

STUDIES IN BLISTER BLIGHT CONTROL

XV. "BLIDUST" TRIALS UNDER NORTH-EAST MONSOONAL CONDITIONS IN UVA.

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Following trials in the South West Monsoon reported in the previous paper of this series, facilities were offered for further trials with 4% Blidust during the North East Monsoon in the Uva District.

The experiment which commenced on 10th October, 1953, and ended on 16th February, 1954, consisted of identical treatments on each of two fields. The treatments and acreages involved were as follows:—

Field No. 2. 54 acres (pruned January 1953)		
PLOT A.	Dusted with "Blidust" at 5 lbs. per acre at 8 day intervals	26 acres
PLOT B.	Sprayed with "Blitox Spray" every 8 days at application rates of approximately 15 gallons per acre with the fungicide at 4 ozs. in 10 gallons of water	... 26 acres
PLOT C.	Unprotected	... 2 acres
Field No. 7. 38 acres (Pruned July 1952)		
PLOT A.	"Blidust" applied as for field No. 2.	... 35 acres
PLOT B.	Sprayed with "Blitox Spray" applied as for field No. 2	1 acre
PLOT C.	Unprotected.	... 2 acres

Dusting was done through the 'Orient' rotary hand duster, the dust being distributed over bands of 5 rows.

Weather Conditions

Although the average rainfall in October to the middle of December was normal in comparison with previous years there were intermittent periods of rainless days in October and November. In November the periods 3rd. to 10th. and again 19th. to 23rd. were rainfree. During those months rain fell mostly in the evenings while the mornings were bright and sunny. From about the middle of December to the middle of February weather conditions were more favourable to blister blight as rain and mist persisted almost throughout the day.

Experimental Results.

The final assessment of blister incidence on the experimental plots was made on February 16th. The weather, for at least nine weeks previous to that date, was particularly favourable to blister blight infection and of sufficiently long duration for a build up of severe infections on the unprotected areas.

Assessments on the two fields were as follows:—

<i>Field No. 2</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Protection</i>
Plot A	'Blidust' dusted	Good
Plot B	'Blitox Spray'	Excellent
Plot C	Unprotected	Poor

<i>Field No. 7</i>	<i>Treatment</i>	<i>Protection</i>
Plot A	'Blidust' dusted.	Good.
Plot B	'Blitox Spray'	Excellent
Plot C	Unprotected	Poor

In both fields, bushes in the sprayed areas carried a few leaf blisters only. There was no die-back of plucking shoots. The dusted areas showed a fairly heavy incidence of leaf blisters while occasional bushes showed die-back of plucking shoots following stem infections. In comparison the unprotected plots showed evidence of a recent severe attack of leaf blisters and stem infections which had caused a considerable amount of die-back of plucking shoots.

Discussion

The results of the trials described above, coupled with the findings of the previous South West Monsoon trials described in the previous article, suggest that Blidust, under all conditions except those obtaining in prolonged periods of rain and mist, affords a degree of protection comparable to that given by wet spraying.

As a short term protection policy, particularly suited to areas subject to the North East Monsoonal rains only, application of Blidust at the rate of 5 lbs. every 8 days appears to be quite sound. During periods of weather exceptionally favourable to blister blight attack the period between applications should be reduced. In reducing the period between applications thought must be given to the subject of copper residues as it is unwise to apply dust less than three days before plucking. Such a short interval assumes that heavy rainfall will wash off the greater part of the dust. Short intervals under low rainfall conditions must be avoided.

Under weather conditions liable to cause heavy and prolonged attacks of blister blight, wet spraying is still strongly recommended.

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Reference

- 1). Loos, C. A. Studies in blister blight control. XIV. Further studies in the evaluation of some copper fungicidal dusts in the control of blister blight. "Tea Quarterly" Vol. XXV. Part 1, March 1954, pp. 17—19.