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Research article

Thiourea orchestrates regulation of redox state and antioxidant responses to reduce the NaCl-induced oxidative damage in Indian mustard (*Brassica juncea* (L.) Czern.)

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### Abstract

Thiourea (TU) has been found to enhance the stress tolerance of plants in our earlier field trials. In the present study, the TU mediated effect on the redox and antioxidant responses were studied in response to salinity (NaCl) stress in Indian mustard (*Brassica juncea* (L.) Czern.) seedlings. Biochemical analyses of reactive oxygen species (ROS) and lipid peroxidation revealed that TU supplementation to NaCl brought down their levels to near control values as compared to that of NaCl stress. These positive effects could be correlated to the significant increases in the 1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH)-

radical scavenging activity, in the levels of reduced glutathione (GSH) and GSH/GSSG (reduced/oxidized glutathione) ratio and in the activities of superoxide dismutase (SOD; EC 1.1.5.1.1) and glutathione reductase (GR; EC 1.6.4.2) in NaCl + TU treatment as compared to that of NaCl treatment. Further, TU supplementation allowed plants to avoid an over-accumulation of pyridine nucleotides, to stimulate alternative pathways (through higher glycolate oxidase activity; EC 1.1.3.15) for channeling reducing equivalents and thus, to maintain the redox state to near control levels. These positive responses were also linked to an increased energy utilization (analyzed in terms of ATP/ADP ratio) and presumably to an early signaling of the stress through stimulated activity of ascorbate oxidase (EC 1.10.3.3), an important component of stress signaling. A significant reduction observed in the level of sodium ion ( $\text{Na}^+$ ) accumulation indicated that TU mediated tolerance is attributable to salt avoidance. Thus, the present study suggested that TU treatment regulated redox and antioxidant machinery to reduce the NaCl-induced oxidative stress.

## Highlights

• The potential role of thiourea (TU) in the amelioration of salinity stress-induced oxidative damage was studied in *Brassica juncea* seedlings. • The TU treatment significantly reduced the ROS load through the co-ordinated regulation of different redox couples, non-enzymatic and enzymatic antioxidants. • The TU mediated protection was also associated with the significant reduction in the level of  $\text{Na}^+$  ion accumulation.



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## Keywords

Ascorbate; ATP; Glutathione; Ion accumulation; Pyridine nucleotides

## Abbreviations

ADP, adenosine-5'-diphosphate; AO, ascorbate oxidase; APX, ascorbate peroxidase; ASC, reduced ascorbate; ATP, adenosine-5'-triphosphate; CAT, catalase; DPPH, 1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl radical; DHA, dehydroascorbate; DHAR, dehydroascorbate reductase; DTT, dithiothreitol; ETC, electron transport chain; GO, glycolate oxidase; GR, glutathione reductase; GSH, reduced glutathione; GSSG, oxidized glutathione; MDA, malondialdehyde; MDHAR, monodehydroascorbate reductase; NAD, nicotinamide

adenine dinucleotide; NADH, nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide reduced; NADP, nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate; NADPH, nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate reduced; ROS, reactive oxygen species; RSA, radical scavenging activity; SOD, superoxide dismutase; TBARS, thiobarbituric acid reactive substances; TGA, thioglycolic acid; TU, thiourea

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orchestrates regulation of redox state and antioxidant responses to reduce the NaCl-induced oxidative damage in Indian mustard

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