



The Soil Re-Union Science for Healthy Soils

4th International and
16th National Congress
of the Serbian Society
of Soil Science



Serbian
Society of
Soil Science



THE BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Vrdnik, Fruške Terme, Serbia,
20-23. October 2025

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4th International and 16th National Congress of the Serbian Society of Soil Science: "The Soil Re-Union: Science for Healthy Soils"

20-23 October 2025, Fruške terme, Vrdnik, Serbia

Congress Organizer: Serbian Society of Soil Science

Co-organization: Institute of Field and Vegetable Crops, National Institute of the Republic of Serbia

Publisher: Serbian Society of Soil Science, Nemanjina 6, 11080 Beograd - Zemun <https://sdpz.rs/>

For publisher: Jovica Vasin, President of the Serbian Society of Soil Science

Editors: Jordana Ninkov, Jovica Vasin and Snežana Jakšić

Design and technical preparation: Kitchen&GoodWolf

CIP - Каталогизacija у публикацији
Библиотеке Матице српске, Нови Сад

631.4(048.3)

INTERNATIONAL Congress of the Serbian Society of Soil Science (4 ; 2025 ; Vrdnik)

The book of abstracts [Elektronski izvor] / 4th International and 16th National Congress of the Serbian Society of Soil Science "The Soil Re-Union: Science for Healthy Soils", 20-23 October 2025, Fruške terme, Vrdnik, Serbia ; [editors Jordana Ninkov, Jovica Vasin and Snežana Jakšić]. -

Belgrade : Serbian Society of Soil Science, 2025

Način pristupa (URL): <https://fiver.ifvcns.rs/handle/123456789/5680>. - Opis zasnovan na stanju na dan 15.10.2025.

ISBN 978-86-80417-99-8

1. National Congress of the Serbian Society of Soil Science (16 ; 2025 ; Vrdnik)

a) Педологија -- Апстракти

COBISS.SR-ID 177872649

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 <https://sdpz.rs/congress/>

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Republic of Serbia
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

This publication is co-financed by the
Ministry of Science, Technological
Development and Innovation of the
Republic of Serbia.

INOCULANT FORMULATION: EFFECTS OF ZEOLITE ADDITIVES ON ALFALFA AND RHIZOBIAL SYMBIONT

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ABSTRACT

Inoculants containing rhizobial bacteria are bio-inoculants which represent microbiological N fertilizer and they contain selected highly effective and highly competitive rhizobial bacteria placed in suitable carrier. The role of carrier is to maintain the viability and efficiency of bacteria used as active agent and to increase the shelf life of inoculant. The most widespread formulation consists of peat as the rhizobia carrier and formulations of inoculants using zeolites as additives are common. Nanogranulation of the zeolite by increasing its surface would enhance its water and nutrients retention efficiency in the layer of the inoculant on inoculated seeds, making the bacteria more resistant to desiccation causing nano-carriers superiority over other carriers. In this study, 15 different inoculants were tested, five highly efficient nitrogen-fixing rhizobial *Ensifer meliloti* strains named 218, 225, 252, 4148s and 4193cs in three different peat carriers, including peat carrier with regular zeolite, zeolite nanoparticles, or CaCO₃. The initial number of rhizobial cells of all strains exceeded 10⁹ in all formulations. After one month of storage at room temperature the number did not differ significantly among strains and formulations but after two months the number was the higher in formulation with zeolite nanoparticles >10¹⁰ for strains 252 and 4148s. This trend continued in the next 6 months. The nodulation ability and efficiency of inoculants was confirmed in the nodulation test with alfalfa after three and six months of storage, indicating good performance of all evaluated inoculant formulations, with the most performant nano zeolite as an additive.

Key words: alfalfa, soil quality, zeolite, peat, carrier

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This research was supported by the Science Fund of the Republic of Serbia, #GRANT No 7015, Utilizing rhizobia to reduce the risk of heavy metal accumulation in alfalfa: Nickel (Ni) case study – RhizoDETOX and by the Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovations of the Republic of Serbia, contract No. 451-03-136/2025-03/200011.

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