

Fly-traps gaining popularity among mango growers

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Hemmige Mohan, mango grower, showing the fly-trap installed at his orchard near Alur.— Photo: Sathish G.T.

The cost-effective technology has cut down yield-loss drastically, say farmers

Use of cost-effective fly-traps to protect mango crop is getting popular in Hassan district, where mango is cultivated in about 2,500 hectares of land.

The Hassan District Mango Growers' Association has been popularising the trap technique developed by the Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR) in Hassan district to bring down the loss of yield due to flies.

Hemmige Mohan, mango-grower and president of the association, has been using the traps in his mango plantation at Bharatavalli, near Alur.

“These traps attract flies and as a result, the fruits remain safe. In the last two years, we have noticed a phenomenal decrease in the loss of yield as we have been using the fly traps. We can avoid the crop wastage by almost 80 per cent by using traps,” he said.

The traps contain a mixture of methyl eugenol, which attracts flies, and malathion, an insecticide. The flies get attracted by the mixture and die there.

Otherwise, female flies would lay eggs on the outer layer of fruits and maggots used to feed on the fruit pulp, causing loss in the yield. Five-six traps are enough for one acre of mango plantation.

The association had bought about 2,500 traps and distributed them among growers in the district this year. Each trap costs about Rs. 25.

John D. Mumford, noted entomologist from England, and Abhraham Verghese, Director of National Bureau of Biological Pests, visited Mr. Mohan's plantation on Wednesday and appreciated the technique used to avoid flies.

Prof. Mumford pointed out that a majority of mango-growers were suffering losses in the yield due to flies.

"This simple and cost-effective technology helps growers in a big way. European countries had stopped importing mangoes because of fly-attack.

Mango-growers can improve sales worldwide by adopting this technique," he said.