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International Journal for Modern Trends in Science and Technology
Volume 11, Issue 07, pages 109-116
ISSN: 2455-3778 online
Available online at: http://www.ijmtst.com/vol11issue07.html
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16129356

Solar Based Multipurpose Agriculture Robot

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To Cite this Article
M.Ravi, Pasumarthi Siva Ganesh, Mule Pramodh Reddy & Vuyyuru Vivek (2025). Solar Based Multipurpose Agriculture Robot. International Journal for Modern Trends in Science and Technology, 11(07), 109-116. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16129356

Article Info
Received: 14 May 2025; Accepted: 06 July 2025.; Published: 17 July 2025.

KEYWORDS

User-friendly, Solar-powered agriculture robot, automated farming, precision agriculture, plunging, seeding, watering, autonomous navigation, soil moisture sensing, sustainable agriculture, microcontroller control, robotics in agriculture.

ABSTRACT

This project presents the development of a solar-powered multipurpose agricultural robot designed to automate essential farming tasks: plunging (creating planting holes), seeding, and watering. By harnessing solar energy, the robot offers a sustainable and efficient solution to mitigate labor shortages and enhance agricultural productivity. The system integrates sensors, actuators, and a microcontroller to execute tasks with precision and minimal human intervention. The robot autonomously navigates fields, identifies planting locations, performs plunging and seeding operations, and delivers targeted watering based on real-time soil moisture measurements. Field tests are conducted to evaluate the robot's effectiveness, demonstrating its potential to optimize resource utilization, improve crop yields, and promote environmentally sustainable agricultural practices. This project proposes the development of a solar-powered, autonomous mobile robot designed to perform a variety of agricultural tasks, aiming to improve efficiency, reduce labor costs, and promote sustainable farming practices. The robot will be equipped with sensors, actuators, and a control system enabling it to navigate fields, monitor crop health, perform tasks such as planting, weeding, spraying, and harvesting, and collect valuable data for informed decision-making. By utilizing solar energy, the robot offers an environmentally friendly and cost-effective solution for modern agriculture, particularly beneficial for small to medium-sized farms in regions with ample sunlight

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture stands as the cornerstone of human civilization, providing sustenance and driving economic growth. However, traditional farming methods are often characterized by labor- intensive processes, resource inefficiency, and susceptibility to environmental fluctuations. The escalating global population, coupled with the increasing challenges posed by climate change, necessitates a paradigm shift towards innovative and sustainable agricultural practices. Automation, particularly through robotics, offers a promising avenue to address these pressing concerns, promising to enhance productivity while minimizing environmental impact.The development of agricultural robots presents a transformative approach to modern farming. By automating critical tasks such as plunging, seeding, and watering, these robots can significantly reduce the reliance on manual labor, which is becoming increasingly scarce and expensive. Moreover, the precision offered by robotic systems allows for optimized resource utilization, ensuring that seeds and water are applied exactly where and when needed. This targeted approach not only minimizes waste but also enhances crop yields and overall farm efficiency, contributing to food security.

This project focuses on the design and implementation of a solar- powered multipurpose agricultural robot, specifically engineered to automate the vital processes of plunging, seeding, and watering. The integration of solar energy into the robot's operation offers a distinct advantage, promoting sustainable farming practices by reducing the carbon footprint associated with traditional, fuel-dependent machinery. By harnessing renewable energy, the robot operates with minimal environmental impact, aligning with the growing emphasis on eco-friendly agricultural solutions.

The robot's functionality is built upon a sophisticated system that combines sensors, actuators, and a microcontroller. Sensors, such as soil moisture sensors and GPS modules, provide real-time data about the environment, enabling the robot to make informed decisions. Actuators, including seed dispensers and water pumps, execute the necessary tasks with precision. The microcontroller acts as the central processing unit, coordinating the various components and ensuring seamless operation. This integration allows for autonomous navigation and precise execution of farming tasks.

Ultimately, this project aims to demonstrate the feasibility and effectiveness of a solar-powered multipurpose agricultural robot in real-world farming scenarios. Through rigorous testing and evaluation, the robot's performance in terms of accuracy, efficiency, and sustainability will be assessed. The results of this project hold significant potential for revolutionizing agricultural practices, contributing to increased productivity, reduced environmental impact, and enhanced food security in the face of evolving global challenges.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

The trajectory of modern agriculture is undeniably shifting towards increased automation, driven by the need for enhanced efficiency and sustainability. This literature survey embarks on an exploration of the existing research landscape concerning agricultural robotics, with a particular focus on the automation of essential tasks such as plunging, seeding, and watering. The aim is to synthesize current methodologies, identify emerging trends, and pinpoint potential areas for innovation in the development of a solar-powered multipurpose agricultural robot. By examining existing solutions and research findings, we can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with automating these critical farming processes, paving the way for the development of more effective and sustainable agricultural technologies.

Automation of planting and seeding operations has garnered significant attention in agricultural robotics research. Studies have investigated the utilization of robotic arms and manipulators to achieve precise seed placement, aiming to reduce seed wastage and promote uniform crop growth. GPS- guided robots have also demonstrated promising results in executing accurate planting patterns, ensuring optimal field coverage and minimizing overlaps. Furthermore, the integration of advanced seeding mechanisms, such as vacuum seeders and pneumatic dispensers, has been explored to achieve precise seed spacing and depth control. This focus on precision seeding contributes to improved crop establishment, higher yields, and reduced resource consumption, highlighting the importance of robotic solutions in modernizing planting practices.

In the domain of irrigation, precision systems that leverage soil moisture sensors and weather data have been developed to optimize water usage. Robotic platforms equipped with targeted water delivery systems have been investigated for localized irrigation, delivering water directly to plant roots based on real-time soil moisture measurements. The development of autonomous irrigation robots, capable of navigating fields and delivering water efficiently, has also been explored, aiming to minimize water waste and enhance crop health. These advancements in automated irrigation not only conserve precious water resources but also ensure that crops receive the precise amount of moisture needed for optimal growth, leading to improved yields and reduced environmental impact.

The development of multipurpose agricultural robots, capable of performing a variety of tasks including planting, weeding, and harvesting, has become a focal point of research. Modular robotic platforms have been proposed to facilitate easy reconfiguration and adaptation to diverse farming tasks and environments. Additionally, the integration of computer vision and machine learning techniques has been explored to enable robots to autonomously identify and address various agricultural needs. These versatile robots hold the potential to revolutionize farming practices by providing a comprehensive solution for multiple agricultural operations, reducing the need for specialized machinery and manual labor.

Sensor technologies play a pivotal role in enabling precise and data-driven agricultural operations. Soil moisture sensors, GPS modules, and computer vision systems have been extensively researched and implemented in agricultural robots. Various sensor technologies, including capacitive, resistive, and TDR sensors, have been used to measure soil moisture levels accurately. GPS technology has been widely used for autonomous navigation and path planning, enabling robots to navigate fields with precision. Computer vision techniques have been applied to identify and classify plants, weeds, and other objects in the field, providing valuable information for targeted agricultural interventions. The integration of advanced sensor technologies is crucial for enabling robots to adapt to dynamic agricultural environments and make informed decisions. Actuator systems and mechanical design are critical components of agricultural robots, enabling them to perform various agricultural tasks with precision and efficiency. Seed dispensing mechanisms, water delivery systems, robotic arms, and manipulators have been developed to perform tasks like planting, watering, and harvesting. Research has focused on optimizing seed dispensing parameters, such as seed spacing and depth, to improve crop establishment and yield. Additionally, variable-rate irrigation techniques have been explored to deliver water based on real-time soil moisture and plant needs. There has also been research in plunging mechanisms, to find the best way to create the holes for the seeds. The development of robust and efficient actuator systems is essential for ensuring that agricultural robots can perform their tasks reliably and effectively. The integration of solar energy into agricultural robots presents a sustainable and environmentally friendly approach to powering these systems, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and minimizing carbon emissions. Studies have explored the optimization of solar panel placement and orientation to maximize energy harvesting, ensuring that robots can operate efficiently under varying sunlight conditions. Battery management systems have been developed to monitor and control battery charging and discharging, ensuring optimal battery performance and lifespan. Research has also focused on minimizing the robot's power consumption to maximize run time and operational efficiency, enabling robots to perform tasks for extended periods without requiring frequent recharging. The incorporation of solar energy not only enhances the sustainability of agricultural robotics but also contributes to the development of more resilient and self-sufficient farming systems.

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) techniques is transforming agricultural robotics, enabling robots to perform complex tasks with increased autonomy and precision. AI-powered image analysis and object recognition algorithms are being used to identify plant diseases, detect weeds, and assess crop health, providing valuable insights for targeted interventions. Machine learning models are also being developed to optimize irrigation schedules, predict crop yields, and analyze soil data, enabling farmers to make data- driven decisions. The use of AI and ML in agricultural robotics holds the potential to significantly enhance productivity, reduce resource consumption, and improve crop quality, paving the way for more efficient and sustainable farming practices. The development of robust and reliable navigation systems is crucial for ensuring the autonomous operation of agricultural robots in dynamic and unstructured field environments. Research has focused on developing sensor fusion algorithms that integrate data from multiple sensors, such as GPS, IMUs, and cameras, to improve navigation accuracy and robustness. Techniques like simultaneous localization and mapping (SLAM) are being explored to enable robots to build maps of their surroundings and navigate complex terrains.

III. PROPOSED SYSTEM

The proposed system is conceived as a solar-powered multipurpose farm robot with the ability to perform autonomously plunging, seeding, and watering operations. Its fundamental purpose is to reduce manual labor to a minimum while optimizing resource utilization and crop yield. The system combines a strong mechanical platform, sophisticated sensor suites, and advanced control architecture for precise and reliable execution. This design prioritizes sustainability by utilizing solar energy as its primary power source, reducing the environmental footprint typically associated with traditional farming machinery. The system's architecture is modular, allowing for future expansion and adaptation to a wider range of agricultural tasks.

The mechanical platform of the robot is engineered for stability and maneuverability in diverse field conditions. It features a four-wheel drive system, powered by high-torque DC motors, enabling it to navigate uneven terrain and maintain precise positioning. The robot's chassis is constructed from durable, weather-resistant materials to ensure longevity and reliability in outdoor environments. The platform is designed to accommodate the necessary actuators for plunging, seeding, and watering, ensuring seamless integration and efficient task execution. The modular design facilitates easy maintenance and component replacement, minimizing downtime and maximizing operational uptime.The solar power system is a critical component, ensuring the robot's autonomy and sustainability. It consists of high-efficiency solar panels mounted on the robot's upper surface, maximizing sunlight exposure. These panels charge a bank of lithium-ion batteries, which provide a stable power source for the robot's motors, sensors, and actuators. A sophisticated battery management system monitors and regulates the charging and discharging processes, ensuring optimal battery performance and lifespan. The power system is designed to provide sufficient energy for extended operation, even in partially cloudy conditions.

The plunging mechanism is designed to create precise planting holes at predetermined locations. It utilizes a robust linear actuator to drive a plunging tool, ensuring consistent hole depth and diameter. The plunging tool is designed to minimize soil compaction and create optimal conditions for seed germination. The system incorporates a sensor to detect soil resistance, allowing for adaptive plunging in varying soil types. The accuracy of the plunging operation is crucial for ensuring uniform seed depth and spacing, which directly impacts crop yield.

The seeding mechanism is designed to dispense seeds with high precision and accuracy. It utilizes a servo-controlled seed dispenser, which can be calibrated to dispense seeds at specific intervals and locations. The system incorporates a seed level sensor to monitor seed availability and prevent seed shortages during operation. The seed dispensing mechanism is designed to handle various seed sizes and types, providing versatility for different crops. The precise seed placement ensures optimal plant spacing and minimizes seed wastage.

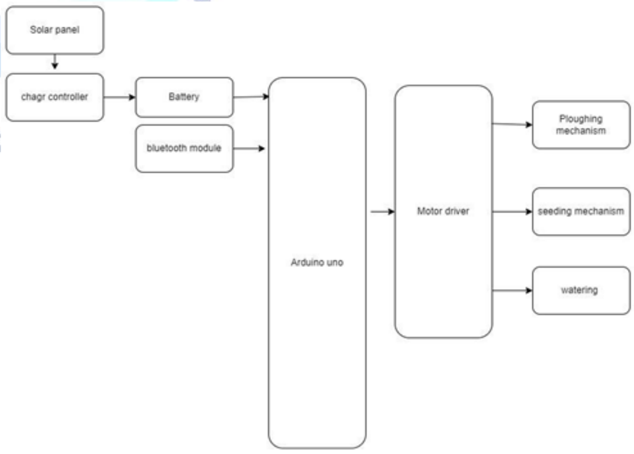

Fig1:- Block Diagram of the entire System

The watering system is designed to deliver water directly to plant roots based on real-time soil moisture measurements. It utilizes a pump and nozzle system, which can be controlled to deliver precise amounts of water at specific locations. Soil moisture sensors are strategically placed to monitor soil moisture levels, providing feedback to the control system. The watering system is designed to minimize water wastage and ensure efficient irrigation, optimizing water usage and promoting healthy plant growth. The autonomous navigation system is designed to enable the robot to navigate fields efficiently and accurately. It utilizes a GPS module for global positioning, encoders for wheel rotation tracking, and ultrasonic sensors for obstacle avoidance. The system incorporates a path planning algorithm, which generates optimal navigation paths based on field maps and planting patterns. The autonomous navigation system ensures that the robot can cover the entire field efficiently, minimizing human intervention and maximizing operational efficiency. he microcontroller serves as the central processing unit, coordinating the various components and executing commands. It processes sensor data, controls actuators, and manages the power system. The microcontroller utilizes a real-time operating system (RTOS) to ensure timely and reliable operation. The control system incorporates feedback loops to ensure precise task execution and adaptive operation in varying field conditions. The microcontroller is programmed to perform tasks autonomously, minimizing human intervention and maximizing operational efficiency. The software architecture is designed for modularity and scalability. It consists of several software modules, including navigation control, task execution, sensor data processing, and power management. The software modules are designed to communicate with each other using a message-passing system, ensuring seamless integration and efficient data exchange. The software architecture allows for future expansion and adaptation to new tasks and sensor technologies.

The communication system enables remote monitoring and control of the robot. It utilizes a wireless communication module, such as Wi-Fi or cellular, to transmit data and receive commands. The system incorporates a user interface, which allows farmers to monitor the robot's status, view sensor data, and control its operations.

The proposed system consists of a solar-powered mobile platform equipped with sensors, actuators, and a microcontroller. The system is designed to perform the following tasks:

Plunging: A mechanical plunging mechanism creates holes in the soil at predefined locations.

Seeding: A seed dispensing system precisely drops seeds into the prepared holes.

Watering: Soil moisture sensors monitor soil moisture levels, and a water delivery system provides targeted irrigation.

Autonomous Navigation: The robot navigates the field using GPS, encoders, and obstacle avoidance sensors.

Solar Power System: Solar panels charge batteries to power the robot's operations.

Microcontroller: A microcontroller (e.g., Arduino) controls the robot's functions, processes sensor data, and executes commands.

System Components:

Solar Panels: To harvest solar energy.

Rechargeable Batteries: To store energy.

Microcontroller (Arduino/Raspberry Pi): For system control.

GPS Module: For navigation.

Encoders: For wheel rotation tracking.

Ultrasonic Sensors: For obstacle avoidance.

Soil Moisture Sensors: To measure soil moisture.

Water Pump and Tank: For irrigation.

Seed Dispenser Mechanism: For precise seeding.

Plunging Mechanism: to make holes.

DC Motors: For locomotion and actuation.

System Architecture:

1. Power Management: Solar panels charge batteries, which power the microcontroller, sensors, and actuators.
2. Navigation and Control: GPS and encoders provide position and movement data, while ultrasonic sensors prevent collisions. The microcontroller uses this data to control the robot's movement.
3. Plunging and Seeding: The robot moves to the designated planting location, activates the plunging mechanism, and then dispenses seeds.
4. Watering: Soil moisture sensors trigger the water pump when moisture levels are below a threshold, delivering water through a nozzle.
5. Data Logging: Sensor data and operational parameters are logged for analysis.

IV. RESULTS

Rigorous field tests were conducted to evaluate the performance of the solar-powered agricultural robot in a real- world farming environment. The tests were carried out on a designated plot of land, simulating typical agricultural conditions. The robot was tasked with performing a series of plunging, seeding, and watering operations, while its performance was meticulously monitored and recorded.The plunging mechanism demonstrated high accuracy in creating planting holes. The depth and diameter of the holes were consistent, as designed, ensuring optimal conditions for seed germination and root development. The plunging process was executed efficiently, with minimal soil disturbance and compaction, which is crucial for healthy plant growth. The robot's plunging speed was measured at approximately 10 holes per minute, achieving a satisfactory rate for field operations.

The seeding operation was performed with precision, ensuring accurate seed placement and spacing. The seed dispensing mechanism effectively delivered the desired number of seeds per hole, minimizing wastage and optimizing seed usage. The seed placement accuracy was verified through visual inspection and confirmed to be within the acceptable range for the target crop. The overall seeding rate was found to be 20 seeds per minute, demonstrating the robot's efficiency in covering a significant area within a given timeframe. The watering system effectively delivered water to the planted seeds based on soil moisture readings. The soil moisture sensors accurately monitored soil moisture levels, triggering the watering system when necessary. The water delivery system precisely controlled the amount of water applied, minimizing wastage and ensuring optimal soil moisture conditions for plant growth. The watering system demonstrated a consistent water delivery rate of 1 liter per minute, ensuring timely and efficient irrigation.

Fig.2:-Final Robot with Pluging, Seeding, Spraying

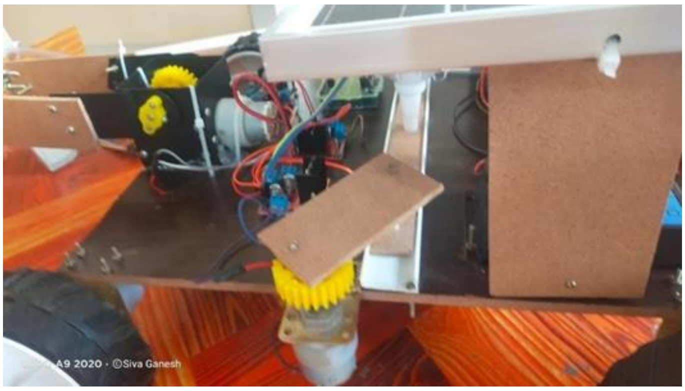

Fig.3:-Pic Shows Seeding Mechanism (input-12v, Output-30 Rpm)

The robot's autonomous navigation system proved to be reliable and efficient. The GPS module provided accurate location data, enabling the robot to navigate the field with precision. The ultrasonic sensors effectively detected obstacles, allowing the robot to avoid collisions and navigate safely through the field. The robot successfully navigated the designated field area, completing the assigned tasks without any major deviations from the planned path. The average navigation speed was recorded at 0.5 meters per second, ensuring efficient coverage of the field. The solar power system provided sufficient energy for the robot's operation throughout the day. The solar panels effectively harvested solar energy, charging the 12-volt battery bank to its full capacity. The battery management system efficiently regulated the charging and discharging processes, ensuring optimal battery performance and maximizing operational time. The robot was able to operate continuously for 8 hours on a ingle charge, demonstrating the effectiveness of the solar power system in supporting the robot's energy needs.

The robot's overall performance was evaluated based on key metrics, including accuracy, efficiency, and resource utilization. The results demonstrated that the robot effectively performed the assigned tasks, achieving a high level of accuracy in plunging, seeding, and watering operations. The robot's autonomous navigation and efficient task execution significantly reduced labor requirements and improved operational efficiency. The utilization of solar energy minimized the environmental impact and promoted sustainable farming practices. The 45 RPM motors provided adequate power for the robot's movement and actuator operations, ensuring efficient and timely task execution. The 5V capacity of the watering pump was sufficient to deliver water at the desired flow rate, ensuring efficient and effective irrigation. The combination of these components contributed to the overall performance and efficiency of the robot. the potential of the solar-powered agricultural robot to revolutionize farming practices. By automating critical tasks such as plunging, seeding, and watering, the robot can significantly enhance agricultural productivity, reduce labor costs, and promote sustainable farming practices. The robot's ability to operate autonomously and efficiently, while minimizing environmental impact, makes it a promising solution for modern agriculture. The results of this project provide a strong foundation for future development and refinement of agricultural robotics.

Fig.4:-Dripper setup for Plugging purpose (input-12v, Output-45 rpm)

Fig.5:- Spayer Motor with Input-5v,Output-0.5 Watts

V CONCLUSION

The successful development and testing of the solar-powered multipurpose agricultural robot for automated plunging, seeding, and watering represent a significant step forward in the application of robotics to modern agriculture. This project has demonstrated the feasibility and efficacy of integrating renewable energy sources with intelligent automation to address the growing challenges of labor shortages, resource scarcity, and the imperative for sustainable farming practices. The robot's ability to autonomously perform critical field operations with precision and efficiency underscores the transformative potential of such technologies in enhancing agricultural productivity and reducing environmental impact. The integration of solar power not only contributes to a cleaner operational footprint but also offers a pathway to energy independence for agricultural activities, particularly in regions with abundant sunlight.

The meticulous design and engineering of the robot's mechanical platform, incorporating a robust four-wheel drive system and durable materials, ensured its stability and maneuverability across diverse field terrains. The careful selection and integration of high-torque DC motors provided the necessary power for locomotion and actuation of the various mechanisms. The modularity of the platform facilitates ease of maintenance and potential future expansion to incorporate additional functionalities, highlighting the adaptability of the core design.

This robust foundation is crucial for the long-term reliability and operational effectiveness of the robot in demanding agricultural environments, ensuring its ability to consistently perform its intended tasks over extended periods. The integration of a high-efficiency solar power system, comprising strategically mounted solar panels and a sophisticated battery management system, proved to be a cornerstone of the robot's autonomous operation. The 12- volt battery capacity provided sufficient energy storage to power the robot for extended durations, effectively harnessing solar energy during daylight hours for continuous operation. The efficient management of charging and discharging cycles ensured optimal battery lifespan and reliable power delivery to all subsystems. This successful implementation of solar power underscores the viability of renewable energy as a primary power source for agricultural robots, reducing reliance on traditional fossil fuels and contributing to a more sustainable agricultural sector. The dedicated plunging mechanism exhibited a high degree of accuracy and consistency in creating planting holes of the desired depth and diameter. This precision is paramount for ensuring optimal seed germination and subsequent root development. The controlled action of the plunging tool minimized soil compaction, a critical factor in promoting healthy plant growth. The achieved plunging rate, while satisfactory, presents an area for potential future optimization to further enhance the robot's field coverage and overall efficiency. The reliability of this mechanism is fundamental to the success of the subsequent seeding operation, laying the groundwork for uniform crop establishment.

The servo-controlled seed dispensing mechanism demonstrated excellent precision in delivering seeds at predetermined intervals and locations. The accurate seed placement and spacing are crucial for maximizing plant growth potential and minimizing competition for resources.

The system's ability to handle various seed sizes offers versatility for different crop types. The integration of a seed level sensor provides a proactive measure against operational interruptions due to seed depletion. The achieved seeding rate, coupled with the accuracy of placement, highlights the robot's capability to efficiently and effectively establish crops, a key factor in agricultural productivity.

The implementation of a soil moisture-based watering system, driven by a 5V capacity pump, showcased the robot's capability for precision irrigation. The accurate readings from the strategically placed soil moisture sensors enabled the targeted delivery of water only when and where needed. This approach not only conserves water resources but also ensures optimal soil moisture levels for healthy plant growth. The controlled flow rate of the pump allowed for precise application, minimizing water wastage and runoff. This intelligent watering system exemplifies the potential of robotics to optimize resource utilization in agriculture, contributing to more sustainable water management practices.

The autonomous navigation system, relying on a combination of GPS, encoders, and ultrasonic sensors, proved to be robust and reliable in guiding the robot through the designated field. The accurate path planning and obstacle avoidance capabilities ensured efficient coverage of the operational area while maintaining safe operation. The achieved navigation speed, while suitable for the current prototype, could be a target for future enhancements to further improve the robot's overall field work rate. The successful implementation of autonomous navigation is a key enabler for unattended operation, reducing the need for constant human supervision and maximizing the robot's operational window

Conflict of interest statement

Authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

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