

CaCl₂

(*Malus domestica* Borkh.)

Effect of CaCl₂ Application on Yield and Quality of Economically Important Apple Cultivars (*Malus domestica* Borkh.)

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SUMMARY

2018 .
(CaCl₂)
(„Gloster 69 , Golden Reinders , Granny Smith , Morrens Jonagored , and Red Chief).
l₂ (21
)
„Red Chief
„Granny
” (73.50 t/ha⁻¹),

During 2018 at Fruit Research Institute in a ak, a research on sodium chloride (CaCl₂) application on the yield and quality of fruit of five introduced apple cultivars (Gloster 69 , Golden Reinders , Granny Smith , Morrens Jonagored , and Red Chief) was conducted. Treatments were performed with CaCl₂ solution in four times (each 21 day from the beginning of June until the mid of August).

In harvest period of investigated cultivars, morphometric characteristics of fruit, firmness and soluble solids content in the fruit as well as yield per unit area were determined. The highest yield per unit area was found in cultivar Red Chief (73.50 t ha⁻¹), nd the lowest in Granny Smith (45.83 t ha⁻¹).

Smith" (45.83 t/ha⁻¹).
 Morrens Jonagored (218.92 g;
 70.64 mm 80.97 mm),
 "Golden Reinders"
 (147.25 g) (70.55 mm).
 -
 CaCl₂.
 Morrens Jonagored
 Golden Reinders
 (12.91°Brix) -
 (12.61°Brix),
 (8.93°Brix)
 „Gloster 69 ”.
 CaCl₂, :

- Based on morphometric characteristics,
 - cultivar Morrens Jonagored (fruit weight – 218.92 g; height and width – 70.64 mm and 80.97 mm, respectively) singled out as an apple cultivar with large fruits.

On the other hand, cultivar Golden Reinders had the lowest weight (147.25 g) and fruit dimensions (height – 63.94 mm and width – 70.55 mm). In all examined cultivars, application of CaCl₂ resulted in greater flesh firmness. In respect of the soluble solids content, cultivars Morrens Jonagored (12.91 ° Brix) and Golden Reinders (12.61 ° Brix) singled out, whereas the lowest soluble solids content (9.05 ° Brix) was determined in the fruit of the cultivar Gloster 69 .

Key words: apple, cultivar, CaCl₂, yield, fruit quality

INTRODUCTION

Total annual production of apple in the world amounts about 83.139.326 t, of which in the Republic of Serbia is produced about 378.644 t on approximately 25.134 ha under apple (Faostat, 2017). In the structure of fruit production in our country, apple is second, right behind plum, while in European production, it takes 12th place.

Good market supply with diverse apple fruits demands an offer of fruits with high external and internal quality characteristics (O'Rourke, 2003). Sams et al. (2008) states that many physiological and pathological disturbances of apple fruits are related to the content of calcium (Ca²⁺) in the tissue of the fruit.

With this regard, concentration of calcium in plant tissue has an extremely important role in maintaining the quality of fruits after harvest.

Application of foliar fertilizer based on calcium positively affects cell membrane

83.139.326 t,
 378.644 t,
 25.134 ha (Faostat,
 2017).
 -
 12-
 (O'Rourke, 2003). Sams et al.
 (2008)
 (Ca²⁺)

(Pervaiz et al., 2002; Hossain et al., 2005; Abdi et al., 2006; Misra and Gupta, 2006; Naeem et al., 2009),

("bitter pit")

(Raese and Drake, 2002; Dierend Rieken, 2007).

(Lester and Grusak, 2004).
Gvozdenovi (1998)

("bitter pit") (Fellahi et al., 2010).
Zavalloni et al. (2001)

Stopit,

2006 .
233 m (43°89'40 "N
20°43'42" E),

stabilization and delays senescence (Pervaiz et al., 2002; Hossain et al., 2005; Abdi et al., 2006; Misra and Gupta, 2006; Naeem et al., 2009), maintains fruit firmness, decreases occurrence of the so called 'bitter pit' and internal rot in fruits (Raese and Drake, 2002; Dierend and Rieken, 2007).

There are numerous foliar fertilizers containing calcium that are used before and after harvest in order to delay senescence with no harmful effect on the consumers (Lester and Grusak, 2004). According to Gvozdenovi (1998), need of apple fruit for calcium is very low and in the lack of it all aging processes in the fruit flow much faster and fruits have lower storage capacity.

Calcium application efficiency is determined by the application time in a way that earlier application during vegetative period is far more efficient than the later in terms of reduction of 'bitter pit' (Fellahi et al., 2010). Zavalloni et al. (2001) emphasize that foliar application of a composition containing calcium in thick apple plantations resulted in a slower leaf-to-fruit mobility of calcium.

The aim of this study was to determine the effect of foliar fertilizer Stopit application on yield and qualitative traits of apple fruit, which would significantly improve the quality of fruit during storage.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted in the production-experimental apple orchard at site Donja Trep a, of the Fruit Research Institute in a ak. Apple orchard was set up in 2006 and located at an altitude of 233 m (43° 89' 40" N and 20° 43' 42" E). The growing shape is slender spindle. During the study, standard agro-technical and plantation maintenance measures were applied.

: 'Gloster 69', 'Golden Reinders', 'Granny Smith', 'Morrens Jonagored' and 'Red Chief'.

9, 4 m x 1.25 m (2000 h⁻¹), „Red Chief“, 4 x 1 m (2500 ha⁻¹).

2018 . Stopit, (160 g L⁻¹).

Yara

(5-10 L ha⁻¹)

7 20 , (80 Stopit 7.5 L ha⁻¹ (150 mL

10 L). Stopit 21

7 , 2 , 20 15

SR 420 (STIHL International GmbH Waiblingen,) 1000 L ha⁻¹.

Stopit (kg ha⁻¹),

: „Gloster 69“ 10 ; „Morrens Jonagored“ 11 ; Red Chief”

The study included five apple cultivars: 'Gloster 69', 'Golden Reinders', 'Granny Smith', 'Morrens Jonagored' and 'Red Chief'. All cultivars were grafted on the rootstock M9, and the tree spacing was 4 m x 1, 25 m (2,000 trees ha⁻¹), apart from the cultivar 'Red Chief' which was planted at a distance of 4 x 1 m (2,500 trees ha⁻¹).

The study was conducted in 2018 by applying a liquid foliar fertilizer 'Stopit', based on calcium chloride with high concentration of calcium (160 g L⁻¹).

The above mentioned fertilizer is produced in the corporation 'Yara' in Great Britain and it can be applied together with pesticides. It is used from the beginning of flowering until the end of fruit maturation phenophase (the phase of pigmentation until harvest). The recommended amount is 5-10 L ha⁻¹ and the last treatment is to be done at least 7 days before harvest.

Treatments were applied on 20 trees in four replications (total 80 trees per treatment). 'Stopit' was used in the amount of 7.5 L ha⁻¹ (150 mL on 10 L of water).

Treatments with foliar fertilizer 'Stopit' were applied four times on each 21 day during the period from early June to mid-August. The first treatment was conducted on June 7th, second treatment on July 2nd, third on July 20th and fourth on August 15th, by using motor sprayer SR 420 (STIHL International GmbH Waiblingen, Germany) with a consumption of 1,000 L ha⁻¹.

The influence of application of foliar fertilizer 'Stopit' were analysed on the basis of yield per unit area (kg ha⁻¹), morphometric properties of the fruit, as well as the fruit firmness and the soluble solids content. Yield of the tested cultivars was measured at harvest, in cultivars 'Gloster 69' and 'Morrens Jonagored' on 10th of September, in cultivar 'Red Chief' on 11th of September, in cultivar 'Golden Reinders' on 26th of September, and in

„Golden Reinders” 26 ;
 „Granny Smith” 9 .
 (g), -
 (mm), -
 (Pa), (°
 Brix) 80
 (20).
 (Adventurer
 Pro AV812M,),
 (Carl Roth, Germany). -
 (FHT-803, -
) Pa. -
 (Carl Zeiss, Jena) °Brix.
 (20 °C) (SE).
 ±
 LSD ,
 (ANOVA),
 MSTAT-C (Michigan State University,
 East Lansing, MI, USA).
 0.05 .

cultivar ‘Granny Smith’ on 9th of October.
 Testing of mass (g), height and width (mm), fruit firmness (Pa), as well as the soluble solids content in the fruit (° Brix) was carried out by conventional morphometric methods on a sample of 80 fruits (four replications of 20 fruits). Fruit weight was determined by measuring on a technical scale (Adventurer Pro AV812M, Switzerland), and the length and width of fruit by digital calliper (Carl Roth, Germany).
 Fruit firmness was determined by digital penetrometer (Model FHT-803, Italy) and the obtained values were expressed in Pa. Soluble solids content was determined using a binocular refractometer (Carl Zeiss, Jena) at room temperature (20° C) and the values were given in ° Brix.

The results are presented as mean ± standard error of mean (SE). Differences between mean values were compared by LSD test in two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) using MSTAT-C statistical computer package (Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, USA). Differences with *p* values of 0.05 were considered insignificant.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study results related to the apple fruit morphometric properties depending on the application of foliar fertilizer ‘Stopit’ are shown in Table 1.

Morphometric properties of apple fruit were statistically significantly influenced by cultivar and variability factor interaction determined by the analysis of variance.

'Gloster 69'
(231.78 g),
„Golden Reinders“
Stopit (145,66 g).
Miši (1994),
500 g, 98%
" "
(120-200 g),
" "
(180-250g) (Miši , 2004). Asgharzade
et al. (2012)
Ashour (2000),
0.5%
70.47 82.42 mm.
Stopit,
Morrens Jonagored
(80.97 mm),
„Golden Reinders“ (70.55 mm).
Stopit Morrens Jonagored
(82.42 mm),
„Golden Reinders“ (70.47
mm).
Gvozdenovi (1998),
75 mm,
63.43 75.18 mm.

value of the respective parameter is registered in cultivar 'Gloster 69' with application of foliar fertilizer (231.78 g), and the lowest in cultivar 'Golden Reinders' in the treatment without 'Stopit application (145.66 g). According to Miši (1994), fruit mass of domesticated apple cultivars range from 70 to 500 g, of which 98% is edible. Fruits of the cultivar 'Golden Delicious' belong to a group of mid-large to large (120-200 g), and 'Gloster' in the group of large to very large (180-250 g) (Miši , 2004). Asgharzade et al. (2012) indicate that by application of calcium chloride solution during vegetation a higher apple fruit mass is obtained. The results obtained in these studies are consistent with the statements of Ashour (2000) who found that spraying with 0.5% calcium chloride positively affects fruit mass.

Average width values of the investigated apple fruit ranged from 70.47 to 82.42 mm. Higher width values of apple fruit were found in foliar treatment with 'Stopit though differences were not statistically significant.

Observed by cultivars, the greatest value of the above mentioned parameter was recorded in cultivar Morrens Jonagored (80.97 mm) being significantly higher in comparison with other studied apple cultivars. The smallest fruit width was found in cultivar Golden Reinders (70.55 mm). In interaction effect of variability factor, the greatest fruit width was recorded in treatment without application of foliar fertilizer 'Stopit in cultivar Morrens Jonagored (82.42 mm), and the smallest in the same treatment in cultivar Golden Reinders (70.47 mm).

According to Gvozdenovi (1998), dimensions of fruits of attractive apple cultivars should be from 65 to 75 mm, which has been confirmed in our studies, accordingly.

The average height of apples varied in the range 63.43 to 75.18 mm.

Stopit, , -
 . -
 „Gloster 69“ (71.51 mm),
 „Golden Reinders“ „Granny
 Smith“, -
 (63.94 69.73 mm,). -
 "Stopit" , -
 (75.18 mm), 'Gloster
 69' "Stopit" -
 -
 'Golden Reinders' (63.43 mm) (
 1). -
 , -
 (Krgovi , 1990; Krpina et al., 2004). -
 , Amiri et al. (2008) -
 , -
 , -
 2 .
 Stopit

Stopit

Higher values of the mentioned parameter were determined in the treatment with foliar application of fertilizer 'Stopit , in relation to the values recorded in the treatment without application. By analyzing values of the investigated apple fruit height, the greatest value is registered in cultivar 'Gloster 69' (71.51 mm) which significantly differed in comparison with cultivars 'Golden Reinders' and 'Granny Smith', which had the lowest values (63.94 and 69.73 mm, respectively). In interactive effect of application 'Stopit / cultivar, the highest average value of apple fruit height was found in treatment with foliar fertilizer application 'Stopit in cultivar 'Gloster 69' (75.18 mm), whereas the lowest value in the same treatment in cultivar 'Golden Reinders' (63.43 mm) (Table 1). Morphometric properties of apple fruit are genetically conditioned although their variation to a considerable extent can be conditioned by environmental factors (Krgovi , 1990; Krpina et al., 2004). On the other hand, Amiri et al. (2008) point out that foliar application of some fertilizers can be more efficient in terms of morphometric properties of a fruit compared to standard fertilization method.

In Table 2 are shown the results of studying foliar fertilizer 'Stopit effect on fruit firmness and soluble solids content of investigated apple cultivars.

According to the variance analysis, statistically significant effect of foliar fertilizer 'Stopit application and variability factor interaction on fruit firmness and soluble solids content in apple fruit was determined.

Table 2. Effect of application of Stopit on fruit firmness and soluble solids content of investigated apple cultivars

/Treatment		/Fruit firmness (Pa)	/Soluble solids content (°Brix)
Stopit (A)/Application Stopit (A)			
/Treatment		14.41±0.22 a	11.58±0.49 a
/Control		13.08± 0.29 b	10.77±0.24 b
/Cultivar (B)			
Gloster 69		13.68±0.35 ab	9.05±0.12 d
Golden Reinders		12.86±0.48 b	12.61±0.38 a
Granny Smith		14.54±0.42 a	11.50±0.11 b
Morrens Jonagored		13.10±0.32 b	12.91±0.52 a
Red Chief		14.53±0.49 a	9.81±0.24 c
Stopit x (x B) / Application Stopit x Cultivar (A ∩ B)			
/Treatment	Gloster 69	14.34±0.44 abc	9.18±0.21 e
	Golden Reinders	13.96±0.28 bcd	13.59±0.12 b
	Granny Smith	15.39±0.48 a	11.64±0.19 c
	Morrens Jonagored	13.49±0.44 bcd	14.23±0.28 a
	Red Chief	14.86±0.30 ab	9.28±0.24 e
/Control	Gloster 69	13.02±0.28 cde	8.93±0.09 f
	Golden Reinders	11.76±0.46 e	11.63±0.19 c
	Granny Smith	13.69±0.33 bce	11.36±0.10 c
	Morrens Jonagored	12.72±0.44 de	11.59±0.18 c
	Red Chief	14.20±0.98 abc	10.34±0.12 d
ANOVA			
A		*	*
B		*	*
A ∩ B		*	*

p 0.05 LSD, ns – Values within each column followed by the same small letter are not significantly different at *p* 0.05 by LSD test; ns - non-significant differences.

Stopit (14.41 Pa) and soluble solids content (11.58°Brix) compared to the treatments without the fertilizer (13.08 Pa and 10.77 °Brix). Observed by cultivars, the greatest average value of fruit firmness was found in cultivar "Granny Smith" (14.54 Pa), and the highest soluble solids content in cultivar "Morrens Jonagored" (12.91°Brix). "Golden Reinders" (12.86 Pa) and of soluble solids content in cultivar "Gloster 69" (9.05°Brix).

In application with foliar fertilizer 'Stopit', greater fruit firmness (14.41 Pa) and soluble solids content were found in apple fruit (11.58 ° Brix) compared to the treatments without the fertilizer (13.08 Pa and 10.77 ° Brix). Observed by cultivars, the greatest average value of fruit firmness was found in cultivar Granny Smith (14.54 Pa), and the highest soluble solids content in cultivar Morrens Jonagored (12.91 ° Brix).

The lowest average values of fruit firmness were recorded in cultivar Golden Reinders (12.86 Pa) and of soluble solids content in cultivar 'Gloster 69' (9.05 ° Brix).

In interaction variable factor effect

„Stopit“/), - (application ‘Stopit’/Cultivar), the greatest average values of apple fruit firmness were recorded in treatment with foliar fertilizer application in cultivar Granny Smith (15.39 Pa), whereas soluble solids content was highest in the same treatment in cultivar Morrens Jonagored (14.23 ° Brix). In treatments without foliar fertilizer ‘Stopit’ application, the lowest values were found in both studied parameters, for apple fruit firmness in cultivar Golden Reinders (11.76 Pa), and for soluble solids content in cultivar ‘Gloster 69’ (8.93 ° Brix).

Asgharzade et al. (2012),

Siddiqui Bangerth (1995) -

Benavides et al. (2002) Similar results were reached by Benavides et al. (2002) and Casero et al. (2004), (2004) who point to the positive correlation between fruit firmness and calcium content in apple fruit. Moreover, calcium affects cell membrane stabilization and may accordingly prevent physiological disorders (Saure, 2005).

(Saure, 2005).

11.0%,

;

(- 13.5%),

(application ‘Stopit’/Cultivar), the greatest average values of apple fruit firmness were recorded in treatment with foliar fertilizer application in cultivar Granny Smith (15.39 Pa), whereas soluble solids content was highest in the same treatment in cultivar Morrens Jonagored (14.23 ° Brix). In treatments without foliar fertilizer ‘Stopit’ application, the lowest values were found in both studied parameters, for apple fruit firmness in cultivar Golden Reinders (11.76 Pa), and for soluble solids content in cultivar ‘Gloster 69’ (8.93 ° Brix).

Study results obtained in this work are in compliance with the reports of Asgharzade et al. (2012) that preharvest calcium chloride treatment significantly affect flesh firmness.

Siddiqui and Bangerth (1995) report that positive effects of calcium chloride application on fruit firmness increase is connected with the calcium content in fractions of covalently linked pectin.

Similar results were reached by Benavides et al. (2002) and Casero et al. (2004) who point to the positive correlation between fruit firmness and calcium content in apple fruit. Moreover, calcium affects cell membrane stabilization and may accordingly prevent physiological disorders (Saure, 2005).

Soluble solids content represents one of the key parameters determining quality and consumer acceptability of fruits.

Soluble solids content is increased by fruit maturity and it is a basic indicator of quality and ripeness. If it is greater than 11.0%, it is considered acceptable in fruit production; therefore the higher values of the mentioned fruit quality indicator (greater than 13.5%), the better consumer acceptability.

Yield of investigated apple cultivars depending on foliar fertilizer Stopit application is shown in Figure 1.

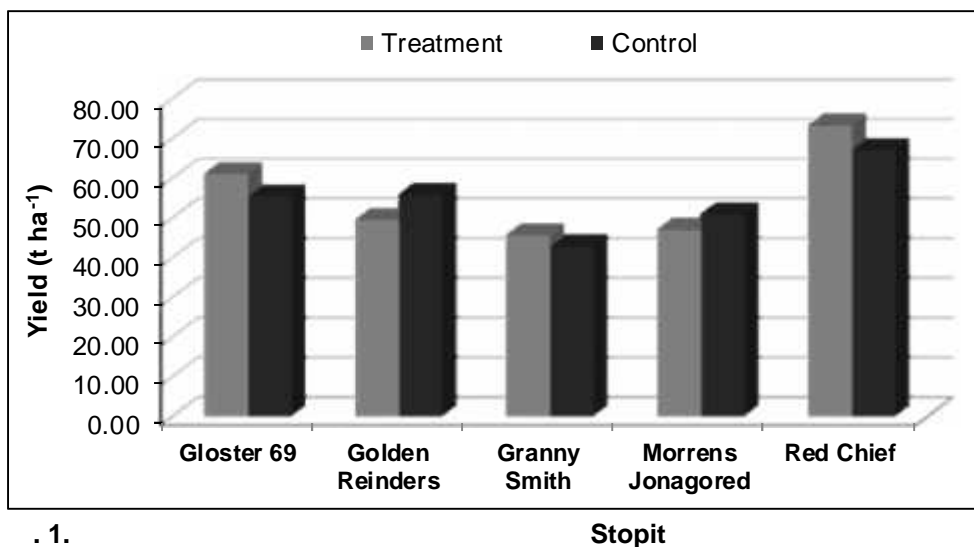


Fig. 1. Effect of application of Stopit on yield of investigated apple cultivars

Comparing treatments with application of foliar fertilizer 'Stopit', higher yield per unit area is found in application, and the highest yields in both treatments are recorded in cultivars 'Red Chief' (73.50 t ha⁻¹ with 'Stopit' application; 67.37 t ha⁻¹ without Stopit application). The same trend in terms of yield per unit area is also observed in cultivar 'Gloster 69' (61.25 t ha⁻¹ with 'Stopit' application; 55.65 t ha⁻¹ without Stopit application). On the other hand, in cultivars 'Golden Reinders' and 'Morrens Jonagored' a lower yield in treatment without application of foliar fertilizer 'Stopit' is registered (56.00 t ha⁻¹, 51.10 t ha⁻¹, respectively), in relation to the treatment with application of fertilizer (49.70 t ha⁻¹, 47.25 t ha⁻¹ respectively). By analyzing results in all treatments, the lowest yield per unit area is found in cultivar 'Granny Smith', both in treatment with application of foliar fertilizer 'Stopit' (45.83 t ha⁻¹), as well as in treatment with no fertilizer application (43.05 t ha⁻¹).

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(Amiri et al., 2008).

Jafarpour and Poursakhi (2011) report that application of foliar fertilizer based on calcium has positive effect on increasing fruit yield; a positive correlation between the number of applications and the yield was found. The best results of the application with calcium chloride are obtained by combination of foliar application and standard fertilization method (Amiri et al., 2008).

CONCLUSIONS

One of the ways for improvement of apple fruit quality is treatment with foliar fertilizer 'Stopit' containing calcium chloride. Foliar application of the respective fertilizer positively affected the most important fruit quality indicators of investigated apple cultivars.

According to the confirmed positive effect of calcium chloride application on certain qualitative apple fruit properties, apple producers can be given some guidelines for 'Stopit' use in cultivation in order to improve quality and storage potential of apple fruits.

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