

SHOOT TIP CULTURE OF THE BO TREE (FICUS RELIGIOSA L.)

A. Hettiarachchi, P.K. Samarajeewa & S.D.G. Jayawardena
Plant Genetic Resources Centre, Gannoruwa.

Murashige and Skoog medium containing auxin, cytokinin and gibberellic acid was used to culture shoot-tips of Bo tree (Ficus religiosa L.) in vitro. The concentration of sucrose was at the 3% (w/v) level. The pH of the medium was adjusted to 5.7 before the addition of agar (0.8% w/v). Shoot-tips with 2 - 3 leaves were dissected out aseptically and cultured at 26°C under a light intensity of 2000 - 3000 lux.

BAP and IBA with GA₃ (0.1 - 0.3 mg/L) produced shoots within 4 - 5 weeks. When they were transferred to the same medium but at different levels of BAP, IBA and GA₃ (0.2 - 0.5 mg/L) roots were produced within another 4 - 5 weeks of culture. The well-grown plantlets were micropropagated in the same medium through nodal culture. Shoot and root formation took place earlier in these nodal cultures than in the original shoot-tip cultures. The plantlets were successfully transferred to soil.