

A VIRUS TRANSMITTING NEMATODE ASSOCIATED WITH PHLOEM NECROSIS VIRUS DISEASE OF TEA

P. V. Arulpragasam

(Tea Research Institute of Sri Lanka, Talawakele)

Phloem necrosis virus disease of tea has been reported only from Sri Lanka, where it is confined to the estates at high elevations (above 1200m). It has been recorded from every estate in the Nuwara Eliya District and from some estates above 1200m elevation in the Dickoya, Dimbulla, Agrapatna, Maskeliya, Kotmale, Maturata, Udapussellawa, Bandarawela and Haputale districts. Analysis of soil from all these districts revealed the presence of a virus transmitting nematode of the family Trichodoridae. This has been identified as *Paratrichodorus (Atlantadorus) porosus* (Allen, 1957) Siddiqi, 1974. This is the first record of this family and genus in Sri Lanka (Arulpragasam, 1973).

There was close association between the presence of this nematode and the incidence of this disease, the nematode population being very high in soil collected from diseased bushes and low in soil collected from healthy (symptomless) bushes or from clonal tea. This nematode was not detected in soil sample collected from lower elevations and from other crops.

Attempts to determine whether this nematode could transmit the phloem necrosis virus were not successful. The pathogenicity of this nematode to tea is being investigated.

Reference:

1. Arulpragasam, P. V. 1974, Report of the Tea Research Institute of Sri Lanka for the year 1973, 2, 45.