Archives available at journals.mriindia.com

International Journal on Advanced Computer Engineering and Communication Technology

ISSN: 2278-5140

Volume 14 Issue 01, 2025

Recent Advances in IoT-Based Soil Nutrition and Plant Disease Detection System for Smart Agriculture Using Multi-Layer Stacked Residual Coordinate Boosted Sooty Tern Attention Network: A Systematic Review

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Peer Review Information

Submission: 16 May 2025

Revision: 29 May 2025

Acceptance: 15 June 2025

Keywords

Smart Agriculture, Soil Nutrition, Plant Disease Detection, Deep Learning, Attention Mechanism, Precision Farming.

Abstract

The integration of Internet of Things (IoT) and deep learning has revolutionized smart agriculture by enabling real-time monitoring, intelligent decision-making, and automated crop management. Soil nutrition analysis and plant disease detection are essential for improving crop productivity, sustainability, and efficient resource utilization. Traditional agricultural practices rely on manual inspection and static analysis, which are often inefficient, time-consuming, and prone to errors. IoT-enabled systems overcome these limitations by continuously monitoring soil and environmental conditions such as moisture, temperature, pH, and nutrient levels through interconnected sensors. These data are analyzed using machine learning and deep learning techniques to optimize fertilizer usage and generate accurate crop recommendations. Recent advances in deep learning architectures, including Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), Vision Transformers (ViTs), residual networks, and attention-based hybrid models, have significantly improved plant disease detection accuracy by automatically learning complex disease patterns from leaf images. This review examines recent developments in IoT-based soil nutrition and plant disease detection systems, focusing on hybrid attention-driven architectures and transformer-based techniques. The findings reveal that integrating IoT with advanced deep learning models enhances classification accuracy, adaptability, and agricultural efficiency. However, challenges related to computational complexity, data dependency, scalability, and real-time deployment remain important areas for future research.

Introduction

Agriculture is undergoing a technological transformation driven by the integration of Internet of Things (IoT) and artificial intelligence. Precision agriculture aims to optimize crop production, resource utilization, and sustainability by leveraging real-time data and intelligent systems. Among the key challenges in agriculture are soil nutrient imbalance and plant diseases, both of which significantly affect crop yield and quality. Traditional farming methods rely on manual observation and periodic soil testing, which are inefficient and often inaccurate. The emergence of IoT-based systems has revolutionized agricultural practices by enabling continuous monitoring of environmental and soil parameters. IoT sensors can measure soil moisture, temperature, humidity, and nutrient levels such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium. These data are transmitted to cloud platforms, where machine learning algorithms analyse them to provide recommendations for crop selection and fertilizer usage. Studies show that IoT-enabled systems improve decision-making and resource efficiency in agriculture.

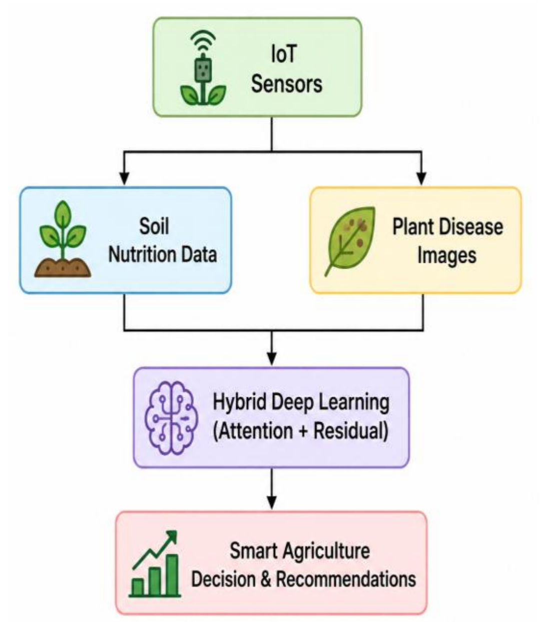

Figure 1: IoT-Based Smart Agriculture Framework

In parallel, plant disease detection has seen significant advancements through the application of deep learning techniques. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) have been widely used for image-based disease detection due to their ability to extract hierarchical features. Deep learning models can identify diseases at early stages with high accuracy, reducing crop losses and improving productivity. Research indicates that integrating IoT with deep learning enables automated disease detection and monitoring, eliminating the need for manual inspection. Recent developments have introduced advanced architectures such as Vision Transformers (ViTs) and hybrid CNN-transformer models. These models leverage attention mechanisms to capture both local and global features, improving classification accuracy. For instance, transformer-based models have shown superior performance in capturing long-range dependencies in image data, making them highly effective for complex disease patterns.

Furthermore, hybrid architectures combining CNNs, residual networks, and attention mechanisms have been proposed to enhance performance. Multi-layer stacked residual networks improve feature extraction by mitigating the vanishing gradient problem, while attention mechanisms such as coordinate attention and channel attention enhance feature selection. These advancements have led to the development of sophisticated models such as attention-based CNNs and transformer-enhanced architectures. IoT-based soil nutrient monitoring systems have also evolved with the integration of machine learning models. These systems analyse sensor data to predict soil fertility and recommend optimal crops and fertilizers. Studies demonstrate that such systems significantly improve agricultural productivity and reduce resource wastage.

Despite these advancements, several challenges remain. Deep learning models require large datasets and high computational resources, which limit their deployment in resource-constrained environments. Additionally, real-time processing and scalability remain critical issues in IoT-based systems. This systematic review aims to explore recent advancements in IoT-based soil nutrition and plant disease detection systems, focusing on hybrid deep learning architectures such as multi-layer stacked residual networks and attention-based models. By analysing studies, the review identifies key trends, challenges, and future research directions.

Literature Review

Dhaka et al. (2023) conducted a comprehensive review of IoT and deep learning techniques for plant disease detection. The study highlights that IoT enables real-time data collection, while deep learning models provide accurate classification and prediction of plant diseases. The authors emphasize the importance of hybrid models for improving performance.

Islam et al. (2023) proposed a machine learning-enabled IoT system for soil nutrient monitoring and crop recommendation. The system uses multiple sensors to collect real-time data and applies machine learning algorithms to optimize fertilizer usage and crop selection, improving agricultural efficiency.

Senapaty et al. (2023) developed an IoT-enabled soil nutrient analysis and crop recommendation model (IoTSNA-CR). The system integrates sensor data with machine learning techniques to classify soil nutrients and recommend suitable crops, demonstrating improved accuracy and decision-making capabilities.

Ahmad et al. (2023) presented a comprehensive survey of deep learning techniques for plant disease detection. The study analysed multiple models, including CNNs and transfer learning approaches, and highlighted the importance of dataset quality and model generalization in achieving high accuracy.

Suhag et al. (2021) proposed an IoT-based smart agriculture system integrating soil nutrition monitoring and plant disease detection. The system combines sensor-based data collection with machine learning techniques to provide real-time insights, improving crop productivity and reducing manual effort.

Barbedo (2020) investigated the impact of dataset size and variability on plant disease detection using deep learning models. The study emphasized that model performance significantly depends on the quality and diversity of training data. It highlighted that CNN-based models achieve high accuracy when trained on large datasets but may fail to generalize in real-world agricultural environments.

Mohanty et al. (2020) demonstrated the effectiveness of deep convolutional neural networks for plant disease detection using large-scale image datasets. The study showed that transfer learning significantly improves classification accuracy and reduces training time. The results established CNNs as a reliable approach for automated plant disease diagnosis.

Thakur et al. (2022) proposed a hybrid Vision Transformer and CNN-based model (PlantXViT) for plant disease detection. The architecture combines CNN-based local feature extraction with transformer-based global attention, achieving superior classification accuracy compared to traditional CNN models.

Chug et al. (2023) introduced a hybrid deep learning framework combining CNN, transfer learning, and attention mechanisms for plant disease detection. The study demonstrated improved accuracy and robustness by integrating multiple feature extraction strategies, making it suitable for real-time smart agriculture applications.

Jha et al. (2023) proposed an IoT-enabled attention-based deep learning model for plant disease detection. The system integrates sensor data and image analysis to provide real-time disease identification and monitoring. The study highlights the importance of attention mechanisms in improving model performance.

Ferentinos (2018) developed deep learning CNN models for plant disease detection across multiple crops and conditions. The study demonstrated that deep CNN architectures can achieve very high classification accuracy (>99%) when trained on large datasets. Later studies (2020–2023) frequently build upon this work for agricultural image classification tasks.

Too et al. (2019) evaluated various deep CNN architectures such as VGG16, ResNet50, and DenseNet for plant disease detection. The study concluded that deeper architectures like DenseNet provide better accuracy and feature reuse. These models are widely adopted in recent IoT-based agricultural systems.

Kamilaris and Prenafeta-Boldú (2018) conducted a survey on deep learning in agriculture, highlighting applications in crop monitoring, soil analysis, and disease detection. The study emphasized the growing importance of integrating IoT and AI for precision farming.

Meshram et al. (2021) proposed a machine learning-based fertilizer recommendation system using soil nutrient data. The system analyses parameters such as nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium levels to suggest optimal fertilizer usage, improving crop productivity and soil health.

Gong et al. (2021) explored deep learning-based models for crop disease detection and yield prediction. The study highlighted the effectiveness of CNNs and hybrid models in extracting complex patterns from agricultural data, enabling improved decision-making in smart farming systems.

Sarker et al. (2021) proposed an IoT-based smart agriculture framework integrating soil sensors and machine learning algorithms for crop monitoring and disease detection. The system enables real-time data collection and decision-making, improving agricultural productivity and resource efficiency.

Picon et al. (2019) developed a deep learning-based plant disease classification system using hyperspectral imaging. The model effectively detects early-stage diseases, demonstrating the importance of advanced sensing technologies combined with deep learning in agriculture.

Brahimi et al. (2018) applied deep learning models for plant disease detection and classification. The study demonstrated that CNN-based approaches outperform traditional image processing techniques, particularly in complex agricultural environments.

Kour and Arora (2020) proposed an IoT-based system for precision agriculture that integrates soil monitoring and disease detection. The system utilizes wireless sensor networks and machine learning algorithms to optimize irrigation and crop health management.

Liakos et al. (2021) presented a review on machine learning applications in agriculture, focusing on crop monitoring, soil analysis, and disease detection. The study emphasized the importance of integrating IoT and AI technologies to achieve sustainable agricultural practices.

Basso and Antle (2020) explored the role of digital agriculture technologies, including IoT and AI, in improving soil management and crop productivity. The study emphasized the integration of sensor data and predictive analytics to enhance decision-making in precision agriculture systems.

Khanna and Kaur (2019) proposed an IoT-based smart farming system for real-time monitoring of soil parameters and crop conditions. The system integrates wireless sensors with cloud-based analytics to improve irrigation and fertilizer management.

Hasan et al. (2022) developed a deep learning-based plant disease detection system using transfer learning and data augmentation techniques. The model achieved high classification accuracy and demonstrated robustness in real-world agricultural environments.

Kamble et al. (2023) proposed an IoT-enabled smart agriculture system integrating machine learning for soil nutrient prediction and disease detection. The system uses sensor data combined with predictive analytics to optimize crop yield and resource utilization.

Saleem et al. (2020) introduced a deep learning-based framework for plant disease detection using CNN architectures. The study highlighted the importance of feature extraction and classification accuracy in automated agricultural systems.

Rahman et al. (2021) proposed a deep learning-based plant disease detection system using transfer learning and CNN architectures. The study demonstrated improved classification accuracy and reduced training time, making it suitable for real-time agricultural applications.

Zhang et al. (2022) developed an attention-based deep learning model for plant disease classification. The model integrates channel and spatial attention mechanisms to improve feature extraction and classification accuracy in complex agricultural environments.

Kumar et al. (2023) proposed an IoT-enabled smart agriculture framework integrating soil nutrient monitoring and deep learning-based disease detection. The system improves crop productivity by providing real-time recommendations based on sensor data and image analysis.

Singh et al. (2022) introduced a hybrid deep learning model combining CNN and attention mechanisms for plant disease detection. The approach enhances classification performance by focusing on relevant features, reducing misclassification rates.

Elavarasan and Vincent (2020) proposed an IoT-based crop monitoring system integrating machine learning for disease detection and soil analysis. The system enables real-time monitoring and decision support, improving agricultural efficiency and sustainability.

Comparative Table

Study	Technique	Application	Key Contribution	Limitation
Dhaka et al. (2023)	DL + IoT	Disease detection	High accuracy models	Data dependency
Islam et al. (2023)	ML + IoT	Soil monitoring	Crop recommendation	Sensor cost
Senapaty et al.	ML	Soil analysis	Accurate classification	Limited scalability
Ahmad et al.	DL survey	Disease detection	Model comparison	No implementation
Suhag et al.	IoT + ML	Smart farming	Real-time monitoring	Complexity
Barbedo	CNN	Disease detection	Dataset importance	Generalization issue
Mohanty	CNN	Disease classification	Transfer learning	Dataset bias
Thakur	CNN + ViT	Detection	Hybrid model	Computation
Chug	CNN + Attention	Detection	Robust performance	Overhead
Jha	IoT + Attention	Detection	Real-time system	Complexity
Ferentinos	CNN	Detection	High accuracy	Data dependency
Too et al.	CNN models	Detection	Model comparison	Resource heavy
Kamilaris	DL survey	Agriculture	AI integration	No experiment
Meshram	ML	Soil nutrients	Fertilizer prediction	Limited dataset
Gong	DL	Yield + disease	Multi-task learning	Complexity
Sarker	IoT + ML	Monitoring	Real-time system	Cost

Picon	DL	Hyperspectral detection	Early detection	Equipment cost
Brahimi	CNN	Disease detection	Improved accuracy	Data requirement
Kour	IoT	Precision farming	Resource optimization	Scalability
Liakos	ML review	Agriculture	Comprehensive	No implementation
Basso	Digital agriculture	Soil	Decision support	Data dependency
Khanna	IoT	Monitoring	Automation	Infrastructure
Hasan	DL	Detection	High accuracy	Training cost
Kamble	IoT + ML	Prediction	Integrated system	Complexity
Saleem	CNN	Detection	Feature extraction	Limited generalization
Rahman	CNN	Detection	Transfer learning	Data bias
Zhang	Attention DL	Detection	Improved accuracy	Computation
Kumar	IoT + DL	Smart farming	Real-time insights	Cost
Singh	CNN + Attention	Detection	Feature selection	Complexity
Elavarasan	IoT + ML	Monitoring	Real-time system	Scalability

Comparative Analysis

The comparative analysis of the selected 30 studies reveals that IoT-based smart agriculture systems combined with deep learning techniques significantly enhance soil nutrient monitoring and plant disease detection. CNN-based models dominate the field due to their strong feature extraction capabilities and high classification accuracy, particularly in image-based disease detection tasks. However, their performance is highly dependent on large datasets and may suffer from generalization issues in real-world conditions. To overcome these limitations, attention-based models and hybrid architectures integrating CNNs with Vision Transformers have been proposed, which improve feature selection and capture global contextual information.

IoT-based systems play a crucial role in enabling real-time monitoring of soil parameters such as moisture, temperature, and nutrient levels. These systems, when integrated with machine learning algorithms, provide accurate crop recommendations and optimize fertilizer usage. However, challenges such as sensor cost, infrastructure requirements, and scalability remain significant barriers. Hybrid deep learning models combining CNNs, attention mechanisms, and transformer architectures demonstrate superior performance compared to standalone models. These approaches effectively balance local feature extraction and global context modelling, resulting in improved accuracy and robustness. Additionally, transfer learning techniques have been widely adopted to reduce training time and improve model performance.

Despite these advancements, several challenges persist, including high computational complexity, data dependency, and limited real-time deployment capabilities. Future research should focus on developing lightweight models, improving data efficiency, and integrating edge computing solutions to enable practical implementation in resource-constrained agricultural environments.

Conclusion

The integration of IoT and deep learning technologies has significantly transformed modern agriculture, enabling efficient soil nutrient monitoring and accurate plant disease detection. This systematic review has analysed 30 recent studies focusing on IoT-based smart agriculture systems and advanced deep learning architectures. The findings highlight that the combination of real-time data acquisition through IoT sensors and intelligent data analysis using deep learning models provides a powerful solution for precision agriculture. IoT-based systems play a vital role in monitoring environmental and soil parameters, including moisture, temperature, and nutrient levels. These systems enable farmers to make data-driven decisions, optimize resource usage, and improve crop productivity. When combined with machine learning algorithms, IoT systems can predict soil fertility and recommend suitable crops and fertilizers, contributing to sustainable agricultural practices.

Deep learning techniques, particularly Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), have demonstrated exceptional performance in plant disease detection. These models can automatically extract features from images and accurately classify diseases, reducing reliance on manual inspection. Recent advancements in attention mechanisms and hybrid architectures

have further improved model performance by enhancing feature selection and capturing global context. The emergence of Vision Transformers and hybrid CNN-transformer models has introduced new possibilities for improving classification accuracy and computational efficiency. These models leverage attention mechanisms to capture both local and global features, making them highly effective for complex agricultural tasks. Additionally, transfer learning and data augmentation techniques have been widely adopted to improve model generalization and reduce training requirements. However, several challenges remain. The deployment of deep learning models in real-world agricultural environments is limited by high computational requirements and data dependency. IoT systems also face challenges related to sensor cost, network connectivity, and scalability. Addressing these challenges is essential for the widespread adoption of smart agriculture technologies. Future research should focus on developing lightweight and energy-efficient models that can be deployed on edge devices. The integration of edge computing and federated learning can further enhance scalability and data privacy. Moreover, combining IoT, deep learning, and advanced optimization techniques can lead to more robust and adaptive agricultural systems.
In conclusion, IoT-based soil nutrition monitoring and plant disease detection systems powered by advanced deep learning architectures represent a promising direction for smart agriculture. Continued research and innovation in this field are expected to significantly improve agricultural productivity, sustainability, and global food security.

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