

SEVERITY OF CARDAMOM STEM AND CAPSULE  
BORER ATTACK IN SRI LANKA

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Although cardamom stem and capsule borer, *Dichocrocis punctiferalis* Guen. (Lepidoptera: Pyralidae), is considered to be an important pest on locally grown cardamom, *Elattaria cardamomum* Maton, hitherto no published data are available on its distribution and the severity of the damage caused.

In October 1986, a survey was initiated to assess the incidence and severity of the infestation by this pest in the major cardamom growing districts of Sri Lanka.

A stratified random sampling programme was used. All Extension Officer Divisions of the Department of Minor Export Crops in the major cardamom growing districts were included in this survey. At each location, the altitude, age, the extent of the crop and management practices, were recorded. The number of clumps with stem borer damage in a randomly selected 50 clumps per hectare of cardamom and the percent of suckers with symptoms of damage in each borer affected clump was also recorded.

This pest was found in all the major cardamom growing districts surveyed. There was an increase in the severity of damage with the increase in the altitude of the locality examined. This varied from 0.6% in Kegalle to 10.27% of the suckers attacked in Nuwara-Eliya. Among the estate the severity of attack varied from 0.41% - 18.80% of the suckers observed. Ironically the better managed estates had a higher incidence of borer damage compared to the poorly managed estates.