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Letter to the editor

RECYCLING OF ENTOMOPATHOGENIC NEMATODES IN COFFEE CROP (*Coffea* spp.) GROWING SOILS IN BUEY ARRIBA

Dear Sr.,

The coffee berry borer (CBB) (*Hypothenemus hampei* Ferrari) is one of the most important pests of the coffee crop in the world. In Cuba it has been the key pest since the middle of the last decade of the twentieth century. For its management, some biological control agents (entomopathogens and invertebrates) have been evaluated under field conditions in different areas. In those cases where entomopathogenic nematodes have shown the potential for CBB management in several field experiments developed between 2006 and 2008 in Buey Arriba Municipality (eastern region of Cuba), the strain HC1 of *Heterorhabditis bacteriophora* Poinar has been found to be capable of persisting and recycling in soils up to three months later after being applied in the soil. The soil samples were processed by the Baermann Funnel Technique the water solution collected was used to inoculate ten *Galleria mellonella* Fabricius last instars larvae per sample, place in Petri dishes. The percentage of *G. mellonella* killed by the nematodes was 14,24%. This fact was corroborated by examining each larva under a stereo microscope, and the hermaphrodite females and juveniles were observed inside the cadavers. Nematode recycling in the soil is possible due to the wide host range they have. This element is important in CBB management under field conditions, because it indicates the capability of the entomopathogenic nematodes to persist under these conditions.

Sincerely yours,

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