 | 6.0 A                | 5.1 A                      | 5.8 A                | 3.7 B                     | 4.1 AB               | 3.0 B                  | 4.6 A                | 2.4 B                       | 5.2 A                |
| pH4  | 5.6 A                 | 5.8 A                | 3.6 BC                     | 5.2 B                | 3.8 B                     | 4.3 AB               | 3.1 AB                 | 4.1 B                | 3.1 A                       | 5.2 A                |
| pH2  | 1.9 D                 | 4.3 B                | 4.3 B                      | 4.4 C                | 0.7 C                     | 2.6 C                | 0.3 D                  | 3.3 C                | 1.0 C                       | 3.4 B                |

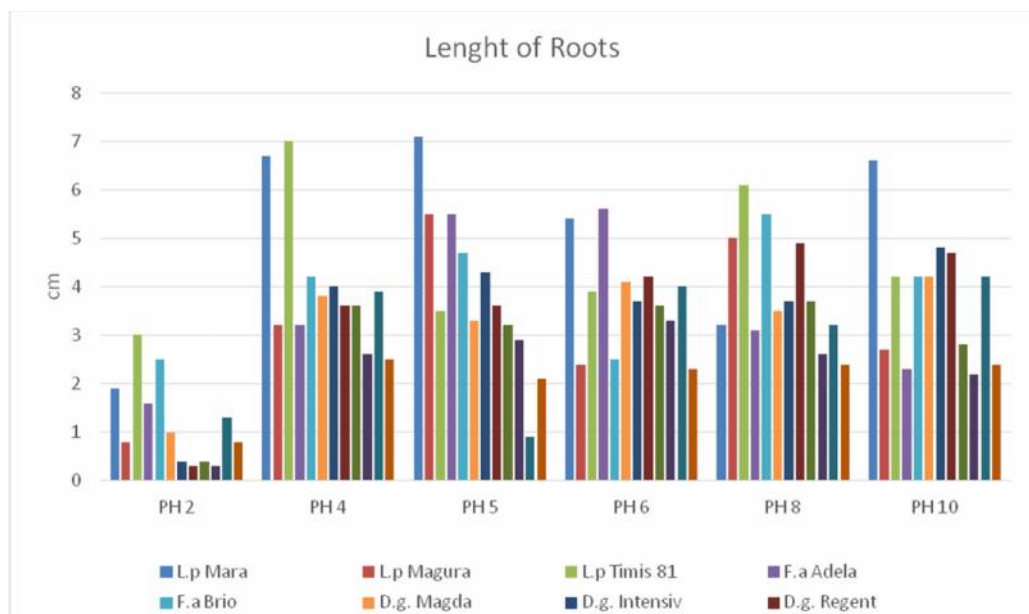
DL 5% = 0.94 % , DL 5% = 0.58 %  
DL 5% = 0.94 % for roots, DL 5% = 0.58 % for shoots

pH10 -  
*Lolium perenne*,  
pH4 pH5 ( 5.6 cm 5.3 cm).  
*Festuca arundinacea* -  
pH = 5 (5.1),  
pH6 pH8 (4.0 4.2 cm).  
*Dactylis glomerata* -  
4.0 cm,  
pH 10 (4.6 cm).  
*Phleum pratense* *Phalaris arundinacea*  
3 cm ( 2).

- pH4 The average values of root length on the pH variants from pH4 to pH10 showed the longest growth in the case of *Lolium perenne*, especially on pH4 and pH5 (5,6cm respectively 5,3cm). *Festuca arundinacea* had the best development of roots on pH=5 (5.1), but also on pH6 and pH8 (4.0 and 4.2 cm). Concerning *Dactylis glomerata* the average length was 4.0 cm, with the biggest development on pH10 (4.6cm). *Phleum pratense* and *Phalaris arundinacea* had almost the same values, in average 3cm (Table 2).

*Lolium perenne*,  
-81  
*Phalaris arundinacea*,

- Differences in the rate of root  
- growth between varieties of the same  
2), species were noted.(Figure 2), especially  
in the *Lolium perenne* where the Mara  
variety had a faster root growth compared  
with Timis-81 and mainly with Magura.  
Also differences were found in the  
*Phalaris arundinacea* in which the Premier  
exceeded the Minier variety.

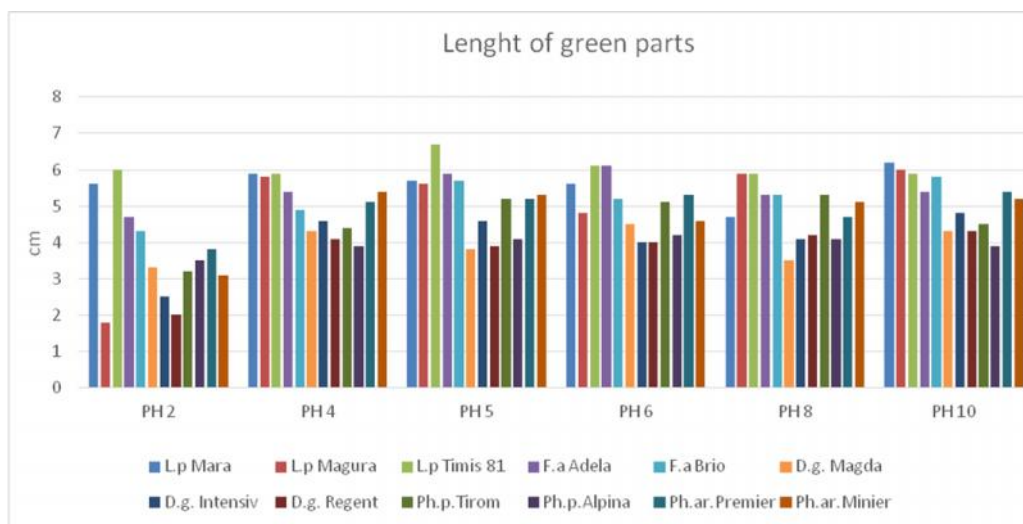


. 2.

**Fig. 2. The roots growing of different Romanians varieties of grasses on studied mediums**

2  
-  
,  
*Dactylis glomerata* (2.6 cm  
3.9-4.4 cm  
)  
pH 4 10  
( 2).

The influence of pH on the growth of shoots was observed at pH2 at all species with the most inhibitory effect at *Dactylis glomerata* (2,6 cm compared to 3,9-4,4 cm on the other pH levels). The levels of pH from 4 to 10 had not statistically assured values on shoot growth (Table 2).



. 3.

**Fig. 3. The shoots growing of different Romanians varieties of grasses on studied mediums**

1. , -  
( 2 pH 10 pH).
2. , ,
3. *Lolium perenne*, *Festuca arundinacea*, *Dactylis glomerata*  
*Phleum pratense* *Phalaris arundinacea*  
pH2 .
4. - pH  
(pH2) -  
-  
*Dactylis glomerata*  
*Phleum pratense*. *Lolium perenne*  
*Festuca arundinacea* -
5. .

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The grass species included in this experience were able to germinate and grow in large pH levels (at 2 pH to 10 pH levels), being suitable to be used as initial material for breeding of varieties for a wide range of environmental conditions.
2. The germination capacity and seedling growth were influenced by pH levels, grass species and also by the cultivars.
3. *Lolium perenne*, *Festuca arundinacea*, *Dactylis glomerata* had good response of germination percentage at all the pH mediums levels while for *Phleum pratense* and *Phalaris arundinacea* pH2 had an inhibitory effect. There were also differences between the varieties within the same species.
4. The lowest pH of the medium (pH2) had a negative effect on the roots development of seedlings, particularly on *Dactylis glomerata* and *Phleum pratense*. *Lolium perenne* and *Festuca arundinacea* has obtained better results.
5. The growth of shoots was

affected by the pH<sub>2</sub> with different responses between the species and also within varieties.

6. The present experience is a first guide on the influence of pH on germination and first development of the seedlings. Further experiments must be established in soil conditions to evaluate acid-soil resistant genotypes.

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