

B-98: *Diaphania indica* Saunders (Lepidoptera: Pyralidae), a new pest on cucurbit crops in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka

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Diaphania indica Saunders has become an important pest on cucurbit crops in Sri Lanka during recent years. Field and laboratory investigations were carried out to study the bionomics of these species under pesticide-free conditions at Regional Agricultural Research Centre, Aralaganwila from 1989 to 1993. The pest inhabited or crops of gherkin and cucumber (*Cucumis sativus* L.), melon (*Cucumis melo* L.), gourds (*Momordica charantia* L., *Trichosanthes cucumerina* L. and *Lufa acutangula* L.) and pumpkin squash (*Cucurbita maxima* Duch. ex Lam., *Cucurbita pepo* L., *Cucurbita moschata* Duch. ex Lam.). The larva caused devastating damages to foliage, flower buds and developing pods. The lifespan of egg, larva, prepupa, pupa and adult in the laboratory varied from 3-5, 8-13, 1-3, 5-9 and 1-12 days, respectively. Egg hatched and adult emerged during the morning. Pre-ovipositional period was 2-3 days. Population on gherkin shows 2 peaks, the major from July to October and the other from February to May. *Apanteles taragamae* Viereck (Hymenoptera: Braconidae) which exhibited up to 50% larval parasitism was the most predominant parasitoid. Other species include larval parasitoid *Phanerotoma* sp. (Hymenoptera: Braconidae) and *Elasmus* sp. (Hymenoptera: Elasmidae) and pupal parasitoid *Brachymeria* sp. (Hymenoptera: Chalcididae) and *Trathala favoorbitalis* Cameron (Hymenoptera: Ichneumonidae).