

Wilt and Leaf Rot diseases of coconut in Kerala mainly at the Regional Research Station, Kayangulam of the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The precise cause of the Root Wilt disease has not yet been finally established. Various types of micro-organisms like fungi, bacteria, nematodes, viruses and micoplasma like organisms (MLOs) have been reported to be associated with the diseased palms. Of these, the MLOs have been found to be consistently associated with the diseased palms only. Further researches on the transmission and possible associated insect vectors of the disease are being carried out in an intensive research programme of the Institute.

The Leaf Rot disease is caused by a fungus called *Bipolaris halodes* which is generally found associated with Root Wilt afflicted palms. The two maladies together lead to accelerated development of the disease symptoms. The Leaf Rot disease by itself is not known to cause serious damage.

Even though the cause of the Root Wilt disease is yet to be finally established, the scientists after detailed investigations have suggested the following ameliorative measures which are known to substantially reduce losses due to these diseases :

(i) Collection and screening of different cultivars and hybrids of coconuts for disease tolerance and high yield under good management practices. Already 2500 nuts of 24 different types were collected by the C.P.C.R.I. scientists from the Polynesian and Solomon islands in 1982 and grown under quarantine conditions in the Andaman Nicobar Islands. This germplasm will be screened against root wilt disease and the resistant ones will be used for upgrading our indigenous coconut types.

(ii) Adaptive research programmes to contain and prevent further spread of the disease, in the Northern border in Trichur district after removal of all disease affected palms, carry out prophylactic plant protection measures on soil and adjacent palms, plant quality seedlings raised in disease free areas.

(iii) Rehabilitation of affected plantations by adopting a set of package of practices like organic recycling, mixed cropping/inter-cropping, addition of plant nutrients, spraying fungicides and adopting good management.

Ban on Cultivation of Kesari Dal

287. DR. VASANT KUMAR PANDIT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Dr. C. Gopalan of Nutrition Foundation of India and other top nutrition experts have suggested to Government the immediate ban on the cultivation of kesari dal in India ;

(b) whether the use of Kesari dal (*Lathyrus Sativus*) as a staple food causes the dreadful crippling diseases called 'Lathyrism' ;

(c) whether the expert team of Nutrition Foundation of India had made extensive studies on all dimensions of this problem in Rewa and other parts of M.P. ;

(d) whether Government will bring some legislation to ban cultivation of kesari dal and/or restrict the distribution and sale or payment as wages of kesari dal ; and

(e) if not, what other steps have been contemplated to stop Lathyrism, a preventable disease in poor farmers and bonded labour ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The disease occurs in a proportion of those who regularly consume *Lathyrus Sativus* in large amounts and is rarely seen among populations that consume *Lathyrus* in small quantities as a subsidiary to other major staples.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e). (1) The cultivation of Kesari Dal has been banned in Uttar Pradesh.

(2) The Government of India do not propose to enact a Legislation to ban its cultivation.

(3) However, under Rule 44-A of Prevention of Food Adulteration Act-1955, it has been provided that no person in any State shall sell or offer or expose for sale or have in his possession for the purpose of sale under any description or for use as an ingredient in the preparation of any article of food intended for sale 'Kesari Dal' and its products in any form. Notification giving effect to the aforesaid prohibition are required to be issued by the State Governments. All the States except Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal have prohibited the use of 'Kesari Dal' for human consumption.

(4) As regards payment of wages in the form of Kesari Dal, the Government of Madhya Pradesh have issued notification according to which the wages are payable in cash to the agricultural labour is.

(5) The remedial measures to reduce the toxic effect of Kesari Dal are as under :—

(i) A simple method by which the toxin content of the Kesari Dal can be easily removed has been evolved by the National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad. The toxin is soluble in water and if the 'dal' is soaked in ordinary water for one night, the water drained, it can be consumed without any harmful effect. (ii) The State Governments have been advised to cultivate low neuro-toxin varieties of Kesari Dal evolved by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research in order to replace the existing high neuro-toxin varieties. (iii) During 1983-84 the Government of India have provided funds to the Government of Madhya Pradesh for replacement of Kesari Dal by pulses and oilseeds.

Crop Insurance Scheme

288. SHRI K.T. KOSAIRAM : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) the details of experimental crop insurance scheme that has been introduced

in the country and the results thereof ; and

(b) when the crop insurance scheme is likely to be introduced all over the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) : (a) An area based Pilot Crop Insurance Scheme is being operated by the General Insurance Corporation of India in collaboration with the State Governments since 1979, details of which are at Statement I. The scheme has since been adopted by twelve States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. Details of State-wise coverage since 1979 are given in Statement II.

(b) It is for the State Government to adopt the insurance scheme. So far only 12 States have adopted the scheme. All the State Governments were impressed upon to adopt the scheme in a National Workshop on Crop Insurance which was held during February, 1983 where they participated.

Statement-I

General Insurance Corporation of India Pilot Crop Insurance Scheme (1978-79) (as amended upto 5.5.1983)

The General Insurance Corporation of India offers to introduce from Kharif 1978 Crop Season and on Pilot basis for 2-3 years, Crop Insurance Scheme as outlined hereunder in such of the States which agree to :—

- (a) Participate as Co-insurers sharing claims as well as premiums to the extend of atleast 25%.
- (b) provide all necessary technical and administrative assistance particularly by furnishing accurate data of crop cutting experiments (conducted by the State Governments from time to time) as per mutually agreed time schedule and also by directing the State Revenue and Agriculture Department to provide such assis-