Validation and sensitivity analysis of InfoCrop simulation model for growth and yield of Indian mustard varieties at Allahabad

Anosh Graham, Vijender Singh, Yogeshwar Sahu

College of Forestry, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology & Sciences, Allahabad-211007 (U.P.) India
* email: anoshgraham@gmail.com

Abstract— Field experiment was carried out at SHUATS, Allahabad, to study validation and sensitivity analysis of InfoCrop model with the data sets generated respectively during Rabi season of 2016-17. The main plot treatments and sub-plot treatment consisted three dates of sowing and cultivars (D1-25th October, D2-5th November and D3-15th November) and (V1- Parasmani, V2- Varuna and V3- SRM 777) using split plot design. The results revealed that simulation of growth and yield parameters were compared with observed data and results concluded that the model overestimates all the parameters within the acceptable range (<15%) with significant accuracy. Sensitivity analysis results indicated that increased in maximum and minimum temperature (1 ºC above and below); increase in rainfall 10 to 20 percent; elevated CO₂ from 390 to 490 ppm shows significant increase in seed yield but after beyond it adversely affect seed yield. Therefore, the validated InfoCrop can be used for prediction of phenology, estimates potential yield and it provide management option in resilience towards changing climatic conditions.

Keywords— InfoCrop model, Indian mustard, Climate change, Validation, Sensitivity analysis.

I. INTRODUCTION

Rapeseed-mustard (Brassica spp.) is a major group of oilseeds crop of the world being grown in 53 countries across the six continents, Indian mustard (Brassica juncea) is the second important oilseed crop in India after groundnut sharing 27.8% in India’s oilseed production. Indian-mustard is much sensitive to climatic variables; hence, climate change could have a significant effect on its production. One month delay in sowing from mid-October resulted in the loss of 40.6 percent in seed yield (Lalulu, et al., 2010). Weather parameter is very important which influence growth and yield of a mustard crop, therefore, largely governed by the change in growing environment such as date of sowing and water availability. Leaf area index plays an important role for crop growth based on its interception and utilization of PAR (Photosynthetically active radiation) for producing dry matter (Kumar et al., 2007) and with the delay in planting date, the higher mean temperature was experienced during flowering which led to accelerating the decrease of LAI and reduction of the flowering period (Poureisa and Nabipour, 2007).

According to IPCC assessment report (AR4), global average temperature has increased by 0.74 ºC over the last 100 years and projection of an increase in temperature about 1.8 to 4 ºC by 2100. Global losses may account for 1 to 5 percent of GDP, but developing countries with tropical and sub-tropical climate are likely to suffer more losses. Temperature increases are likely to be higher during winter season and precipitation is likely to decrease (IPCC, 2007). IPCC and its global studies indicate that considerable probability of loss in crop production in India with increases in temperature (IPCC, 2014). InfoCrop simulation model is one of the user-friendly systems, dynamic crop growth model developed under Indian condition. This model has the capability to estimate the actual and potential yield, yield gaps and also to assess the impacts of climate variability and climate change. The model simulates the crop growth processes viz., phenology, photosynthesis, respiration, leaf area growth, assimilates partitioning, source-sink balance, nutrient uptake partitioning and transpiration (Aggarwal et al. 2006). InfoCrop model has been used for simulating potential rain-fed yields. It is used to optimize management, dates of planting, variety, irrigation and nitrogen fertilizer, assessing interactions among genotype, environment, management, and pests, yield forecast, yield loss assessment due to pests and greenhouse gas emissions (Aggarwal et al. 2004).

Study of the impact of climate change on crops needs simulation model, as it provides a means to quantify the effects of climate, soil, and management on crop
growth, productivity and sustainability of agricultural production. These tools can reduce the expensive and time-consuming field experimentation as they can be used to extrapolate the results of research conducted in one season or location to another season, location, or management (Boomiraj et al. 2007). Boomiraj et al. (2010) observed that model can successfully simulate growth and yield of the mustard crop across different locations in India. The simulated yield of mustard was found to be sensitive to changes in atmospheric CO₂ and temperature variation. The objectives of this study, to quantify InfoCrop model on the mustard crop at Allahabad conditions, which show considerable potential to evaluate crops, varieties, and genotypes of mustard, cropping pattern and genetic potential for yield. The scientific information on simulation of growth and yield in mustard crop using modeling in Uttar Pradesh is lacking. Hence, keeping in view the importance of the study, the present investigation was carried out.

II. MATERIALS AND METHOD

Experimental Details
The experimental field data (2016-17) of Allahabad station comprising three dates of sowing (Rabi: D₁-25th Oct., D₂-5th Nov. and D₃-15th Nov.) and varieties (V₁-Parasmani, V₂- Varuna and V₃- SRM 777) through the field experiment laid out split-plot design was used for model calibration and validation. The package and practices for Indian mustard cultivation were followed as per the Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology, and Sciences, Allahabad. Validation of model was performed by using different data sets on such as phenology, total dry matter, grain yield, harvesting index and test weight from the field experiment conducted at Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences, Allahabad.

InfoCrop v.2.0 model
InfoCrop is a dynamic crop-yield simulation model. This model was developed by Aggarwal (2009) at Center for Application of Systems Simulation, IARI, New Delhi. The inputs required for InfoCrop v. 2.0 model are listed separately in Table 1.

Calibration of the model
The models were run and validated by comparing the predicted output with observed parameters. Deviation of predicted from observed was calculated and accuracy of the model to predict different crop parameters was quantified, then the simulated was for the further study. The genetic coefficient of mustard for InfoCrop model is given in Table 2.

Validation
Validation of model will be performed by using different data sets on phenology, biological yield, seed yield, harvesting index and test weight from experiments conducted at Research farm, School of Forestry and Environment, SHUATS, Allahabad. For judging the performance of the InfoCrop model, validation results on major crop growth parameters such as phenology during crop growth and grain yield will be tested using various statistical parameters viz., mean absolute error (MAE), mean bias error (MBE), root mean square error (RMSE), and error %.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Validation of Info Crop model
The model was calibrated and simulated in different plots of Parasmani, Varuna and SRM 777 in both sowing dates and season. Validation of model performed by different data sets on phenology, total dry matter, grain yield, harvesting index and test weight were simulated. Test criteria for various parameters of Mustard cv. SRM 777, Varuna and Parasmani using InfoCrop model during 2016-17.

Phenology
Test criteria of Phenology of mustard varieties using InfoCrop model during 2016-17 are presented in Table 3.

Days to start flowering (days)
The observed mean values of days to start flowering for three mustard cv. Parasmani, Varuna and SRM 777 were 37.33, 44.6 and 45.0, whereas the model simulated 39.67, 48.67 and 49.67 days respectively. Different test criteria involving different measures to locate and quantify errors viz., MAE, MBE, RMSE, and PE computed for mustard varieties suggested that model was better for SRM 777.
followed by Varuna and Parasmani for simulation of days to start of flowering. The mean percent error was observed higher for cv. SRM 777 (10.04) followed by Varuna (6.30) and Parasmani (5.06). This shows that model simulation was found better for cv. SRM 777 as compared to others in case of simulation of days to start flowering (days). Similar trend was observed for other test criteria for days to start flowering such as MAE, MBE, and RMSE. This clearly showed that model performance was found good for SRM 777 as compared to Varuna and Parasmani for simulation of days to start flowering. However, model overestimated the days to start flowering (days).

**Days to maturity (days)**

Days to maturity for Parasmani, Varuna and SRM 777 were observed as 144.33, 145.63 and 149.00 days while model simulated 150.67, 149.67 and 143.00 days, respectively. SRM 777 performed better and the model overestimated the days to maturity. The average percent error was overestimated by the model for mustard varieties. The mean percent error was observed higher for cv. SRM 777 (4.88) followed by Varuna (4.67) and Parasmani (4.71). This showed that day to maturity simulation was found good for cv. SRM 777. The similar trend was observed by carrying out other tests such as MAE, MBE, and RMSE for days to maturity. The simulation performance of the model in respect of days taken to maturity was found good with an acceptable level.

**Growth and yield parameter**

Test criteria for growth and yield of mustard varieties using InfoCrop model during 2016-17 are presented in Table 4.

**Test weight**

The test weight obtained for cv. Parasmani, Varuna and SRM 777 were 4.66, 4.75 and 4.95 g, while model simulated higher values i.e. 5.91, 5.34 and 6.57 g, respectively. The average percent error for test weight was found 5.56 (Parasmani), 4.42 (Varuna) and 3.14 (SRM 777), respectively. The evaluation of MAE and MBE was found lower for cv. SRM 777 followed by Varuna and Parasmani except for MBE of SRM 777, respectively, but cv. Parasmani holds higher RMSE (0.57) values as compared to Varuna (0.42) and SRM 777 (0.51). The overall performance of test weight simulation was found under accepted range; however model overestimated the test weight.

**Seed yield**

The grain yield obtained for cv. Parasmani, Varuna, and SRM 777 were 1138.23, 121.32 and 1284.4 kg ha\(^{-1}\) while model simulated higher yield i.e. 1382.67, 1465.67 and 1451.67 kg ha\(^{-1}\) respectively. The test criteria computed by MAE, MBE, RMSE, and PE for both the cultivars suggested model performance was better for SRM 777 as compared to Varuna and Parasmani. The average percent error for grain yield of both the cultivars was overestimated by the model. The average percent error for grain yield was found 4.96 (SRM 777), 10.58 (Varuna) and 8.60 % (Parasmani), respectively. The mean percent error was found lower for SRM 777. The average error as computed by MAE (101.33), MBE (102.33) and RMSE (58.27) found lower for SRM 777 as compared to other cultivars. This shows that the evaluation of the model on an overall basis revealed that the yield simulation was found good with an acceptable level for mustard.

**Biomass yield**

The performance parameters for cv. SRM 777 was higher than Varuna and Parasmani for simulated biomass yield. The average percent error of biomass yield of all varieties was overestimated by the model. The average percent error for biomass yield was found 10.18 (SRM 777), 12.62 (Varuna) and 11.43 % (Parasmani), respectively. The average error as computed by MAE (1320.0), MBE (1320.0) and RMSE (1473.25) found lower for Parasmani as compared to other varieties. The biomass yield simulation was found good with an acceptable level for mustard.

**Harvesting Index**

The model performance in a simulation of Harvest Index was found good for cv. SRM 777(0.87 error %) as compared to Varuna (1.38 error %) and Parasmani (8.19 error %). More or less similar results were obtained in terms of other test criteria such as MAE, MBE, and RMSE for simulation of harvest index. Model underestimated the simulation results for cv. SRM 777 and Varuna and overestimated for Parasmani. Model performance was found good for cv. SRM 777 compared to other cultivars for HI simulation.

**Sensitivity analysis**

The increase in CO\(_2\) concentration from 390 to 490 ppm enhanced the crop yield. Increase in CO\(_2\) from 390 to 490 ppm with no change in temperature has resulted in 13–32 % increase in yield of mustard but further increase in CO\(_2\) concentration reduced the percent increase in yield. Increase in rainfall during crop season, indicated the scope for improved dry matter production and increase in grain number.

**Temperature**

The increased in daily maximum temperature up to 3 °C resulted in increased in yield of mustard (figure 1). In plants, warmer temperature accelerates growth and development leading to less time for carbon fixation and biomass accumulation before seed set resulting in poor
yield (Rawson, 1992; Morison, 1996). Similar results were supported by Singh et al. (2008), Easterling et al. (2007), Roy et al. (2005), Fischer et al. (2007), Mall et al. (2004), Long et al. (2006), Morrison and Stewart (2002), Chaudhari et al. (2009), Kumar et al. (2010), Bhagat et al. (2007) and Aggarwal et al. (2006). The highest benefits in increased in yield was obtained by increasing minimum temperature from 2 °C above and -1 °C below from the crop season 2016-17. Similar results were supported by Singh et al. (2008), Easterling et al. (2007), Kumar et al. (2010), Chaudhari et al. (2009).

Rainfall

The increase in rainfall (10 to 20 percent from the crop season 2016-17). It simulated the increased yield but after beyond it adversely affected crop growth and yield (figure 1). Similar results were reported by earlier workers Mall et al. (2004) and Singh et al. (2008).

CO₂ concentration

CO₂ concentration elevated 390 to 490 ppm from the present CO₂ concentration. It showed the positive impact on yield. An increase in crop yield in mustard crop after 490 ppm of CO₂ concentration, it produced warming effect which results decline in yield (figure 1). Similar results were reported by earlier workers Uperty et al. (2003), Rotter and Van de Geijn (1999).

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Simulation of mustard phenology, growth and yield attributes by InfoCrop model was within the acceptable limit. Therefore, the validated InfoCrop model can further be used for prediction of crop growth, phenology, potential and actual yield of the mustard crop under changing climate scenarios.

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**Table 1: List of inputs required for InfoCrop**

| Input variables       | Acronyms | Unit       |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|
| **Site data**         |          |            |
| Latitude              | LAT      | Degree     |
| Longitude             | Long     | Degree     |
| Altitude              | Alt      | Meter      |
| **Daily weather data**|          |            |
| Date/year             | dd-mm-yy |            |
| Station number        |          |            |
| Julian days           | JD       | Days       |
| Solar radiation       | RDD      | KJ m$^{-2}$|
| Maximum temperature   | TMAX     | °C         |
| Minimum temperature   | TMIN     | °C         |
| Vapour pressure       | VP       | K Pa       |
| Wind Speed            | WDST     | m sec$^{-1}$|
| Rainfall              | TRAIN    | Mm         |
| Relative humidity morning | RHMIN | %          |
| **Soil texture/district master parameters** |            |            |
| pH of soil            | PHFAC    |            |
| Electrical conductivity| EC       | ds/m (0 to 1)|
| Slope                 | SLOPE    | %          |
### Table 2: Categorization of genetic coefficient of mustard for InfoCrop v.2.0 model

| Genetic constant description                                  | Acronyms  | Unit                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Thermal time for germination to emergence                      | TTGERM    | degree day                  |
| Thermal time for seedling emergence to anthesis                | TTVG      | degree day                  |
| Thermal time for anthesis to maturity                          | TTGF      | degree day                  |
| Base temperature                                              | TGBD      | °C                          |
| Optimum temperature                                           | TOPT      | °C                          |
| Maximum temperature                                           | TMAX      | °C                          |
| Relative growth rate of leaf area                             | LAII      | °C/d                        |
| Specific leaf area                                             | SLAVAR    | m²/mg                       |
| Index of greenness of leaves                                   |           | Scale 0.8 to 1.2            |
| Extinction coefficient of leaves at flowering                  |           | ha soil/ha leaf fraction    |
| Radiation use efficiency                                      | RUE       | g/MJ/day                    |
| Root growth rate                                               | RWRT      | mm/d                        |
| Sensitivity of crop to flooding                                | FLDLCRP   | Scale 1 to 1.2              |
| Index of nitrogen                                              | NI        | Scale 0.7 to 1.0            |
| Slope of storage organ number/m² to dry matter during storage organ formation | SOPOT | Storage organ/kg/day |
| Potential storage organ weight                                 | POTGWT    | mm/grain                    |
| Nitrogen content of storage organ                             | NUPTK     | Fraction                    |
| Sensitivity of storage organ setting to low temperature        | TPHIGH    | Scale 0 to 1.5              |
| Sensitivity of storage organ setting to high temperature       | TPLLOW    | Scale 0 to 1.5              |

**Crop data**

- **Crop name**
- **Input sowing depth**
- **Input seed rate**
- **Maximum possible crop duration**
- **Default sowing date**

**Crop/variety management data**

- **Thermal time for germination to emergence**
- **Thermal time for seedling emergence to anthesis**
- **Thermal time for anthesis to maturity**
- **Base temperature**
- **Optimum temperature**
- **Maximum temperature**
- **Relative growth rate of leaf area**
- **Specific leaf area**
- **Index of greenness of leaves**
- **Extinction coefficient of leaves at flowering**
- **Radiation use efficiency**
- **Root growth rate**
- **Sensitivity of crop to flooding**
- **Index of nitrogen**
- **Slope of storage organ number/m² to dry matter during storage organ formation**
- **Potential storage organ weight**
- **Nitrogen content of storage organ**
- **Sensitivity of storage organ setting to low temperature**
- **Sensitivity of storage organ setting to high temperature**

**Thickness of layer**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| TKL               | Mm       |        |

**Sand content**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| SAND              | %        |        |

**Silt content**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| SILT              | %        |        |

**Clay content**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| CLAY              | %        |        |

**Saturation fraction**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| WCST              | 0 to 1   |        |

**Field capacity fraction**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| WCFC              | 0 to 1   |        |

**Wiling point fraction**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| WCWP              | 0 to 1   |        |

**Saturation hydraulic conductivity**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| KSAT              | mm/day   |        |

**Bulk density**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| BDL               | mg/m³    |        |

**Organic carbon**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| SOC               | %        |        |

**Soil moisture fraction at sowing**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| WCL               | 0.1 to 0.4|        |

**Initial soil ammonium**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| NHAPL             | (1 to 40 kg/ha) | |

**Initial soil nitrate**

| Property          | Acronyms | Unit   |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| NOAPL             | (1 to 50 kg/ha) | |

**Crop data**

- **Crop name**
- **Input sowing depth**
- **Input seed rate**
- **Maximum possible crop duration**
- **Default sowing date**

**Crop/variety management data**

- **Thermal time for germination to emergence**
- **Thermal time for seedling emergence to anthesis**
- **Thermal time for anthesis to maturity**
- **Base temperature**
- **Optimum temperature**
- **Maximum temperature**
- **Relative growth rate of leaf area**
- **Specific leaf area**
- **Index of greenness of leaves**
- **Extinction coefficient of leaves at flowering**
- **Radiation use efficiency**
- **Root growth rate**
- **Sensitivity of crop to flooding**
- **Index of nitrogen**
- **Slope of storage organ number/m² to dry matter during storage organ formation**
- **Potential storage organ weight**
- **Nitrogen content of storage organ**
- **Sensitivity of storage organ setting to low temperature**
- **Sensitivity of storage organ setting to high temperature**
Table 3: Test criteria of mustard phenology using InfoCrop model during 2016-17.

| Parameters | Days to start flowering (days) | Days to maturity (days) |
|------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
|            | PARASMANI | VARUNA | SRM 777 | PARASMANI | VARUNA | SRM 777 |
| OMV        | 37.33     | 44.6   | 45.00   | 144.33    | 145.63 | 149.00  |
| SMV        | 3.06      | 1.53   | 1.80    | 4.51      | 4.16   | 4.58    |
| SDo        | 39.67     | 48.67  | 49.67   | 150.67    | 149.67 | 156.33  |
| SDs        | 5.86      | 1.52   | 1.52    | 7.71      | 2.51   | 7.02    |
| MAE        | 1.03      | 2.00   | 3.67    | 1.33      | 8.33   | 4.33    |
| MBE        | 2.07      | 4.67   | 3.67    | 6.00      | 3.33   | 4.33    |
| RMSE       | 2.10      | 3.43   | 4.00    | 5.52      | 9.76   | 7.42    |
| PE         | 5.06      | 6.30   | 10.04   | 4.71      | 4.67   | 4.88    |

Table 4: Test criteria of yield and its attributes of mustard varieties using InfoCrop model during 2016-17.

| Parameters | Test weight (g) | Seed yield (kg/ha) | Biomass (kg/ha) | HI (%) |
|------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------|
|            | PARASMANI | VARUNA | SRM 777 | PARASMANI | VARUNA | SRM 777 | PARASMANI | VARUNA | SRM 777 |
| OMV        | 4.66      | 4.75   | 4.95   | 1138.23    | 1214.32 | 1284.4   | 9891.0     | 10067.67 | 13186.0   | 11.50    | 12.58    | 13.47    |
| SMV        | 0.88      | 0.88   | 0.89   | 396.99     | 396.11  | 400.56   | 1379.74    | 1389.25  | 1388.16   | 1.04     | 0.96     | 0.71     |
| SDo        | 5.91      | 5.34   | 6.57   | 1382.67    | 1465.67 | 1451.67  | 10211.0    | 11313.33 | 12335.67  | 12.63    | 12.76    | 15.15    |
| SDs        | 1.09      | 0.63   | 0.46   | 365.84     | 43.24   | 31.0     | 2181.04    | 1470.74  | 1300.63   | 0.40     | 1.76     | 0.22     |
| MAE        | 0.50      | 0.35   | 0.31   | 209.0      | 105.67  | 101.33   | 1320.0     | 1245.67  | 1449.67   | 0.11     | 0.47     | -0.87    |
| MBE        | 0.50      | 0.35   | 0.38   | 209.0      | 105.67  | 102.33   | 1320.0     | 1373.67  | 1449.67   | 1.09     | 1.38     | 0.87     |
| RMSE       | 0.57      | 0.42   | 0.51   | 220.51     | 208.05  | 58.27    | 1473.25    | 1649.55  | 1463.98   | 1.18     | 1.66     | 0.95     |
| PE         | 5.56      | 4.42   | 3.14   | 8.60       | 10.58   | 4.96     | 11.43      | 12.62    | 10.18     | 1.96     | 4.19     | 3.31     |

Where OMV: observed mean value, SMV: simulated mean value, SDo: standard deviation of observed, SDs: standard deviation of simulation, MAE: mean absolute error, MBE: mean bias error, RMSE: root mean square error, PE: Percent error.
Fig. 1: Depicting the InfoCrop simulation results of impact of change in (1) maximum temperature ($T_{\text{max}}$) (2) minimum temperature ($T_{\text{min}}$) (3) seasonal rainfall and (4) elevation in $CO_2$ concentration on the seed yield of all three varieties of mustard during the Rabi- 2016-2017.