

**B-10: Effect of planting time on yield of groundnut, *Arachis hypogaea* L. at Aralaganwila during Yala**

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Groundnut is one of the potential crops for Mahaweli System B. Farmers establish the crop from April to June and yields vary with planting time. To recommend the

best time, 7 planting times of groundnut (variety; No. 45) were studied under field conditions at Aralaganwila during yala 1991 and 1992. Crops planted in mid April, early May and mid May gave higher yields with better vegetative growth and lower incidence of pests and diseases. Late plantings experienced the highest thrips damage that prevailed under hot, dry and low humid weather conditions from mid June to September. Root borer caused total loss in affected plants, 4% in early and 12-20% in late plantings. Diseases such as rust, leaf spots and bud necrosis inflicted the crops of early plantings only at maturity and of late plantings throughout. Adverse weather conditions (low humidity, wind, high evapotranspiration and soil and ambient temperature) during July to September and Maha rains thereafter, severely affected yields of late plantings. Observations further indicated that farmers harvest groundnut even at premature stage soon after their paddy harvest from fields. All these affected late plantings to give lower yields. Therefore, groundnut yields can be maximized by adjusting the time of crop establishment. The period from mid April to mid May is recommended for the establishment of Yala crop for Mahaweli system B.