

Effect of Liming in controlling Panama disease

Banana is an important crop as a fruit . Kolikuttu is the most popular banana variety in Sri Lanka. This variety is seriously affected by Panama disease which is caused by *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. cubence. Panama disease cannot be controlled by chemical or any sanitary measures once the soil and planting material is infected. It has been reported that the disease incidence is less in calcareous soils having high pH, compared toneutral and acidic soils.

This study was designed to evaluate the possibility of controlling Panama disease by soil liming and to select the best application dosage of lime for controlling the disease.

An infected field was selected and soil pH was measured. The amount of lime had to be added to a planting hole to change the soil pH levels up to 5.5, 6.5,7.5 and 8.5 were calculated as 255g 475g, 721gand 951g per polanting hole respectively, based on soil calibration studies. Planting holes were dug and soil in the planting holes were amended with lime at the above rations. Two months after soil amending Kolikuttu plants collected from disease form area were plated.

Disease symptoms first appeared four months after planting. Plants in each plot, irrespective of lime levels, were affected by the disease and there was no significant difference in disease severity and disease incidence between treatments.

Results of this reveals that, soil liming is not effective in controlling Panama disease.