

Editor's comment:

I acknowledge the authors for the new version of the MS. Although standard deviation bars (or standard error? - The authors are asked to clarify) have been included in the graphs, the necessary post hoc multiple comparisons (means separation) tests were not.

- Even without post-hoc means comparison in the graphs (e.g. Bonferroni, Duncan, LSD, Scheffée, Tukey, ...), and struggling to see bars when points are in the x-axis origin overlapping the y-axis scale, some variables seems to be not significantly different. For example, looking at the graphs with the bars, one cannot be convinced for significant effects of irrigation and K₂O on stem diameter, chlorophyll index, diameter chapter (inner and outer), etc. Even one of the points / individual regimes differs from other individual one, it is mandatory to clearly identify which one(s) are and which one(s) aren't. Therefore, post-hoc means comparison are mandatory to understand the data and all results/discussion of non-significant points must be omitted.

- Fig.2b, Fig. 4 and Fig. 5 differ from MS-revised version 1 (some graphs now displaying a fitted lower R-square) and new data usually requires a new evaluation by the independent reviewers.

Moreover:

- The standard deviation bars (or standard error) are very difficult to understand for points at the x-axis origin (since they overlap the y-axis scale)

*- The text in the figure's legends was slightly adjusted but contains basically the same information. The significance information given (e.g. for Fig 1: *** Significant to 0.1% by statistical analysis) is still not explained with enough detail.*

- A further note on the irrigation above field-capacity question: doesn't it mean surface run-off? or drenching?

Author's feedback:

- The bars in the graphs are of standard deviation, as it is a measure that indicates the dispersion of data within a sample in relation to the mean.

-The multiple comparison (mean) tests were included in the charts as requested.

-The data in Figures 2b, 4 and 5 differs from version 1 because they have been redone with the raw data for insertion of the standard deviation as requested by the reviewer.

-It was not possible to modify the standard deviation bars that overlap the scale of the y axis, because when formatting the axis excel does not offer me this possibility, leaving the graph unconfigured.

-The text in the captions has been adjusted.

-Under wetting conditions the plants underwent physiological and morphological adaptations that allowed their development.