

PREVALENCE OF DISEASES AND PESTS OF RUBBER (*HEVEA BRASILIENSIS*) IN TRIPURA

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Survey of diseases and pests of rubber (*Hevea brasiliensis*) in Tripura was carried out in 18 locations covering 47 sites of West and South Tripura districts during 2008-10. The survey revealed prevalence of four leaf diseases (viz. powdery mildew, *Colletotrichum* and *Corynespora* leaf diseases and *Periconia* leaf blight), pink disease and brown root in varying intensities. However, powdery mildew, *Colletotrichum* leaf disease and brown root disease were found to be more common. Among insect pests, minor incidence of scale insects (in association with sooty mold), mealy bugs, termites, borer beetles and mooply beetles were observed. The plantations were also damaged by other animals like spotted deer and rats. The trend of disease and pest occurrence over three years was more or less consistent.

Keywords: Diseases, *Hevea brasiliensis*, Pests, Survey, Tripura

INTRODUCTION

Diseases are major biotic constraints leading to higher cost of natural rubber production in India. Several fungal diseases are reported to attack leaf, stem, panel and root of rubber plants both in traditional and non-traditional rubber growing areas of the country. Tripura, one of the non-traditional rubber growing regions, is the second largest producer state of natural rubber in India. Now rubber is an economically and socially important crop in this state occupying 50,070 ha area with an annual production of 23,280 tonnes (Rubber Board, 2011). However, of late these plantations are also affected with several diseases as in traditional regions.

Information on the prevalence and distribution of diseases and pests is essential

to assess their economic importance to prioritize research and to develop strategies for preventing the spread. There is a little information on the disease of rubber status in this state and hence survey was initiated in 2008 to document the prevalence and distribution of various diseases and pests in West and South Tripura districts. Rubber cultivation is mainly concentrated in West Tripura followed by South Tripura and to some extent in North Tripura districts. The incidence and severity of diseases and pest of rubber in Tripura during the period from 2008 to 2010 is presented and discussed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The survey was conducted in 18 locations covering 47 sites of West and South