

EFFECT OF POST-BUDDING PRACTICES ON ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH OF GREEN BUDDED PLANTS OF *HEVEA BRASILIENSIS* IN THE POLYBAG NURSERY

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The effect of delayed opening and delayed pulling out of budded plants of *Hevea brasiliensis* on budding success, establishment and growth of young plants was studied. Both delayed opening and delayed pulling out did not show any influence on the characters observed. Significant differences between treatments existed only for number of stock shoots produced. The practice of retaining longer snags and nicking of snag buds had no discernible advantage in the production of poly bag plants.

Keywords: Green budding, *Hevea brasiliensis*, Polybag plants, Nursery practices.

INTRODUCTION

Vegetative propagation of high yielding clonal materials by bud grafting is the common method of producing planting material of *Hevea brasiliensis* for raising plantation. The process of bud grafting involves replacement of a patch of bark of the stock plant with that of the scion plant possessing a dormant bud. The grafted portion is then bandaged using polythene tape to keep the bud patch tightly pressed on the stock plant. As a standard practice, the bandage is retained for at least 20 days by which time the scion bud patch unites with the stock plant and gets established as a part of the stock plant. Successful grafts are then pulled out and stumped for planting (Hurove, 1960; Tinley, 1962; RRIM, 1964;

Marattukalam and Saraswathyamma, 1992; Marattukalam and Mercykutty, 2000). Even though this method gives very good budding success, many farmers claim that delaying the opening of the budding (removal of the polythene strip) and pulling out of plants results in higher percentage of successful budding and establishment in polybags. These claims were based on random observations made on a small number of plants.

Green budded stumps when planted in polybags often show high percentage of casualty due to die back. Earlier studies conducted in Malaysia and Sri Lanka indicated that retention of long snag and nicking of snag buds favourably influence the establishment and growth of green budded stumps

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