Review Report

The manuscript *"Effects of shading stress on endogenous hormone levels in Eleutherococcus giraldii: hormonal dynamics and growth strategy analysis"* presents a well-designed study investigating the hormonal responses of *E. giraldii* to varying shading conditions. The research is methodologically sound, with clear experimental design, appropriate statistical analysis, and valuable insights into plant adaptation strategies. The findings are novel and contribute to both theoretical and applied aspects of plant physiology and medicinal plant cultivation. While the manuscript is strong overall, some revisions are needed to improve clarity, statistical reporting, and contextualization of results.

Comments

Include p-values or effect sizes Tables 1 and 2.

The discussion should better Integrate findings with existing literature on shade responses in other plant species, particularly medicinal shrubs.

How do the observed hormonal changes compare with known adaptive strategies?

Address whether the short experimental duration (July 15–31) could influence results. Would longer shading treatments lead to different hormonal trends?

Authors did not mention that what shading level (29.12% vs. 39.68%) is optimal for *E. giraldii* growth in agricultural settings?

Figures 3 and 4 needed descriptive captions to stand alone without referring to the text.

Table 2 includes dates in Chinese ("7 月 15 日").

Specify the shade net material and mesh size.

Clarify why the selected light transmittance levels (29.12%, 39.68%) were chosen. Are they ecologically relevant or based on prior studies?

Streamline the Results and Discussion sections to avoid redundancy (e.g., hormonal trends are described in both).

Ensure consistent formatting of hormone abbreviations (e.g., sometimes "iPA," other times "IPA").

Final Recommendation

Accept with Minor Revisions.