

RESEARCH NOTES

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A New Device for Applying Pesticides to Banana Disease Management *

Hill banana, one of the choicest varieties of banana is grown under rainfed conditions as a mixed crop with coffee in Lower Palanis and Sirumalai hills. The very existence of this plantation crop is threatened by the bunchy top virus disease. As there is no chemical for the present to inactivate the virus, *in vivo*, the alternative is to reduce the source of inoculum by phytosanitation and to control the vector movement by application of insecticides (Regupathy and Kulasekaran, 1980).

Before removal of the diseased plants, the aphids, *Pentalonia nigronervosa* coq., colonising the plants must be killed *in situ*, lest, they will move away to neighbouring plants, spreading the disease further. To kill the aphids, kerosene could be poured in the leaf-axil @ 50-150 ml/plant. Carrying a ladder and pouring over the tall 'Virupakshi' plant is the difficult task in the hilly terrain. A small and cheaper labour saving device was designed at the Horticultural Research Station, Thadiyankudisai, to cater to the needs of banana growers for this purpose (Fig.).

It consists of an used insecticide metal container (200 or 250 ml cylin-



derical) rivetted to an 'U' shaped iron frame in such a way that the container could be tilted by pulling a nylon rope tied to the narrow neck of the container. By pulling the rope, the kerosene or contents in the container, as the case may be could be emptied into a funnel like guider. The guider is made from tin plate, about 20 cm long. The upper end is wider (5 cm) than the bottom end (1 cm). The frame could be fixed to a pole of desirable height. The cost of fabrication including the material is only Rs. 4/- per piece.

An array of insecticides were found to be effective against this aphid (Regu-

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pathy and Paranjothi, 1979; Regupathy, 1980). Any one of these insecticides like methyl parathion, methyl demeton, phosalone, endosulfan, phenthoate, quinalphos etc. could be used in the place of kerosene which is a scarce commodity nowadays. The insecticidal liquid at 0.05% a.i. could be poured over the leaf axil using this device to kill the aphids.

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