STUDIES ON LEACHING LOSSES OF NUTRIENT ELEMENTS IN GREEN MANURE PLANTS

M.W.Thenabadu and A.D.A.Ratnayake
Dept. of Soil Science, Faculty of Agriculture,
University of Peradeniya

Air dried leaves of *Glyricidia maculata* and *Tithonia diversifolia*, which are two commonly used green manures in this part of the country, were extracted in distilled water for varying length of time (with minimum damage) and the nutrients leached out were estimated. The common grass *Cymbopogen* sp. (mana) was used as a standard for comparison.

A single 1:1, leaves: water extract released less nutrients after 24 hours than when the leaves were extracted at shorter intervals of time continuously for 8 hours. *Glyricidia* and *Tithonia* were both richer in Ca, K, Mg and Na than the

grass. *Glyricidia* was rich in K and Ca with more than 3,000 ppm of each being leached out in the continuous extraction. *Tithonia* leaves on the other hand released approximately 4,900 ppm K and 1,900 ppm Ca and the graminaceous leaves released only approximately 800 and 400 ppm K and Ca. When total nutrients are considered, *Glyricidia* leaves were richer than those of the other two plants.