

Protect Rubber Plantations from Infection of Papaya Mealy Bug

By now, the Papaya Mealy Bug attack which firstly invaded the papaya plants in Gampaha and Colombo districts of Sri Lanka has been spread to rubber nurseries, immature and mature rubber plantations in rubber growing districts.

Especially, the Papaya Mealy Bug disease has infected only to the rubber plants or trees which are around the infected papaya trees.

The main reason for this unfortunate incidence is that proper steps have not been taken timely to control by spraying chemicals or destroy infected papaya and other host plants such as manioc, mango, brinjal, temple trees, jack, bread fruit, ornamental plants and various weeds.

The Rubber Research Institute of Sri Lanka coming under the purview of the Ministry of Plantation Industries is taking every possible effort to protect rubber plantations from the Papaya Mealy Bug attack.

Identification of the Disease

Papaya Mealy Bug infections are typically observed as clusters of cotton-like masses on the rubber leaf blades, leaf stems and immature apex.

The disease symptoms can be clearly seen on the lower surface of the leaf. The premature leaf fall, deformation of apex and leaf curling may be occurred due to the sap-sucking by the Mealy Bug. In addition, it can be observed that fungus called Sooty Mould is grown on excrete of this insect. The severely infected trees are eventually died.

Prevention

- Inspect all papaya, temple trees and other susceptible hosts in and around rubber plantations.
- Although papaya trees and other susceptible hosts are healthy in appearance, early symptoms of the Mealy Bug infection can be identified having a closer look on lower surface of the leaf.
- If the Mealy Bug infection of a host plant was observed; inspect carefully the edge of branches of rubber trees nearby to know the Mealy Bug attack has been spread to your rubber plantation.
- Slightly infected rubber plants as well as cover crops and weeds should be sprayed with the following recommended insecticides frequently.
- Burn and destroy the severely infected trees / parts of trees immediately.

Control

The following recommended chemicals should be sprayed to the lower surface of the leaf of infected rubber plants and nearby rubber plants.

- Dimethoate EC
40% (1ml in 1l of water)
- Imidacloprid 20%
(1ml in 1l of water)
- Thiamethoxam
25% (1-2 g in 1l of water) pour or spray to the soil.
- Acetamprid 20% (1g in 1l of water)

If the infection can be seen again, re-follow the above procedure within a suitable period

Be alert. It is your responsibility to protect your rubber plantation.

Take precautionary measures immediately and do not allow this deadly Mealy Bug to invade your rubber plantation due to negligence.

For further details- (www.rrisl.lk) T.P:- 034-2247426