

STUDIES IN BLISTER BLIGHT CONTROL

I. THE PROGRAMME OF RESEARCH

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Following the report on "Blister Blight in Ceylon Tea Plantations" submitted to the Tea Controller in November 1949 and published in the *Tea Quarterly*, Vol. 20, pts. 3/4, page 149, a grant of Rs. 150,000/- has been received from Government for blister blight control work during 1950.

This vote has enabled the definite planning of the blister blight campaign and as the results of experiments become available they will be published in this series of articles.

Plans include the following lines of investigation:—

1. Large Scale Experiments.

A 200-acre scale experiment on the protection of tea recovering from pruning has been started on Kataboola Estate, Kotmale, where blister blight attacks are severe throughout the year and where a variety of terrain is available. Weather conditions are also severe in the Kotmale district and should afford a chance for trials under extreme weather conditions.

2. Extensive Experiments.

50-acre scale experiments on a series of estates ranging from Hewaheta to Nuwara Eliya and from Hatton to Ramboda have also been started.

Courses of instruction for the superintendents of the estates concerned and for labourers to be employed in spray gangs were held at the Institute in June and July.

3. Engineering Division.

The services of an engineer, Mr. J. Landreth, have been secured and a workshop is being established at the Institute. These facilities will greatly assist in the investigation of application of fungicides which is the most important field for immediate investigation.

4. Fungicides.

A search for fungicides more effective than the present range of copper based fungicides must be made.

With the co-operation of the Shell Company's laboratories in Amsterdam, who have loaned the services of Dr. J. W. Pfaeltzer, a large scale screening of a wide range of fungicidal compounds is already in progress.

5. Spray Application.

The practical aspects of the application of fungicides by knapsacks and the organisation of spraying in the field are so important that we have arranged to hire the services of Mr. C. L. Scoles, who has a wide range of experience of spray application from Messrs. Plant Protection Limited.

6. Dusting.

Dr. H. Dike of Universal Crop Protection Limited asked for facilities to carry out experiments with dusting and mist blowing during the south west monsoon period.

Arrangements have been made to give Dr. Dike all the facilities he requires.

7. Protection of Tea in Plucking.

Experiments with the protection of tea in plucking have been commenced at the Institute and a full investigation of the question of spray residues and their effect on quality is in progress.
