

ENTOMOLOGY BULLETINS: NO.6

HOW TO SEND INSECTS FOR IDENTIFICATION

INTRODUCTION

There are many thousands of insect species (types) in Papua New Guinea. Most of these do us no harm, but some are harmful because they damage our crop plants. They can do this in many different ways such as by eating the leaves, by boring in the stems and by sucking out the plant juices.

Before we can work out a way to stop an insect from damaging a crop, we must find out which insect it is. This is done by collecting some of the insects which seem to be doing the damage and sending them to the nearest D.P.I. entomologist. Samples of damaged plants should also be sent.

If the insects suspected of causing the damage cannot be collected, then samples of the plants alone may be sent.

If you live near to one of the entomologists, then it is better to visit him and take him some live insects, rather than send dead ones.

The addresses of D.P.I. entomologists are given at the end of this Bulletin.

SENDING INSECTS

To send insects, they are put in a small bottle (or plastic tube). The bottle is then filled with methylated spirits and sealed tightly. After this, it is put into a plastic bag which is closed and then

packed in a box which is at least twice as big (in all dimensions) as the bottle.

Samples of damaged plants should be laid flat between sheets of newspaper and then be put in a plastic bag and packed in the box with the insects.

The space left in the box should be firmly filled with cotton wool or crushed newspaper so that the bottle will not break in transit.

Three copies of an information sheet should then be written or typed out giving the following information.

1. Name of the plant on which the insects were found.
2. Place where the insects were found (name of the owner of the land, name of the village and name of the nearest town).
3. Details of the damage done by the insects eg. holes chewed in leaves, tunnels made in stems etc. and how serious it is eg. killing the plants, lowering their yield, making them grow slowly.
4. Number and size of gardens where the insect is causing damage.
5. Details of previous trouble with this insect including any control measures taken and whether they worked.
6. Number of plants attacked in each garden eg. all, most,

several, few.

7. Date the insects were collected on.

8. Name, address and phone number of the person sending the insects to the entomologist and date they are being sent on.

One copy of this information sheet should then be put in the box which should be closed, wrapped up and sent to the entomologist straight away.

Another copy of the information sheet should be sent separately to the entomologist.

The third copy should be kept by the sender.

RECOMMENDATIONS

When the entomologist has identified the insects he will be able to make recommendations for their control. If it is necessary to use an insecticide, the entomologist will explain which one should be used, how much is needed and how it should be applied.

There are certain safety precautions which must be carried out when handling or applying insecticides. These involve the person using the insecticide and any other people or animals which may come into contact with the insecticide or with the treated crop. These precautions will be listed in a separate Entomology Bulletin which will be published in a later issue of HARVEST. Copies of the Bulletin will be available from the Entomology Section, D.P.I., P.O. Box 2417, Konedobu and from the entomologists listed in the next column.

Insecticides must only be used when recommended by an entomologist.

When the pest control recommendations have been carried out, the farmer should write to the entomologist to tell him how successful they were. This will be a great help to the entomologist in making his recommendations next time this pest causes damage.

ADDRESSES OF ENTOMOLOGISTS

Mt. Hagen - Kuk Agriculture Research Station, P.O. Box 339, Mt. Hagen, Western Highlands Province.

Lae - Bubia Agriculture Research Centre, P.O. Box 348, Lae, Morobe Province.

Keravat (Rabaul) - Lowlands Agricultural Experiment Station, Keravat, East New Britain Province.

Popondetta - D.P.I., P.O. Box 94, Popondetta, Northern Province.

Port Moresby - D.P.I., P.O. Box 2417, Konedobu, National Capital District.

Copies of this Entomology Bulletin are available from: Publications Section, D.P.I., Box 2417, Konedobu.