

Report of Hands on Training programme on Mass Production of Biocontrol Agents for Suppression of Invasive Whiteflies

Hands on training program on “Mass Production of Biocontrol Agents for Suppression of Invasive Whiteflies” was organized by ICAR-National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru from 23.01.2023 to 25.01.2023 (Second Batch) at ICAR-NBAIR, Bengaluru to disseminate the biocontrol technologies developed at bureau to curtail the recent invasive whiteflies infesting coconut. The trainees (12 Numbers) were part of extension officials of state line department (Department of Horticulture, Government of Andhra Pradesh; Agricultural officers, Government of Tamil Nadu), subject matter specialists of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) of Andhra Pradesh and plant protection officers of Central integrated pest management centres (CIPMC) of Vijayawada, Ernakulum and Hyderabad.



The trainees were taught with mass production protocols of potential natural enemies viz., parasitoid, *Encarsia guadeloupae* and *Encarsia cubensis*; Predator, *Apertochrysa astur* and entomopathogenic fungus, *Isaria fumosorosea* (ICAR-NBAIR Pfu-5) for their large-scale augmentation and application. Besides, symptoms of damage, Diagnostic characteristics of invasive whiteflies, distribution, host ranges, coexistence pattern and their natural enemies were also covered.



Dr. S.N. Sushil, Director, ICAR-NBAIR interacted with trainees and sensitized about the biological control of invasive whiteflies through bio-control agents. He also urged the trainees to disseminate these technologies to growers for the sustainable management of these invasive whiteflies. Dr. S.C. Dubey, Assistant Director General (Plant Protection & Biosafety), ICAR, New Delhi in his valedictory address, stressed upon the importance of dissemination of such biocontrol technologies to other stakeholders and farmers to curtail these invasive whiteflies menace.



This training was a part of project activities under Coconut Development Board (CDB), Kochi funded project on "Development and Validation of Bio-intensive Integrated

Pest Management strategies for Coconut Invasive Whiteflies in Karnataka”. Training kits viz., training manual, extension folders, technical bulletins on invasive whiteflies and their biocontrol strategies were distributed to all the trainees. In valedictory function, trainees expressed their confidence to identify and diagnosis the invasive whiteflies and their natural enemies. Director, ICAR-NBAIR and Courses directors viz., K. Selvaraj; Dr. A. Kandan; Dr. C. Manjunatha and Dr. B. Gundappa sincerely acknowledge the CDB, Kochi for funding this training programme.



Source: Dr. K. Selvaraj, Senior Scientist (Entomology), ICAR- National Bureau of Agricultural Insect Resources, Bengaluru