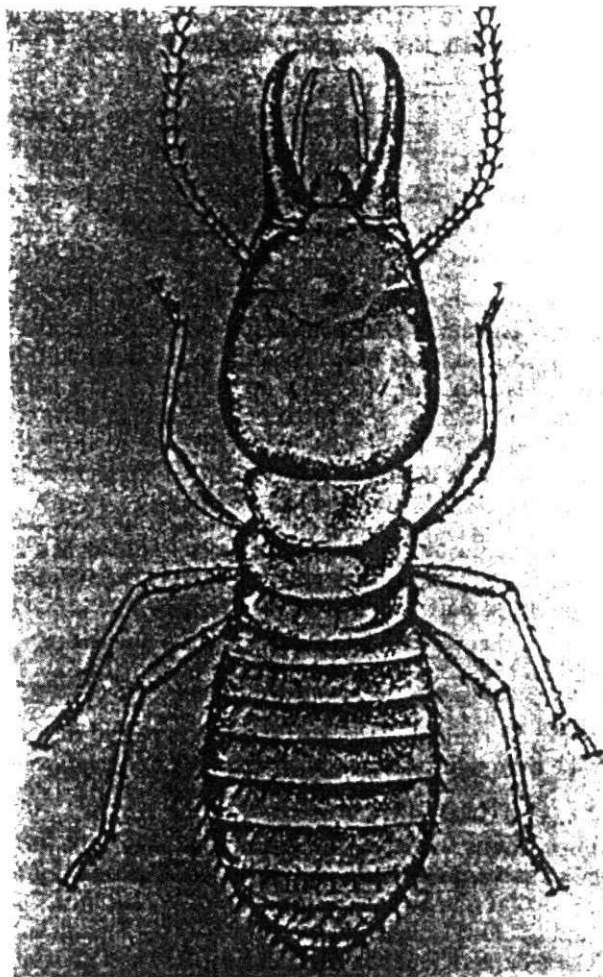


# PARADICHLOROBENZENE IN THE CONTROL OF TERMITES IN PLANTING HOLES

## SOME PRECAUTIONS

( Leaflet No. 30 )



Paradichlorobenzene-P.D.C.B. has been recommended in C.R.I. Leaflet No. 2 in the treatment of planting holes when seedlings are transplanted as a precaution against termite (white ant) damage. In view of recent cases which have been brought to our notice where seedlings have been damaged by not following the instructions regarding application (in particularly the quantity applied), it has been decided to issue this leaflet.

Paradichlorobenzene often abbreviated (P.D.C.B. or P.D.B.) is one of the few substances which, for insecticidal purposes, has been almost exclusively used for soil treatment.

### Description

Paradichlorobenzene is a white crystalline powder which has a characteristic odour. The odour is not so unpleasant and as clinging as that of naphthalene. It is non-inflammable under usual conditions.

### General Effects

Most authors stress the necessity for care in its application and recommend an interval of some weeks between treatment and planting. It does not appear to be effective in heavy soils and at low temperatures because it does not volatilise rapidly to be toxic. It has been found to be not effective while the soil is wet but acts again when the soil dries out.

### Effects on Plants

Under tropical conditions, because of high temperatures volatilization of Paradichlorobenzene is rapid. Generally with soil applications, if the dosage is heavy, the first symptoms shown by the palm are those of root scorch. In seedlings where only a few roots are present, if root scorch takes place then the seedling is bound to show signs of severe setback and may even result in death. The root scorch in turn will cause the leaves to turn brown and take on the appearance of a fire burn. The plant can recover from this state if the new roots that will form, provided the germ tissue is not already dead, do not have to contend with the volatilizing chemical that is injurious to tissue.

### Recommendations

Bearing in mind what has been said above, the recommendations made if Paradichlorobenzene is used in the treatment of coconut seedlings against termite attack are as follows:—

If the crystals of the chemical have formed large aggregates, these aggregates should be thoroughly crushed. Mix *one* tea-spoonful of the crushed chemical with *half a pound* (one cigarette tin full) of sand. Apply this mixture in a furrow located at least *six inches* away from the seedling. The furrow should be continuous round the seedling. Once the chemical has been applied the furrow should be covered over with soil.

Repeat treatments with this chemical should be made only if an interval of at least *12 weeks* has elapsed between treatments. Should toxic symptoms develop in the seedling the soil around the seedling should be removed immediately and fresh soil should replace this soil.

*Note*:—The present recommendations of the Coconut Research Institute do not advocate the use of Paradichlorobenzene. This chemical has been replaced by more recent chemicals such as Aldrex, Intox and Chlordox, which are more effective, less toxic and easier to apply than Paradichlorobenzene. (Please refer to Leaflet No. 31, 'Control of Insect Pests of the Coconut Palm').