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Effect of arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi and pesticides on *Cynara cardunculus* growth

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Abstract

Wild cardoon (*Cynara cardunculus* L.) is a promising crop for biomass production. A nursery trial was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of mycorrhizal inoculation on the biomass yield of wild cardoon seedlings and the effect of the pesticides fosetyl and propamocarb, as fungicides, and isofenphos, phoxim and oxamyl, as insecticides, on cardoon plant growth and the mycorrhizal arbuscular mycorrhizal (AM) fungi inocula were: commercial inoculum with *Glomus mosseae* spores, and an inoculum of a *Glomus* sp. isolated locally. Mycorrhizal inoculation with either inoculum increased cardoon shoot biomass compared to non-inoculated control. Pesticide applications had a neutral or positive effect on cardoon seedling growth. However, the AM fungi colonisation did not increase for plants colonised by *G. mosseae* and treated with the insecticides isofenphos and oxamyl. Thus, the mycorrhiza can survive to the concentrations employed in commercial nursery, and enhance cardoon plant productivity.

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