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Status of Common Oil Palm Insect Pests in Relation to Technology Adoption

NORMAN HJ KAMARUDIN AND MOHD BASRI WAHID

Malaysian Palm Oil Board, No.6, Persiaran Institusi, Bandar Baru Bangi, 43000 Kajang,
Malaysia

Selangor Darul Ehsan,

*A survey was conducted by the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) in 2005 on the status of insect pest infestation, distribution and the industry's perception and adoptions of insect pest control technologies. Sabah and Perak had recorded the most occurrence of bagworms (30%), while other states individually had less than 15 per cent bagworm occurrence. *Metisa plana* and *Pteroma pendula* were mainly concentrated in Perak, Sabah and Johor, while *Mahasena corbeti* was more prevalent in Sabah and Perak. A similar trend was also observed in the distribution of nettle caterpillars, however, Melaka and Terengganu have no records of nettle caterpillar infestation during the period 2000-2005. In adopting the beneficial plants for bagworm and nettle caterpillar control, at least three oil palm agencies have fully adopted (100%) the technology while four agencies have still not implemented the technology in 2005. The planting of beneficial plants was widely practiced in Sabah, followed by Perak, Selangor, Sarawak, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka and Johor. In Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Melaka it seems to be planted as a preventive measure. There was a one-fold reduction in bagworm infestation in estates which planted the beneficial plants compared to those which did not. This clearly suggests the contribution and role of beneficial plants in enhancing population of natural enemies for controlling the bagworms in plantations. The rhinoceros beetle, *Oryctes rhinoceros* was mainly concentrated in Johor, Sabah, Perak and Pahang. Compared to the previous years, there was almost a one-third reduction in the infestation in 2005, likely due to the adoption of technologies on better replanting techniques or the use of chemicals/pheromone trapping for control of the pest. A majority felt that the use of chemical pesticides may have reduced the infestation of the pest, while others thought that single-layer trunk chips laid during the zero-burning method has possibly reduced breeding and infestation. Some estates that responded also felt that biocontrol agents such as *Bacillus thuringiensis*, *Metarhizium* and *Oryctes virus* will gain more importance in the coming years.*

Keywords: Survey, insect pests, oil palm, bagworms, nettle caterpillars, rhinoceros beetle, technologies.