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Saponite-containing basaltic tuffs: characteristics and application features

Viktar Bosak, Tatsiana Sachyuka

Introduction

Saponite-containing basaltic tuffs occur at a depth of 40 to 1500 m in the south-western part of the Republic of Belarus.

The basis of saponite-containing tuffs is a clay mineral saponite

$(\text{Ca}_{0.5}, \text{Na})_{0.3}[(\text{Mg}, \text{Fe})_3(\text{Si}, \text{Al})_4\text{O}_{10}](\text{OH})_2 \cdot 4\text{H}_2\text{O}$.

The composition of saponite-containing basaltic tuffs in Belarus includes some amount of the following minerals: analcime $\text{Na}[\text{AlSi}_2\text{O}_6] \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$, hematite $\alpha\text{-Fe}_2\text{O}_3$, kaolinite $\text{Al}_4[\text{Si}_4\text{O}_{10}](\text{OH})_8$, feldspars (plagioclase: albite $\text{Na}[\text{AlSi}_3\text{O}_8]$ and anorthite $\text{Ca}[\text{Al}_2\text{Si}_2\text{O}_8]$; orthoclase $\text{K}[\text{AlSi}_3\text{O}_8]$), hydromica $\text{K}_x(\text{Al}, \text{Mg}, \text{Fe})_{2-3} \cdot [\text{Si}_{4-x}\text{Al}_x\text{O}_{10}] \cdot (\text{OH})_2 \cdot n\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ($x \leq 0.5$, $n \leq 1.5$), quartz SiO_2 .

Saponite-containing basaltic tuffs contains MgO – 6.53–9.87%, K₂O – 0.79–3.46%, N_{о6}и. – 0.14–0.18%, P₂O₅ – 0.22–0.24%, Na₂O – 2.31–3.29%, CaO – 0.04–1.94%, FeO – 17.06–24.20%, Al₂O₃ – 11.50–14.49%, SiO₂ – 41.82–57.12%.

The content of active forms of manganese averaged 162.39 mg/kg, cobalt – 4.45 mg/kg, zinc – 35.37 mg/kg, copper – 51.69 mg/kg.

Saponite-containing basaltic tuffs are promising silicate raw materials in the industry (production of Portland cement, ceramics, glass), and can be used as a broad spectrum ameliorant in the agrobiosphere, as well as natural sorbent of heavy metals and radionuclides. In agriculture saponite-containing basaltic tuffs can be used as a magnesium source for crop feeding.

Objective of the research is to study the possibility of saponite-containing basaltic tuffs application in agriculture.

Material and methods

The research was carried out in the form of field experiments in 2014–2016 in the Minsk region of the Republic of Belarus on the sod-podzolic sandy loamy soil.

Agrochemical characteristics of the soil arable layer had the following indicators: pH_{KCl} 5.5–5.7, content of P₂O₅ (0,2 M HCl) – 135–145 mg/kg, K₂O (0,2 M HCl) – 120–130 mg/kg, humus (0,4 n K₂Cr₂O₇) – 2.2–2.4%, CaO (1 M KCl) – 1484–1685 mg/kg, MgO (1 M KCl) – 110–120 mg/kg of the soil.

The experiment scheme provided a control variant without the use of fertilizers, variants with the use of a complete mineral fertilizer NPK (carbamide, ammoniated superphosphate, potassium chloride) and various doses of saponite-containing basaltic tuffs (doses were calculated by magnesium – Mg₂₀₋₈₀) in the sowing cultivation of the crops, as well as foliar processing of green beans, peas and basil using 4% solution of magnesium sulfate (Mg₈).

Crops under research – spring wheat (*Triticum aestivum* L.), oats (*Avena sativa* L.), peas (*Pisum sativum* L.), green beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.) and basil (*Ocimum basilicum* L.).

Results and discussion

The experiments on the sod-podzolic sandy loamy soil showed that the application of saponite-containing basaltic tuffs in magnesium doses of Mg₂₀₋₆₀ increased yield of spring wheat grain by 2.6–5.3 dtha⁻¹, oats grain – by 2.4–5.1 dtha⁻¹ with a total yield of spring wheat grain amounted to 50.7–53.4 dtha⁻¹, oats grain – 33.1–35.8 dtha⁻¹ (table 1).

The cultivation of peas and green beans with the application of saponite-containing basaltic tuffs in magnesium doses of Mg₄₀₋₈₀ increased yield of peas grain – by 3.6–4.5 dtha⁻¹, green beans – by 14.2–16.2 dtha⁻¹ with a total yield of peas grain amounted to 27.5–28.4 dtha⁻¹, green beans – 265.9–267.9 dtha⁻¹ (table 2).

The best performance indicators in the cultivation of the grain and leguminous crops under research were archived by applying Mg₄₀ against the background of complete mineral fertilizing (NPK).

Preplans application of saponite-containing basaltic tuffs in Mg doses of Mg₂₀₋₆₀ increased yield of green mass of basil – by 0.16–0.22 kg/m² with better agronomic efficiency in case of application of Mg₂₀ against the background of complete mineral fertilizing.

Foliar treatment of the crops using magnesium sulfate (Mg₈) increased the yield of peas grain – by 2.8 dtha⁻¹, green beans – by 14.1 dtha⁻¹, green mass of basil – by 0.13 kg/m².

Conclusions

The experiments on the sod-podzolic sandy loamy soil with an average content of exchangeable magnesium (110–120 mg/kg of soil) showed that the best indicators of agronomic efficiency in the cultivation of spring wheat, oats, peas, green beans and basil were achieved in case of preplans application of saponite-containing basaltic tuffs in Mg doses of Mg₄₀ (grain and leguminous crops) and Mg₂₀ (basil) against the background of complete mineral fertilizing.

Key words: saponite-containing basaltic tuffs, magnesium, agriculture, spring wheat, oats, peas, green beans, basil.

Table 1. Influence of fertilizers on productivity of spring wheat and oats

Spring wheat grain, dtha ⁻¹			Oats grain, dtha ⁻¹		
variants	total yield	increased yield	variants	total yield	increased yield
Control	22.3	–	Control	16.5	–
N ₉₀ P ₆₀ K ₁₂₀	48.1	–	N ₇₀ P ₅₀ K ₉₀	30.7	–
NPK + Mg ₂₀	50.7	2.6	NPK + Mg ₂₀	33.1	2.4
NPK + Mg ₄₀	53.4	5.3	NPK + Mg ₄₀	35.7	5.0
NPK + Mg ₆₀	53.1	5.0	NPK + Mg ₆₀	35.8	5.1
CD ₀₅	2.4		CD ₀₅	1.8	

Table 2. Influence of fertilizers on productivity of peas, green beans and basil

Peas grain, dtha ⁻¹		Green beans, dtha ⁻¹		Green mass of basil, kg/m ²	
variants	total yield	variants	total yield	variants	total yield
Control	12.1	Control	158.1	Control	2.06
N ₃₀ P ₆₀ K ₁₂₀	23.9	N ₅₀ P ₆₀ K ₁₂₀	251.7	N ₄₅ P ₆₀ K ₉₀	2.29
NPK + Mg ₈	26.7	NPK + Mg ₈	265.8	NPK + Mg ₈	2.42
NPK + Mg ₄₀	27.6	NPK + Mg ₄₀	265.9	NPK + Mg ₂₀	2.45
NPK + Mg ₆₀	28.4	NPK + Mg ₆₀	267.9	NPK + Mg ₄₀	2.51
NPK + Mg ₈₀	27.5	NPK + Mg ₈₀	267.1	NPK + Mg ₆₀	2.46
CD ₀₅	1.5	CD ₀₅	12.2	CD ₀₅	0.12

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