Letter to Editor

Susceptibility of *Pseudosphink tetrio* Lin. larvae to *Heterorhabditis amazonensis* Andaló *et al*. strain HC1 *in vitro*

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Susceptibilidad de larvas de *Pseudosphink tetrio* Lin. a *Heterorhabditis amazonensis* Andaló *et al*. cepa HC1 *in vitro*

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Dear Editor,

In some gardens in the community of Alamar, located in the eastern zone of Havana City, Cuba, several last instars larvae of *Pseudosphink tetrio* Lin. (Lepidoptera: Sphingidae) were found on ornamental plants belonging to *Plumeria* genus. The larvae, with more than 10 cm long, consumed high quantities of leaves per day. In Alamar, where population density is very high within Havana, no chemical pesticides would be used and biological control agents would be the favorite choice. For this reason, the larvae were collected and treated with entomopathogenic nematodes *in vitro* (Petri dishes) in the Agricultural Nematology Laboratory at the National Center for Plant and Animal Health (CENSA) in Mayabeque province. Nematodes of the specie *Heterorhabditis amazonensis* Andaló *et al*. strain HC1 were applied in aqueous solution at 10^5 nematodes per plate containing 5 larvae. The nematodes caused 100 % larval death in 24-48 hour, with odorless, dark brown larval bodies. Reproduction of the nematodes was completed inside the larvae, showing that the entry and development of these entomopathogenic nematodes was the cause of the larval death. This strain of entomopathogenic nematode is mass reared at CENSA and they are the active ingredient of BionemC®, a commercial product available for pest control. Some *in situ* trials must be conducted to determine the dose and frequency to apply to control *P. tetrio* outbreaks in gardens in Alamar.