

INCIDENCE OF LAC, *Kerria Sp.* (Homoptera : Lacciferidae) IN LITCHI

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ABSTRACT

Natural infestation of Lac insect was observed for the first time in litchi while monitoring insect's pest at the Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS), Rampur, Chitwan in 1987/88. The newly established (< 5 years old) litchi orchard was free from any infection while nearly 50% of the trees in the old orchard (nearly 15 year old) were infested with this insects. Some of the trees showed heavy infestation covering most of the branches which reveals that this insect can be considered as a serious problem in litchi fruit cultivation in the Chitwan valley. The good incrustation of lac on litchi plant also indicated the possibility of successful rearing and good production of lac provided that suitable host explored and studies carried out for its adaptation and development in this region .

Additional Key words: Lychee, lac insect, infestation

Litchi, *Litchi chinensis* Sonn is a delicious fruit grown in tropical and subtropical climatic region and is known to give lucrative income to the growers. It is rich source of vitamin C. It also contains much sugar and fair amount of phosphorus, calcium and iron (Butani, 1979). In Nepal, Litchi is grown in the Terai, inner Terai and foot hill region of Mahabharat range and is subjected to attack by about 40 insects' species in nature. Some major insects species attacking to this fruits have also been discussed in Nepal. (Neupane et al.,1991). However, the incidence of the lac insect was not reported before from the Chitwan Valley.

Old (nearly 15 years) and new (< 5 years old) litchi orchard was monitored for gathering information on litchi and its insects and pests. The old orchard was found infested with the lac insect. Therefore, litchi trees in the old and new orchard were thoroughly observed and incidence of lac insects was recorded during the spring season of 1987/88.

Results and discussion

Table 1 shows the incidence of lac insects. Natural incidence was observed for the first time in litchi. The newly established (<5 year old) orchard was free from any infestation while nearly 50% of the trees in the old orchard (nearly 15 years old) were infested with these insects. Butani (1979) have recorded incidence of *Kerria spp.* in litchi. However, it was not mentioned in Nepal, so far.

Table 1. Incidence of *Kerria sp.* in the old and new litchi orchard at IAAS, Rampur, Chitwan, 1987/88.

Orchard	No of plants observed	Percent Infestation
Old orchard	42	50
New orchard	150	0

Some of the trees showed heavy infestation covering in the branches (Fig. 1). This revealed that lac insects are a serious problem in litchi fruit cultivation in this valley. The good instruction of lac in litchi plant also indicated the possibility of successful rearing and good production of lac provided that suitable host explored and studies carried out for its adaptation and development in this region.



Figure 1. Branches of litchi showing lac incrustation.

REFERENCES CITED

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