

Growth responses of home grown Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), Lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*), Swiss chards (*Beta vulgaris*) and faba beans (*Vicia faba*) to sunlight and shade

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Abstract: Four experiments were conducted at research field, Agric. College, Samawa, Iraq during 2017-2018 growing season to investigate the growth responses of barley, lettuce, Swiss chards, and faba beans to natural sunlight and shaded sunlight. Barley plants grown under natural sunlight significantly exceeded these grown under shaded sunlight in leaf length (7.569%), leaf width (94.74%), leaf numbers (68.75%), tillers (33.33%), leaf fresh weight (325%), leaf dry weight (298.91%) and chlorophyll content of leaves (28.09%). Natural sunlight grown lettuce manifested substantially higher leaf length (11.5 cm), leaf width (3.75cm), leaf fresh weight (2.625g), leaf dry weight (0.875g). However, it gave significantly lower leaf number per plant (4.75). Swiss chards grown under natural sunlight highly exceeded these of shade grown in terms of leaf fresh weight, leaf dry weight and chlorophyll content of leaves, respectively by 42.37, 51.53 and 11%. However, it manifested a reductions of 10.7% in leaf length. Sunlight grown faba beans highly exceeded that shade grown in tiller leaves number per plant (30.77%), branches number per plant (100%), leaf fresh weight (16.17%), leaf dry weight (16.59%), and chlorophyll content of leaves (62.92). On the other hand, shaded faba beans substantially by passed these grown under sunlight in terms of plant height (106.07%), leaf length (9%), leaf width (18.37%).

Keywords: Barley, Lettuce, Swiss chards, fababeans, sun light, shade

استجابة النمو للشعير و الخس والسلق السويسري و الباقلاء الى اشعة الشمس و اشعة الشمس الظل

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المستخلص :

نفذت اربع تجارب منفصلة في حقل كلية الزراعة/جامعة المتنى/السماوة/ العراق خلال موسم النمو 2017-2018 لدراسة استجابة استجابة نمو الشعير و الخس و السلُق السويسري و الباقلاء النامية تحت ضوء الشمس و الظل. تفوقت نباتات الشعير النامية تحت اشعة الشمس معنويا على نباتات الظل في طول الورقة (7.569%) و عرض الورقة (94.74%) و عدد الاوراق للنبات الواحد (68.75) و عدد الاشطاء (33.33%) و الوزن الطازج للورقة (325%) و الوزن الجاف للورقة (298.91%) و محتوى الكلوروفيل في الورقة (28.09%). اعطى الخس النامي تحت الشمس اعلى القيم و يتفوق معنوي على الخس النامي تحت الظل في طول الورقية (11.5 سم) و عرض الورقة (3.75 سم) و الوزن الطازج للورقة (2.625 غم) و الوزن الجاف للورقة (0.875 غم). لكنها اعطت قيم منخفضة في عدد الاوراف للنبات الواحد (4.75). تفوقت نباتات السلُق السويسري النامية تحت اشعة الشمس على تلك النامية بالظل في الوزن الطازج للورقة و الوزن الجاف للورقة و محتوى الكلوروفيل للورقة بمقدار 42.37 و 51.53 و 11% على التوالي. تفوقت نباتات الباقلاء النامية تحت الشمس معنويا على تلك النامية في الظل في عدد الاوراق للنبات الواحد (30.77%) و عدد التفرعات للنبات الواحد (100%) و الوزن الطازج للورقة (16.17%) و الوزن الجاف للورقة (16.59%) و محتوى الورقة من الكلوروفيل (62.92). . على العكس من ذلك تفوقت نباتات الباقلاء النامية تحت الظل على تلك انامية تحت الشمس في ارتفاع النبات (106.07%) و طول الورقة (9%) و عرض الورقة (18.37%).

Introduction

Plant growth and differentiation is profoundly influenced by the light quality wavelength reaching a plant's surface (Johkan et al., 2010). Red and blue lights possess the greatest impact on plant growth, since they are the major energy sources for photosynthetic CO₂ assimilation in plants. It is well known that action spectra have action maxima in the B and R ranges (Kasajima et al., 2008). Combined red-blue (RB LED) lights were seem to be an effective lighting source for producing many plant species, including lettuce, in controlled environments (Lee et al., 2007; Shin et al., 2008). Plants grown under varied environments are exposed to competition with others; further, they have the ability to adjust to varying light conditions. Plants varied in their acclimation capabilities to shade (Murchie and Horton, 1997). Acclimation to different light intensities includes changes in the organization and abundance of protein complexes in the chloroplasts thylakoid membranes (Timperio et al., 2012). Plants receive extra sunlight, around the year, as compared to that they can really need for photosynthesis. Therefore, regulation of light harvesting is important to homeostasis the absorption and utilization of light power, thereby minimizing the photo oxidative adversity. Moreover, adjusting light absorption by algae and plants through means by which they getting rid of excess light energy has been absorbed already (Muller et al., 2001). *Solanum dulcamara*, is physiologically adapted to the light intensities prevailing in their natural habitats. However, when *Solanum dulcamara*, grown under a high

light intensity, an ecotype from a shaded habitat manifested signs of damage. While other ecotype from an exposed habitat had higher rates of photosynthetic CO₂ uptake as they grown under strong as compared to weak light, without showing damage. This differential response observed in leaves of both ecotypes when they were grown up to maturity under poor light and then subsequently subjected to strong light for some time.

The quantum requirement for photosynthesis increases in the shade ecotype, but not in the sun ecotype. The sun type of plants increase its rate of photosynthesis under saturating light intensities after a few days in strong light. Insignificant difference in physical resistances to gas diffusion could be found to explain the highly differing rates of photosynthesis. With the increase in photosynthetic capacity in leaves of the sun type, protein content, activity of RuDP carboxylase, and concentration of Fraction I protein increased in the same pattern. Thus it was suggested that *de novo* synthesis of photosynthetic enzymes in fully expanded leaves of the sun ecotype following treatment with strong light is the cause of its increased capacity for CO₂ fixation (Gauhl. et al., 1976). Shaded and the sun grown barley leaves manifested similar Chlorophyll *a/b* and Chl/carotenoid ratios. Major functional variations recorded between the sun and the shade leaves: lower connectivity among Photosystem II (PSII), decreased number of electron carriers, and limitations in electron transport between PSII and PSI in the shade leaves. However; slight differences were detected in the size of PSII

antenna (Zivcak, et al., 2014). They discussed the possible protective role of low electron connectivity between PSII units in shaded leaves in sustaining the excitation pressure at a lower, physiologically more acceptable level under strong light intensities.

The shoot and root fresh and dry weights as well as the crispness, sweetness, and shape of the plants treated with white light (RBW) and fluorescent lamp (FL, as a control) were higher than those of plants treated with RB. The soluble sugar and nitrate contents in plants grown under RBW treatment were significantly higher and lower, respectively, compared to those under RB treatment. However, the chlorophyll, carotene, and soluble protein contents of lettuce leaves showed no significant differences among treatments. These results demonstrate that supplemental light quality can be strategically used to enhance the nutritional value and growth of lettuce plants grown under white light (RBW) LED lights. Precise management of the irradiance and wavelength may hold promise in maximizing the economic efficiency of plant production, quality, and nutrition potential of vegetables grown in controlled environments (Lin et. al, 2013).

Materials and Methods

Four separate experiments were carried out during 2017-2018 growing season at house garden, Samawa, Iraq, which is located on 9m altitude, 31°19N, and 45°17E, to investigate home growing crops under direct sun radiation and shaded sun radiation under date palm trees. Four crops namely barley (*Hordeum vulgare*, L., Local cv.), Lettuce (*Lactuca sativa*, L. Cos Romaine type), Swiss chards *Beta vulgaris*, and Faba beans (*Vicia faba*, L. Aquadulce cv.), each was arranged within Randomized Complete Block Design (RCBD).

Seeds were sown on 12th, December, 2017 in plots of 2m² for each of the four replicates, under direct sun radiation and under the sun shade of date palm trees. Plants were complementary irrigated 8 times. Weeds were manually eradicated on 10th January, 2018, Diamenophosphate (DAP) was applied twice at rates of 5g.m⁻². Plants were harvested on 1st, February, 2018, and then kept in plastic bags, brought to laboratory to measure leaf length, width, and fresh weight, tiller number per plant. Dry weights were recorded after oven drying at 55°C for 72hrs. While, leaf chlorophyll contents mg.m⁻² by SPAD CC200 Meter. Finally, meteorological data was taken from online (table, 1).

Table (1). Actual, Highest and Average temperature from 12th December, 2017 to 17th February, 2018, (ef.accuweather.com)

Days	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Actual Temp.	19° /4°	20° /3°	20° /6°	22° /8°	21° /3°	20° /6°	22° /8°
Hist. Avg.	20°/8°	20°/8°	19°/8°	19°/8°	19°/7°	19°/7°	19°/7°
Days	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Actual Temp.	22° /7°	22° /5°	25° /9°	26° /9°	29° /17°	25° /15°	25° /15°
Hist. Avg.	19°/7°	19°/7°	18°/7°	18°/7°	18°/7°	18°/6°	18°/6°
Days	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Actual Temp.	22° /12°	22° /12°	21° /10°	22° /8°	20° /9°	24° /10°	24° /10°
Hist. Avg.	18°/6°	18°/6°	18°/6°	18°/6°	18°/6°	17°/6°	17°/6°
Days	23	24	25	25	26	27	28
Actual Temp.	25° /11°	18° /11°	21° /9°	21° /10°	21° /6°	21° /11°	20° /10°
Hist. Avg.	17°/6°	17°/6°	17°/6°	17°/5°	17°/5°	17°/5°	17°/5°
Days	29	30	31	32	33	34	35

Actual Temp.	20° /11°	22° /8°	21° /7°	20° /5°	21° /5°	24° /7°	19° /5°
Hist. Avg.	17°/5°	16°/5°	16°/5°	16°/5°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°
Days	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
Actual Temp.	24° /5°	19° /7°	21° /5°	19° /7°	22° /8°	19° /9°	15° /7°
Hist. Avg.	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°
Days	43	44	45	46	47	48	49
Actual Temp.	17° /6°	19° /6°	20° /9°	22° /8°	22° /9°	21° /10°	16° /9°
Hist. Avg.	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°
Days	50	51	52	53	54	55	56
Actual Temp.	17° /5°	18° /5°	18° /5°	19° /5°	20° /6°	20° /7°	21° /6°
Hist. Avg.	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/5°	16°/5°	16°/5°	16°/5°
Days	57	58	60	61	62	63	64
Actual Temp.	17° /5°	18° /5°	18° /5°	19° /5°	20° /6°	20° /7°	21° /6°
Hist. Avg.	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/4°	16°/5°	16°/5°	16°/5°	16°/5°
Days	65	66	67	68	69	70	71
Actual Temp.	22° /7°	22° /9°	25° /10°	26° /12°	25° /11°	25° /10°	26° /11°
Hist. Avg.	16°/5°	17°/5°	17°/5°	17°/5°	17°/5°	17°/6°	17°/6°
Days	72	73	74	75	76	77	78
Actual Temp.	25° /12°	29° /18°	20° /14°	22° /9°	22° /10°	18° /10°	23° /15°
Hist. Avg.	17°/6°	18°/6°	18°/6°	18°/6°	18°/6°	18°/6°	18°/7°

Results and Discussion

Responses of Barley plants to sunlight and shaded sunlight

Barley plants grown under natural sunlight (table, 1), significantly exceeded those grown under shaded sunlight in leaf length (7.569%), leaf width (94.74%), leaf numbers (68.75), tillers (33.33%), leaf fresh weight (325%), leaf dry weight (298.91%) and chlorophyll content of leaves (28.09%). The obtained results reflected the growth of barley in response to light wave length in which it directly affects the photosynthesis performance and then on cell expansions and stature. Abdel and Stutzel (2015a) found that increasing leaf area of barley occurred on the account of leaf thickness (Abdel and Stutzel, 2015) and vice versa where, this alteration were light dependent. Photosynthesis Active Radiation (PAR) at the leaf level showed 8 times higher average and 5 time's higher maximum values incident on the sun leaves compared to those in the shade leaves. Moreover, The PAR input, calculated as a total sum of incident PAR on the

penultimate leaf (the second leaf below the spike, usually the largest one) from the time leaf was formed till it reached its maximum length, was 3.5 times higher for barley leaves in the sun than in the shade. The second leaf below the spike, as it called penultimate leaf is usually the largest one in shade grown plants fulfilled the major conditions for it to be called “shade leaf” (Givnish, 1988; Abdel and Sahib, 2010).

Chlorophyll contents of leaves is a paradox, as it basically depends upon cell growth rates, where under stress chlorophyll is higher, as compared to normal cell growth (Abdel, 2016). Although the total Chlorophyll content was lower per leaf area in the shade leaves, the Chl *a* / Chl *b* ratio was similar in leaves grown at varying light intensities. Evans (1996), however, stated that under conditions of High light, for example, under a sunny habitat, plants have usually smaller PSII antenna size. But, under lowlight circumstances, in a shady habitat, plants have larger PSII antenna size. Thus, the amount of the outermost PSII antenna proteins change in response to light

conditions, whereas, the other PSII antenna proteins the core antenna proteins and the inner peripheral antenna proteins remain unchanged (Tanaka and Tanaka 2000). Hence, the lower value of Chl *a* / Chl *b* ratio is expected in shade

leaves, as has been documented in many studies, e.g., in the sun and the shade leaves of forest trees (Lichtenthaler et al. 2007; Abdel and Sahib, 2009).

Table (1). Response of Barley growth to full sun shine and shade (*, **).

Barley	Plant L	leaf L	Leaf w	L No	Tiller	L fwt.	L dwt.	Chloro
Light	39.88a	27.43a	0.925a	6.75a	1a	2.55a	0.73a	74.64a
Shade	40.63a	25.5b	0.475b	4b	0.75b	0.6b	0.183b	58.27b
Means	40.26	26.32	0.7	5.38	0.875	1.575	0.457	66.455
Exc. %	1.88	7.569	94.74	68.75	33.33	325	298.91	28.09

*Plant length (cm) = Plant L, Leaf length (cm) = Leaf L, Leaf width = Leaf w, Leaf number per plant = L No., Leaf fresh weight (g) = L fwt., Leaf dry weight = L dwt., Chlorophyll content (mg.m⁻² leaf area) = Chloro, Exceeding % = Exc.%
 ** Figures of unshared character are significant at 0.05% level, Duncan test

Natural sunlight grown lettuce (table, 2) manifested substantially higher leaf area (11.5cm), leaf width (3.75cm), leaf fresh weight (2.625g), leaf dry weight (0.875g). However, it gave significantly lower leaf number per plant (4.75), as compared to lettuce grown in shaded environment. These results suggested that lettuce can performed better under full sunlight. However, the higher leaf number per plant of shaded lettuce can be attributed to less compacted apical meristem leaves (Abdel, 2005; Sanchez-Barrios, *et al.*, 2017). Shoot fresh weight, shoot dry weight root fresh weight and root dry weight of plants were the greatest when grown under red blue white light (RBW), and lowest under red blue light. The shoot fresh weight significantly increased by 10% with the red blue white light (RBW) treatment, as compared to the fluorescent lamp light control. Plants under RB treatment (16.3) had a significantly higher S/R DW compared with those under RBW (12.8) and FL (12.3) treatments. The leaf area (LA) and specific leaf area (SLA) decreased in the order of plants grown under fluorescent lamp light, RBW, and RB, and the two traits under fluorescent lamp light

were significantly higher than under red blue light. In addition, a normal appearance and compact morphology with vigorous roots of the lettuce plants treated with RBW lights were observed. However, plants grown under RB light looked small or even severely dwarfed (Lin et al., 2013). They also found that Chl *a* contents of lettuce leaves in all treatments were higher than the respective chlorophyll *b* contents. However, no significant differences were observed in pigment contents chlorophyll *a*, *b*, *a+b*, and regardless of the light spectra. The biomass of lettuce leaves and roots was comparatively greater in plants grown under RBW and FL treatments than under RB treatment. However, fluorescent lamp light -treated plants had a greater SLA than RBW- and RB-treated plants. These results indicate that FL-treated plants exhibited puffiness with a loose shoot structure. The shoot structure of RBW- and RB-treated plants had a tight appearance, but observations of the growth and morphological features indicated that RB treatments were deleterious or adversely affected plant performance (Lin et al., 2013, Saleem, et al., 2018). Seedlings in which stems rapidly elongate

under low irradiation or excess water have small roots that do not take up sufficient water or mineral nutrients, which decreases plant growth. Poor roots cannot supply sufficient water for large shoots, so plants with high S/R ratios are unsuitable for active growth (Johkan et al., 2010). Plant pigments have specific wavelength absorption patterns known as absorption spectra. Biosynthetic wavelengths for the production of plant pigments are referred to as action spectra

(Wang et al., 2009). Lin et al., (2013) stated that soluble sugar content in plants was highest under RBW treatment (220 mg g⁻¹ DW), followed by FL treatment (176 mg g⁻¹ DW), and then RB treatment (104 mg g⁻¹ DW). On the contrary, in the RBW treatment (58 mg kg⁻¹ DW), the nitrate content of lettuce plants was significant lower than those of plants under RB (86 mg kg⁻¹ DW) and FL (73 mg kg⁻¹ DW) treatments.

Table (2). Response of lettuce growth to full sun shine and shade (*, **).

Lettuce	Plant L	leaf L	Leaf w	L No	Tiller	L fwt	L dwt	Chloro
Light	15.475a	11.5a	3.75a	4.75b	0	2.625a	0.875a	99.61a
Shade	15.75a	9.625b	2.2b	5.75a	0	1.25b	0.415b	94.67a
Means	15.613	10.564	2.975	5.25	0	1.9375	0.645	97.14
Exc. %	1.74	19.48	70.46	21.05	0	110	110.84	5.22

*Plant length (cm) = Plant L, Leaf length (cm) = Leaf L, Leaf width = Leaf w, Leaf number per plant = L No., Leaf fresh weight (g) = L fwt., Leaf dry weight = L dwt., Chlorophyll content (mg.m⁻² leaf area) = Chloro, Exceeding % = Exc.%
 ** Figures of unshared character are significant at 0.05% level, Duncan test

Swiss chards grown under natural sunlight highly (table,3), exceeded these of shade grown in terms of leaf fresh weight, leaf dry weight and chlorophyll content of leaves, respectively by 42.37, 51.53 and 11%. However, it manifested a reductions of 10.7% in leaf length. These results suggested that Swiss chards was adversely affected by shade, in contrast to plants grown under full sunlight, where a specific light quality can be used to improve the nutritional quality of vegetables and yields in commercial production. Since, lights differentially affected the metabolic system of the investigated vegetables. The most sensitive response was in sugars, the main photosynthesis product, and their accumulation in leaves (Lefsrud et al., 2008; Xia et al., 2019).

Lillo (1994) reported that lights stimulated the de novo synthesis and activation of higher plant nitrate reductase, and sugar can replace lights in eliciting an increase in nitrate reductase messenger RNA accumulation. Therefore, the addition of broad spectral energy (500–600 nm) to R and B irradiations enhanced the accumulation of sugars and degraded the nitrate level in RBW-treated plants. The higher sugar level might also result in a sweeter taste, and the lower nitrate level can be beneficial to human health. The objective of this experiments was to investigate the morphological responses of barley, lettuce, faba beans, and Swiss chards to natural sunlight and shaded natural sunlight.

Table (3). Response of chards growth to full sun shine and shade (*, **).

Swiss Chard	Plant L	leaf L	Leaf w	L No	Tiller	L fwt	L dwt	Chloro
Light	11.875a	5.375b	2.275a	7.25a	0	2.1a	0.7425a	55.15a
Shade	12.875a	5.95a	2.3a	7a	0	1.475b	0.49b	49.69b
Means	12.375	5.6625	2.2875	7.125	0	1.7875	0.6163	52.42

Exc.%	8.42	10.7	1.09	3.57	0	42.37	51.53	11
*Plant length (cm) = Plant L, Leaf length (cm) = Leaf L, Leaf width = Leaf w, Leaf number per plant = L No., Leaf fresh weight (g) = L fwt., Leaf dry weight = L dwt., Chlorophyll content (mg.m ⁻² leaf area) = Chlora, Exceeding % = Exc.%								
** Figures of unshared character are significant at 0.05% level, Duncan test								

Sunlight grown faba beans highly exceeded that shade grown in tiller leaves number per plant (30.77%), number per plant (100%), leaf fresh weight (16.17%), leaf dry weight (16.59%), and chlorophyll content of leaves (62.92). On the other hand, shaded faba beans substantially by passed these grown under sunlight in terms of plant height (106.07%), leaf length (9%), leaf width (18.37%). Resemble results were found by Abdel, (1997) in investigation of faba beans populations, he attributed his results of high population to phototropism, in which plants were trying to perceive more light by vertical growing and increasing their leaf area. Such phenomena unfortunately was accomplished on the account of branching and plant stature, and ultimately yield. It was found that plants of the high light intensity treatment were more capable of excluding Na⁺, Cl⁻ and accumulating Ca²⁺, K⁺, Mg²⁺, when compared to plants grown under low light

intensity. Therefore, It was suggested that the improved ionic status provided better conditions for protein synthesis, CO₂ assimilation, Particularly, for the conversion of photosynthates into lipids (Helal, and Mengel, 1981). Leaves of pea plants grown in low light were found to content lower of Photosystem II (PSII), ATP synthase, cytochrome b/f (Cyt b/f) complex, and components of the Calvin–Benson cycle, particularly, the CO₂ fixing enzyme the ribulose-1,5-bisphosphate carboxylase/oxygenase, Rubisco, while the levels of major chlorophyll a/b-binding light-harvesting complexes (LHCII), associated with PSII, were increased. Moreover, leaves of plants grown in low light showed lower number of reaction centers (Chow and Anderson 1987), as well as decreased capacity for oxygen evolution, electron transport, and CO₂ consumption and a lower ratio of chlorophyll a to chlorophyll b (Chl a/b) (Leong and Anderson 1984a, b).

Table (4). Response of Faba beans growth to full sun shine and shade (*, **).

Faba beans	Plant L	leaf L	Leaf w	L No	Tiller	L fwt	L dwt	chlora
Light	26.75b	6.17b	3.675b	12.75a	3a	21.55a	6.168a	42.93
Shade	55.125a	6.725a	4.35a	9.75b	1.5b	18.55b	5.29b	69.942
Means	40.94	6.45	4.02	11.25	2.25	20.05	5.73	56.466
Exc.%	106.07	9	18.37	30.77	100	16.17	16.59	62.92
*Plant length (cm) = Plant L, Leaf length (cm) = Leaf L, Leaf width = Leaf w, Leaf number per plant = L No., Leaf fresh weight (g) = L fwt., Leaf dry weight = L dwt., Chlorophyll content (mg.m ⁻² leaf area) = Chlora, Exceeding % = Exc.%								
** Figures of unshared character are significant at 0.05% level, Duncan test								

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