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A PROCEDURE FOR BLOTTER TESTS WITH RICE SEEDS

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In carrying out blotter tests for the detection of fungal infections in rice seeds, limitations of glassware, normally used for these tests, hampered the examination of large numbers of samples.

Alternate procedures were sought using earthenware dishes which are locally produced in place of petri dishes. An arrangement with three earthenware dishes placed one above the other, the lowermost and middle containing water, and the upper dish three layers of blotting paper on which seeds were placed, the latter being then covered with glass, proved satisfactory.

Samples were incubated for seven days at room temperature c. 25–28°C, prior to examination. The porosity of the earthenware dishes ensured adequate moistness of the blotters. Leakage of water from the lowermost dish was prevented by sealing pores with a wax impregnation. The arrangement was used successfully for the routine examination of rice seed samples for seed-borne fungi.

The earthenware dishes were 4 inches in diameter, slightly tapering, and 1 inch high. Each dish could conveniently accommodate 25 seeds. They were produced at the Ceylon Ceramics Corporation Tile Factory at Mahiyanganaya.

The genera of fungi detected in these tests included *Trichoconis padwickii*, *Drechslera oryzae*, *Curvularia lunata*, *Curvularia affinis*, *Curvularia senegalensis*, *Curvularia clavata*, *Curvularia intermedia*, *Fusarium* spp., *Chaetomium* spp., *Aspergillus* spp., *Penicillium* spp., and *Nigrospora* spp. of which *Trichoconis padwickii* and *Drechslera oryzae* were the most freqently detected fungi of pathogenic significance.