B-73 Evaluation of azadirachtin as a termite control agent

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The neem tree, *Azadirachta indica* A, Juss Meliaceae is a source of azadirachtins which are environmentally friendly tetranotriterpenoids showing potent insecticidal properties, feeding deterrent and growth arresting properties. A two-choice laboratory bioassay was designed to investigate the effect of neem seed extract, containing not less than 85% azadirachtin, on termites, based on their nest building behaviour under suitable microclimatic conditions. Workers of *Odontotermes redemanni*, the major species that attacks coconut nurseries in Sri Lanka, were provided with treated and untreated samples of "Termite clay" and the utilization of this material for nest building was observed after 6h. Almost all termite workers have not built nests at 20 ppm (PC_{100}=20ppm) azadirachtin treated soil samples. Azadirachtins did not exhibit any evidence of acute toxicity toward *O.redemanni*. The present data suggest definite termite repellent effect of Neem Seed Kernel extract which could be used for termite control. This versatile bio-assay technique can be used to investigate the termite repellency under laboratory conditions.