IMPROVING FRUIT CRACKING RESISTANCE OF WONDERFUL POMEGRANATES

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out in two successive seasons of 2015 and 2016 on Wonderful Pomegranates trees grown in sandy soil under drip irrigation system in a private orchard located at Giza governorate, Egypt. Trees were sprayed two times (at fruits size 8-10 mm & Re-spraying at one month later) with Potassium silicate at (2500 & 5000 ppm), Boron at (5 &10%), Kaolin (1 &2%), Zinc oxidase (1000 & 2000 ppm) with wrapping as a commercial treatments. Spraying started at July in the two seasons to improve fruit cracking resistance “Wonderful” pomegranates and study their effects upon yield components, physical and chemical fruit properties.

Results indicated that the “Wonderful” pomegranates cultivar had the highest values of fruit weight and the minimum cracking values were obtained by spraying Boron at (5 %) and potassium silicate at (5000 ppm) in both seasons and this treatments gave the maximum values with total yield/tree, /feddan and Marketable yield/tree, /feddan. Meanwhile, number of arils per fruit, total soluble solids, total sugar, total acidity, (arils)/fruit weight was not affected but when trees treated with wrapping, without wrapping and zinc oxidase at (1000 ppm) sprays gave the minimum mentioned above characteristics. However, fruit weight, arils weight, ascorbic acid, anthocyanin and tannins %were increased as influenced by foliar spraying with all treatments in both studied seasons.

Therefore, boron at 5 % and Potassium silicate at 5000 ppm treatments could be recommended for improving Wonderfull pomegranate cvs performance in cracking resistance alternative treatments to fruit wrapping under similar conditions of this study.

INTRODUCTION

Pomegranate (Punica granatum L) belongs to family Punicaceae, considered one of the oldest cultivated trees in the history of the world cultivated about 5000 years ago. although it is one of the oldest known edible fruits and is capable of growing in different agro-climatic conditions ranging from the tropical to subtropical. It is highly suitable for growing under arid and semiarid regions due to its versatile adaptability, hardy nature, low cost maintenance and high returns. (Al-Maiman and Ahmad, 2002 & Sarkhosh et al 2006 & Hamouda et al 2015)

Fruit cracking is one of the physiological on pomegranate fruit is very scanty. Fruit cracking is a serious problem in pomegranate which hinders its cultivation to a large extent. Cracking varies from 10 to 70% depending upon the prevailing environmental conditions. Various factors are responsible for fruit cracking which include fluctuations in soil moisture regimes, climate, tree nutrition and cultivars (Kumar et al 2010). It may also occur to micronutrient deviancy in young fruit while in mature fruit might be moisture imbalances (Hegazi et al 2014) or due to extreme variations in day and night temperature (Abd-El-Rahman, 2010). Cracked fruits are susceptible to storage disease and have a shorter storage as well as shelf-life (Hegazi et al 2014) .
Fruit bagging is one of the most effective techniques to produce high quality, pollution-free fruits and got more attentions to the fruit producers during the recent decades were obvious. The quality of fruit bagging has been getting better and better. The effect of bagging on appearance quality (brightness, color, size and weight of single fruit), the quality of fruit contents such as total soluble solids, titratable acids, vitamin C, become more apparent procedure Also, the influence of bagging on fruit maturity period, storage property, protection of plant disease, insect pets and sunburn (Jing, 2009). However Bambal et al (1991) found that foliar application of some micronutrients such as Si, B, ZnO, and K increased fruit yield, whereas B reduced the percentage of cracked fruits.

Although, the effect of foliar applied chemicals on yield and fruit quality have been studied by many workers the information of such effect on pomegranate fruit is very scanty. (Hasani et al 2012). Kaolin has recently been utilized in the development of hydrophilic particle film technology. This technology uses chemically inter, non - toxic mineral particles coat to plant surfaces(Glenn et al 1999). Kaolin application showed significantly positive effect on protection of fruit against sunburn on Fuji and Honeycrips apple cultivars (Schupp et al 2002) These positive results on Kaolin application was also confirmed with studies of Melgarejo, et al (2004); Abd El-Rhman, (2010) and Samra & Shalan (2013) on pomegranate and Glenn et al (1999) on apple cultivars.

Kaolin also is an important material used in this concern, it is considered as an effective natural antitranspirant and was reported to mitigate the negative effects of water deficiency and environmental stresses, such as heat stress and sunburn damage as well as suppress diseases and protect crops from insect pests (Kahn and Damicone, 2008). Spraying tomato plants with 5% of kaolin suspension improved water status and yield under water stress conditions Creamer et al (2005) illustrated that applications of kaolin at hot temperatures might help hot Chile pepper plants from being subjected to severe water stress. the main role of potassium is the activation of many enzyme systems involved in the structure of organic substances and promotes photosynthesis and transport of the assimilates of the carbohydrates to the storage organs.

In addition, K is involved in several basic physiological functions. It resulted in improving the fruit quality parameters, i.e., TSS %, Total sugars and coloration (Wahdan et al 2011). These effects might be dedicated to the potassium role in increasing tolerance to stresses and improving the formation and accumulation rates of sugars (Saleh and Abd El-Monem, 2003 and Baiea et al 20115).

Silicon (Si) is the second abundant element in the crust of earth and in plants in which its content in plant is %0.1 to %10 of dry weight, (Epstein 1999 and Hassan et al 2013). Although silicon is not considered an essential element for plant nutrition, many authors report on beneficial effects when its supply to various cultivated plants is enhanced. In most cases, the favorable effects of Si on crop plants seem to originate from reinforcement of the cell walls due to deposition of Si in form of amorphous silica (SiO₂·nH₂O) and opal phytoliths (Epstein 1999) & Stamatakis et al 2003). Moreover, the mechanical strength provided by Si to the plant tissues increases their resistance to several bacterial, fungi and insect diseases (Menzies, et al 1991 & Epstein 1999). Si has been reported to generally improve plant growth, a feature linked to the ability of Si to balance nutrient uptake or the general enhancement of nutrient transport and distribution by Si (Gong, et al 2005, Bertling et al 2009). Apart from the physical action of Si deposits in cells, Si can also associate with cell wall proteins, where it might exert an active biochemical function, possibly through production of defence compounds (Chérif et al 1994). which could reduce pathogen attacks .Therefore, Si applications could improve the postharvest fruit quality of avocado, not only through reducing pest and disease incidences but also by altering certain fruit parameters .Recently, silicon dips have an ability to reduce chilling injury symptoms in lemons; however low concentration should be used (Bertling et al 2009 & Mdithswa et al 2013). The most commonly used from of Si in agricultural commodities is currently potassium silicate (K₂SiO₃), although other products, such as calcium (CaSiO₃) and sodium silicate (Na₂SiO₃) as well as NonTox silica are available. However, as these products are either less soluble than KSi or, like Na, might affect fruit quality negatively (Bertling et al 2009).

Zinc is an essential component of some enzymes such as dehydrogenase, protease and peptidases. In this regard, zinc can affect electron transfer reactions such as the Krebs cycle and energy production of the plant. Zinc is also involved in other reactions such as protein construction and analysis (Bose et al 1988). Zinc is a prerequisite for making tryptophan and tryptophan is the raw material for making auxin and auxin plays an important role
in increasing the leaf area and tree canopy. Foliar application of 0.25% of zinc significantly increased the yield vitamin C, TSS, total acid and juice % of pomegranate (Balakrishnan et al 1996) Zn. Recently, bio fertilization of pomegranate, has improved its yield and decreased cracking of fruit (Aseri et al 2008). Therefore, they may be new alternatives to soil and foliar application of fertilizers for pomegranate orchards. (Khorsandi, et al 2009).

Boron and Zn deficiencies are more probable early in the season because the translocation of elements from the root to the aboveground portion may not be adequate before leaf expansion. Zinc and B have a critical effect on flowering and fruit set and for this reason spring foliar application of these elements are frequently recommended in fruit orchards (Neilson, et al 2004).

Zinc and boron have promising effect on plant metabolism. They are responsible for producing the natural hormones IAA, activating some enzymes biosynthesis of chlorophylls, enhancing germination of pollens and regulating water uptake by plants (Nijjar, 1985). Foliar application of nutrients, especially boron and zinc was essential for producing healthy fruit trees as well as producing productive trees. In addition, they are responsible for improving physical and chemical parameters of fruits (Banik, et al 1997 & Srihari & Rao, 1998 and Bahadur et al 1998).

The positive effect of foliar application of zinc in increasing the productivity. (Singh & Maurya, 2004 and Ranjit et al 2008) and improving the fruit quality in terms of TSS and total sugars (Rashmi et al 2007). Boron has effect on many functions of the plant such as hormone movement, activate salt absorption, flowering and fruiting process and pollen germination specially its influences on the directionality of pollen tube growth, it seems to play an important role in achieving satisfactory fruit set (Baldi, et al 2004 & Khayyat, et al 2007 and Abdel-Fattah et al 2008).

The objectives of this study are to evaluate the use of spraying some substance such as Zinc oxidase, Kaolin, Potassium silicate, Boron, and fruit wrapping (bagging) on yield, physical and chemical fruit characteristics as well improving fruit cracking resistance of “Wonderful” pomegranates.

3- MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was carried out during two successive seasons, (2015 and 2016) in a private orchard located at Giza governorate, Egypt. Thirty uniform healthy pomegranate trees of Wonderful cv. Five years old were chosen for this study. Trees grown on sandy soil, drip irrigation system was used and planted. at 3.5 x 3.0. A regular pest management program was maintained. In both seasons, the selected trees were divided into different ten treatments included the control treatments. The treatments were arranged as follows:

1. Boric acid at 5 ppm
2. Boric acid at 10 ppm
3. Zinc oxidase (ZnO) at 1000 ppm
4. Zinc oxidase (ZnO) at 2000 ppm
5. Kaolin AL2Si2O5 at 1%
6. Kaolin AL2Si2O5 at 2%
7. Potassium silicate K2SiO3 at 2500 ppm
8. Potassium silicate K2SiO3 at 2500 ppm
9. Commercial (sprayed with water only and wrapped with paper as commercial treatment)
10. Control (sprayed with water only)

The experiment was designed as a completely randomized blocks design with three replicates and each replicate was replicates by one tree. All treatments were applied as spraying twice/year (after at fruits size 8-10 mm and re-spraying on the same trees at one month later). Control fruits were wrapped with pepper as commercial treatment at mid July in both seasons.

The following measurements were recorded

1. Yield components: Fruits were harvested at mature stage in the two successive years at mid September. The number of fruit per tree was counted and then, the yield per tree was calculated either fruit number or Kg/tree.
   - Fruit weight (g): A sample of ten fruits per replicate (tree) was weighed at mature stage.
   - Fruit cracking percentage (%)

The percentage of cracked fruits was calculated at mature stage as follows:

\[
\text{Cracking (\%)} = \frac{\text{Number of cracking fruits/tree}}{\text{Total number of fruits/tree}} \times 100
\]

- Marketable fruits % = Total No. of fruits – Total No. of cracked fruits x 100.
Five normal fruits was taken from each tree in all treatments for physical and chemical determination as follows:

2. Fruit physical characteristics: fruit peel weight (g), fruit arils weight (g) and fruit peel thickness (cm) were measured. The fruit length and diameter (cm): were measured by a Digital Electronic caliper.

3. Fruit chemical properties

- **Total soluble solid**: (TSS) was measured by the refractive index expressed as °Brix with an Erma hand refractometer (reading at 20°C) [Palou et al. 2007].
- **Titratable acidity**: was determined as gm malic acid / 100 m juice (A.O.A.C. 2000)
- **Total sugars (%):** was determined as gm / 100 g fresh weight according to (A.O.A.C. 2000).
- **Ascorbic acid content (mg/100g F.wt):** The L-ascorbic acid content (V.C) was determined and expressed as mg/100 g fresh weight following the methods by (A.O.A.C. 2000).
- **Pigment anthocyanins content (%):** Total anthocyanins was extracted from one gram pulp fresh weight with 100 mm . 0.1% methanolic HCL, the solution filtered and absorbency measured at 520 nm on Spekol 11 spectrophotometer [A.O.A.C. 2000].
- **Total tannins (%):** Total tannins were determined by using Folin Denis colorimetric method (A.O.A.C. 2000) at 760 nm wave length. The concentration was calculated from a standard curve of pyrogallol as percentage.

Statistical analysis

Tannins content was determined in each sample by Swain and Hillis [1959].

The experiment was a completely randomized design (CRD) with factorial arrangement. Comparison between means was evaluated by Duncan's Multiple Range Test at 5% level of significance. All storage treatments were done with three replications according to Sendecor and Cochran 1982

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Yield components

- **Total Yield / Tree (Kg) & Marketable and Cracking (%):**

  Results presented in Table (1) showed the Effect of spraying some substance to improve fruit cracking resistance “wonder full” pomegranates on Total yield/tree (Kg), Cracking (%), Marketable yield/ tree (Kg) and No of fruit/tree, during 2015 and 2016 seasons.

As for the effect of treatments, it is evident that all concentrations of Zinc oxidase, Kaolin and Potassium silicate, as well as Boron treatment significantly increased the total yield/tree (Kg) & marketable and reduced Cracking (%) than the control in the two seasons. The most effective treatments which were measured with the lowest crack and highest yield with K2O2Si at 5000 which gave (30.8 & 30.2 Kg Marketable yield/Fed and 9.1 & 8.4 Cracking percentage) during 2015 and 2016 seasons, respectively. Cracking fruit in wonderful pomegranate were recorded by silicate treatment may be influencing cell well strength elasticity. Tree treated with Br at 5 and 10 PPM with slight differences among them which gave (28.3 & 27.7 kg and 11.3 & 2.6 % first season and 27.9 & 26.9 kg and 12.4 & 14.4% in second season, followed by two concentration of kaolin which gave average values. Glenn & Puterka (2007) presented that Kaolin increases carbon assimilation, which results in higher fruit yield and better coloration. Also, Palitha et al (2010) reported that Kaolin spraying significantly reduced damage of pomegranate fruit peel Ergun (2012) Samra et al 2013 mentioned that kaolin has emerged as the most important film resource for plants. This non-toxic film resource, has been used for reflecting radiation, especially UV wavelengths, reaching the surface of leaves and fruits. Whereas the tree treated with ZnO at 1000 PPM considered the of less treatments where it gave the lowest amount of marketable yield/Fed 20.8 & 20.4 Kg and the highest percentage of cracking 18.6 & 20.9 during 2015 and 2016 season.

Regarding control treatments (trees unsprayed) showed the worst treatments where the cracking rate gave nearly a quarter of total yield/tree (20.3 & 23.3% with wrapping and 24.7 & 25.5 % with no bagging during both seasons

- **No of fruit/tree**

  No significant differences were noticed No of fruit/tree with all treatment under study, while it ranged from 68.5 to 63.3 fruits in the frits season and 70.0 to 65.5 in the second season.

Reduced fruit cracking could be due the effect of auxins and enzymes which influenced hydrolytic activity and increased plasticity of cell walls (Taiz and Zeiger, 2006). Such physiological effect of these biostimulants may possibly result in preventing the cracking (Sekse et al 2005). Silicon was reported to alleviate water stress by its reduction effect on the diameter of stomatal pores (Efimova and Dokynchan, 1986) that in turn, reduces tran
Silicon plays a key role in retaining the water capacity of stressed cells, which thereby can tolerate severe drought (Crusciol et al 2009) on potato. Silicon was reported to enhance rigidity, strengthening and elasticity of cell wall, also silicon promotes plant growth by correcting the levels of endogenous growth hormones, i.e., auxins, gibberellins and cytokinins under stress conditions (Hanafy et al 2008). Furthermore, potassium silicate as a foliar application provide a supplemental source of potassium. Since potassium has substantial effect on enzyme activation, protein synthesis, stomatal movement and water-relation (turgor regulation and osmotic adjustment) in plants (Marschner, 1995). Increasing application of K+ has been shown to enhance photosynthetic rate, plant growth and yield as well as drought resistance under water stress conditions (Egilla et al 2001). It was reported also that when K+ is deficient, the stomata cannot function properly and water losses from plant may reach damaging levels (Gething, 1990 and Kamal, et al 2013). potassium silicate led to increased yield might have attributed to increased photosynthetic activity of plant, water metabolism, chlorophyllcontent, more formation of carbohydrates and more uptake of essential nutrients. (Adatia & Besford, 1986; Nesreen et al 2011 and Lalithya et al 2013).

2. Physical fruit properties

2.a. Fruit weight (g), Fruit height, Peel Thickness and NO of Arils

Data in Table (2) declare the Effect of spraying some substance to improve fruit cracking resistance “wonderfull” pomegranates on Fruit weight (g), Fruit height (cm), Peel Thickness cm and NO of Arils/tree during 2015 and 2016 seasons. It was evident from the data that, generally, all tested treatments increased fruit weight (g) and Fruit height as compared with the control. Differences between any of the tested treatments and the control were statistically significant.

- Fruit weight (g) and Fruit height

The greatest Fruit weight (g) and Fruit height values 505.0 & 480.0 g and 8.3 & 8.4 cm during 2015 and 2016 seasons respectively resulted from sprayed fruits with K2O3Si at 5000.

Table 1. Effect of spraying some substance to improve fruit cracking resistance “Wonderfull” pomegranates on Total Yield / Tree (Kg), Cracking (%), Marketable yield/tree (Kg) and No of fruit/tree, during 2015 and 2016 seasons

| Treatments | Total Yield / Tree (Kg) | Marketable yield/Fed (Kg) | Cracking (%) | No of fruit/tree |
|------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
|            | Season 2015 | Season 2016 | Season 2015 | Season 2016 | Season 2015 | Season 2016 | Season 2015 | Season 2016 |
| Br at 5 PPM | 31.8 AB | 31.9 A | 28.3 B | 27.9 B | 11.3E | 12.4E | 66.3 A | 67.0 A |
| Br at 10 PPM | 31.7 AB | 31.5 AB | 27.7 BC | 26.9 BC | 12.6E | 14.4D | 66.5 A | 70.0 A |
| ZnO at 1000 PPM | 25.5 D | 25.8 DE | 20.78 F | 20.4 FG | 18.6BC | 20.9B | 65.3 A | 65.0 A |
| ZnO at 2000 PPM | 31.2 BC | 26.8 D | 25.73DE | 21.71 EF | 17.6C | 19.3BC | 68.5 A | 65.5 A |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 1 % | 29.2 C | 31.1 AB | 24.4 E | 25.3 CD | 16.2CD | 18.5C | 66.5 A | 65.8 A |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 2 % | 29.3 C | 28.7 C | 24.4 E | 22.9 E | 16.7CD | 20.1BC | 64.5 A | 68.3 A |
| K2O3Si at 2500 | 31.6 B | 29.3 BC | 26.6 CD | 24.5 D | 15.7D | 16.3C | 68.8 A | 66.3 A |
| K2O3Si at 5000 | 33.4 A | 32.8 A | 30.2 A | 30.8 A | 9.1F | 8.4F | 66.0 A | 68.5 A |
| Commercial * | 25.8 D | 25.6 DE | 20.5 F | 19.6 GH | 20.3B | 23.3A | 63.0 A | 67.5 A |
| Control | 22.8 D | 23.9 E | 17.1 G | 17.8 H | 24.7A | 25.5A | 63.5 A | 68.3 A |

Values followed by the same letter(s) are not significantly different at 5% level
* sprayed with water only and wrapped with paper as commercial treatment
### Table 2. Effect of spraying some substance to improve fruit cracking resistance “wonderfull” pomegranates on Fruit weight (g), Fruit height (cm), Fruit diameter (cm) and Peel Thickness cm during 2015 and 2016 seasons

| Treatments          | Fruit weight (g) | Fruit height (cm) | Fruit diameter (cm) | Peel Thickness (cm) |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
|                     | Season 2015      | Season 2016       | Season 2015         | Season 2016         |
| Br at 5 PPM         | 480.7 B          | 477.5 A           | 8.1 AB              | 14.0 AB             |
| Br at 10 PPM        | 477.5 CB         | 450.5 B           | 7.9 AB              | 14.0 AB             |
| ZnO at 1000 PPM     | 390.9 E          | 398.3 E           | 7.4 BC              | 13.2 BC             |
| ZnO at 2000 PPM     | 455.7 D          | 410.5 D           | 7.1 CD              | 13.4 BC             |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 1 %   | 440.4 CD         | 407.3 D           | 7.3 BC              | 13.2 BC             |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 2 %   | 455.7 CD         | 420.5 CD          | 7.5 A-C             | 13.6 AB             |
| K2O3Si at 2500      | 460.3 CB         | 443.0 BC          | 7.7 A-C             | 13.8 AB             |
| K2O3Si at 5000      | 505.0 A          | 480.0 A           | 8.3 A               | 14.2 A              |
| Commercial *        | 410.2D           | 380.0 E           | 6.7 DE              | 13.2 BC             |
| Control             | 360.0E           | 350.0 F           | 6.1 E               | 13.0 C              |

Values followed by the same letter (s) are not significantly different at 5% level
* sprayed with water only and wrapped with paper as commercial treatment

On the other hand, the lowest values of these qualities (390.9 & 398.3 g and 7.1 & 7.3 cm) were recorded with treated fruits with ZnO at 1000 PPM in Fruit weight and ZnO at 2000 PPM in Fruit height. Zinc is an essential component of some enzymes such as dehydrogenase, proteinase and peptidases. In this regard, zinc can affect electron transfer reactions such as the Krebs cycle and energy production of the plant. Zinc is also involved in other reactions such as protein construction and analysis (Bose et al. 1988).

So, promote growth by increasing plasticity of the cell wall followed by the hydrolysis of starch into sugars which reduces the cell water potential, resulting in the entry of water into the cell and causing elongation (Richard, 2006).

As for the control treatment Do not spray the fruit with any substance led to reduce of weight fruit. The reduction in fruit weight was from 505.5 & 480.0 g in the treated fruits of K2O3Si at 5000 to 350 & 360.0 g at control treatment (about 30.7 – 28.0%)

- **Fruit diameter and Peel Thickness**

As for Fruit diameter the fruits treated with K2O3Si at 5000 and Br at 5 PPM, gave significantly higher (14.2 & 14.0 cm) in the first season and (14.0 & 13.8 cm) in the second season. However, the lowest diameter value was untreated fruits which recoded (13.0 & 12.6 cm) during the first & second seasons.

Data of the two studied seasons revealed that, slight different among all treatments for Peel Thickness effect. But slight decrease were observed with the untreated fruit (0.59 & 0.58 cm) or treated fruits by ZnO at 1000 PPM (0.63 & 0.63 cm) during both seasons under study respectively. Meanwhile slight increase were observed with treated fruit by K2O3Si at 5000 and Br at 5 PPM (0.66 & 0.65 cm) and (0.66 & 0.65 cm) during 2015 &2016 seasons respectively.

**2.b. NO of Arils, arils weight, Juice weight and Pomace Weight**

Data presented in Table (3) showed the Effect of spraying some substance to improve fruit cracking resistance “Wonderful” pomegranates Fruit diameter (cm) arils’ weight, juice weight and pomace weight during 2015 and 2016 seasons.
Table 3. Effect of spraying some substance to improving fruit cracking resistance “wonderfull” pomegranates on NO of Arils, Arils’ Weight, Juice Weight and Pomace Weight. Fruit diameter during 2015 and 2016 seasons.

| Treatments          | NO of Arils | Arils’ Weight (g) | Juice Weight (g) | Pomace Weight (g) |
|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|                     | Season 2015 | Season 2016       | Season 2015      | Season 2016       | Season 2015       | Season 2016       |
| Br at 5 PPM         | 247.3 A     | 247.6 A           | 307.6 B          | 315 A             | 259.9 B           | 265.04 A          | 47.7 E             | 50.11 D           |
| Br at 10 PPM        | 247.2 AB    | 246.5 A           | 304.6 B          | 293.7 B           | 248.8 B           | 242.3 B           | 55.8 D             | 51.4 D            |
| ZnO at 1000 Ppm     | 245.6 B     | 243.3 AB          | 259.2 F          | 236.5 D           | 199.8 F           | 179.9 D           | 59.4 BC            | 56.6 B            |
| ZnO at 2000 Ppm     | 246.3 AB    | 245.3 AB          | 272.7 DE         | 256.5 C           | 213 DE            | 201.6 C           | 59.7 CD            | 54.9 BC            |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 1 %   | 245.5 B     | 244.2 AB          | 267.3 EF         | 245.6 D           | 208.2 EF          | 189.9 CD          | 59.1 BC            | 55.7 B            |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 2 %   | 246.7 AB    | 245.1 AB          | 282.2 CD         | 261.4 C           | 224.6 CD          | 207.02 C          | 57.6 CD            | 54.38 BC           |
| K2O3Si at 2500      | 246.8 AB    | 246.2 AB          | 290.9 C          | 288.9 B           | 233.3 C           | 236.63 B          | 57.6 CD            | 52.87 CD           |
| K2O3Si at 5000      | 247.5 A     | 248.0 A           | 332.0 A          | 322.08 A          | 288.1 A           | 276.6 A           | 43.9 F             | 45.84 E           |
| Commercial *        | 242.0 B     | 241.2 B           | 244.1 G          | 244.6 E           | 259.9 B           | 265.04 A          | 66.6 A             | 50.2 B            |
| Control             | 241.0 B     | 240.3 B           | 208.8 H          | 201.9 G           | 248.8 B           | 242.3 B           | 61.6B              | 60.7 A            |

Values followed by the same letter (s) are not significantly different at 5% level
* sprayed with water only and wrapped with paper as commercial treatment

- **NO of Arils**

Slight differences between all used treatments on arils number per fruit were noticed. However, arils number recorded the lowest values 241.0 & 240.0 arils with treated fruits by ZnO at 1000 Ppm and (245.6, 243.3 arils) with the untreated fruit during both seasons under study respectively. On the other side, the highest values were achieved with treated fruit by K2O3Si at 5000 and Br at 5 PPM (246.8 & 246.2 cm arils) in first season and (247.3 & 247.6 arils) in second season.

- **Arils weight and Juice weight**

On the general side there was a positive relationship between Juice weight and the weight of arils with the fruit weight. The treated fruits with potassium silicate at 5000 and boron at 5 PPM achieved highest significant of both qualities, which gave the highest weight to the fruit. No significant differences between the ZnO and K2O3Si in both concentrations, which gave intermediate values but higher than untreated or bagging treatment.

- **Weight of Pomace**

Regarding the weight of Pomace. It was observed that the number of arils in the fruit was almost constant and it is clear that, The weight of Pomace increases with worst treatment such as (control, bagging(wrapping) and ZnO at 1000 ppm) and decreases with best treatments such as (B, Si and Kaolin) in both concentration during two seasons under study.

3- Chemical fruit properties

3.a. Total Acidity (%), Total Sugars (%) and TSS (%)

The results illustrated in Table (4) showed the Effect of spraying some substance to improving fruit cracking resistance "wonderfull" pomegranates on Total Acidity (%) & Total Sugars (%) & TSS (%) during 2015 and 2016 seasons. It is worth to mention from the obtained data in Table 5 that supplying pomegranates trees with K2O3Si at 5000 and Br at 5 & 10 PPM significantly was very effective in stimulating chemical characteristics of the fruits in
Table 4. Effect of spraying some substance to improving fruit cracking resistance “wonderfull” pomegranates on Total Acidity(%) , Total Sugars (%) and TSS(%) during 2015 and 2016 seasons

| Treatments       | Season 2015 | Season 2016 | Season 2015 | Season 2016 | Season 2015 | Season 2016 |
|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Br at 5 PPm      | 1.12 B      | 1.15 C      | 13.6 A      | 13.9 AB     | 16.3 AB     | 16.5 AB     |
| Br at 10 PPm     | 1.13 B      | 1.16 C      | 13.2 AB     | 13.7 AB     | 15.9 AB     | 16.1 A-C    |
| ZnO at 1000 PPm  | 1.17 AB     | 1.34 A-C    | 12.5 BC     | 13.1 BC     | 13.7 CD     | 15.3 BC     |
| ZnO at 2000 PPm  | 1.16 AB     | 1.26 BC     | 13.1 AB     | 13.1 BC     | 14.9 BC     | 15.4 BC     |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 1% | 1.15 AB     | 1.28 A-C    | 13.07 BC    | 13.2 B      | 14.8 BC     | 15.4 B      |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 2% | 1.15 AB     | 1.20 BC     | 13.0 A-C    | 13.4 AB     | 15.1 BC     | 15.5 BC     |
| K2O3Si at 2500   | 1.14 B      | 1.17 C      | 13.4AB      | 13.5 AB     | 15.6 AB     | 15.7 BC     |
| K2O3Si at 5000   | 1.11 B      | 1.14 C      | 13.7 A      | 14.2 A      | 16.7 A      | 17.4 A      |
| Commercial *     | 1.20 AB     | 1.38 AB     | 12.1 C      | 13.0 BC     | 13.2 D      | 15.3 BC     |
| Control          | 1.25 A      | 1.47 A      | 11.5 C      | 12.2 C      | 13.0 D      | 14.8 C      |

Values followed by the same letter (s) are not significantly different at 5% level
* sprayed with water only and wrapped with paper as commercial treatment

Table 4: Effect of spraying some substance to improving fruit cracking resistance “wonderfull” pomegranates on Total Acidity(%) , Total Sugars (%) and TSS(%) during 2015 and 2016 seasons.

Terms of increasing T.S.S. % and Total Sugars (%). Also the same treatments significantly reduced titratable acidity. While pomegranates trees treated with bagging or untreated fruits led to reduce the values of T.S.S. %, Total Sugars (%) also led to increased acidity. The deterioration of the fruits resulting from cracking on pomegranate led to an increase in acidity value.

El-Sese and Mohamed (2005) reveal Si significantly increased SSC %, but decreased the total acidity compared to the control. Carbohydrates play a vital role in the development of fruit colour, an indicator of maturity (Roper et al 1987). Further, increase in the fruit colour is due to increase in the anthocyanin content which was due to greater accumulation of carbohydrates under the influence of bioregulators. Fornes et al (1995) and Abubakar et al (2015). The positive significant effect of potassium silicate on the quality aspects of fruits in comparison with the other treatments may be attributed to the significant absorption of NPK nutrients. In addition, potassium silicate is considered as significant supplement of K, since potassium plays an important role in water status of plant, promoting the translocation of newly synthesized photosynthetics and mobilization of metabolites as well as promoting the synthesis of sugars and polysaccharides (Mengel and Kirkby, 1982). Kamal et al (2013). Silicon increased the level of sucrose and water-soluble carbohydrates. (Stamatakis et al 2003; Lynch 2008 and Lalithya et al 2013).

3.b. Ascorbic Acid, Tannins and Anthocyanin

* Ascorbic Acid

Generally, it was noticed that ascorbic acid content in fruits decreased slightly with untreated fruit and bagging treatments. The results presented in Table (5), ascorbic acid content was found that (K2O3Si at 5000) (73.4 and 78.9mg) and (Br at 5 & 10 PPm) (72.0 and 76.8 mg) & (70.0 and 75.1 mg) which gave the highest significant values of L-ascorbic acid compared to control in both seasons respectively. Fruits treated with (ZnO at 1000 PPm) (66.2 &70.7 mg) exhibited the least value of L-ascorbic acid than all treatments.
Table 5. Effect of spraying some substance to improving fruit cracking resistance “wonderfull” pomegranates on Ascorbic Acid mg/100g F.wt, Tannins %and Anthocyanin during 2015 and 2016 seasons

| Treatments            | Ascorbic Acid mg/100g F.wt | Tannins % | Anthocyanin % |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|
|                       | Season 2015 | Season 2016 | Season 2015 | Season 2016 | Season 2015 | Season 2015 |
| Br at 5 PPM           | 72.0 A      | 76.8 AB     | 2.59 D      | 2.57CD      | 0.489AB     | 0.553 AB     |
| Br at 10 PPM          | 70.0 AB     | 75.1 AB     | 2.60 CD     | 2.59CD      | 0.481AB     | 0.513 AB     |
| ZnO at 1000 PPM       | 66.2 CD     | 70.7 C      | 2.70 BC     | 2.81 A      | 0.396 D     | 0.488 BC     |
| ZnO at 2000 PPM       | 69.8 BC     | 72.9 B      | 2.69 BC     | 2.73BD      | 0.422 CD    | 0.486 BC     |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 1 %     | 67.3 B-D    | 71.2 C      | 2.75 AB     | 2.78 A      | 0.436BC     | 0.452 CD     |
| AL2 Si2 O5 at 2 %     | 71.4 AB     | 73.3 BC     | 2.66 CD     | 2.64 AB     | 0.411CD     | 0.445 CD     |
| K2O3Si at 2500        | 70.3 AB     | 74.0 A-C    | 2.61 CD     | 2.56D       | 0.452 BC    | 0.495 BC     |
| K2O3Si at 5000        | 73.4 A      | 78.9A       | 2.65D       | 2.45D       | 0.577 A     | 0.511A       |
| Commercial *          | 66.7 D      | 66.7 D      | 2.78 AB     | 2.80A       | 0.394 D     | 0.412 D      |
| Control               | 63.1 D      | 66.3 D      | 2.84 A      | 2.84A       | 0.372 D     | 0.407 D      |

Values followed by the same letter (s) are not significantly different at 5% level

* sprayed with water only and wrapped with paper as commercial treatment

- **Total tannins**

An evident, significant effects in both seasons on total tannins were detected in all treatments, total tannins of fruit juice wonderful ranged from (2.59 to 2.84 %). K2O3Si at 2500 & 5000 ppm had recorded the best treatment of total tannins. On the other hand, worst treatment was recorded by (AL2 Si2 O5 at 1 % and untreated fruits without significant different between them 2.75 & 2.84 % in first season and 2.78 & 2.84 % in second season. Ascorbic acid is an important nutrient quality parameter and is very sensitive to degradation due to its oxidation compared to other nutrients during food processing (Veltman et al 2000 and Samah Nasr et al 2013).

- **Anthocyanins pigment content (%)**

By reference to Table (1) (percentage of cracking) it was observed that the treatments that gave the lowest value gave the highest percentage of anthocyanin and vice versa. Untreated fruit recorded the lest values of pigment anthocyanins which achieve (0.372 & 0.407 %), gave the highest cracking values (24.7 & 25.5 %) in both seasons respectively. In the contrast K2O3Si at 5000 and Br at 5 & 10 PPM gave the highest values of pigment anthocyanins content. (0. 577, 0.489 and 0.481 in 2015 season) and 0.511, 0.553 and 0.513 in 2016 season with slight different among them, these treatments have been recorded least percentage of cracking. (9.1, 11.3 and 12.6% in 2015 season) and 0.8.4, 12.4 and 14.4 %) in 2016 season respectively.

Silicate gave a higher significant value of anthocyanin than untreated fruits. and prevent the sunburn damage completely and enhanced anthocyanin contents in skin and seed. (Kulkarni & Aradhya, 2005 and Samra et al 2013).

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