

LETTER TO EDITOR

Natural epizooty of *Beauveria bassiana* (Bals.-Criv.) Vuill. in *Hypothenemus hampei* Ferrari in Mayabeque, Cuba

Epizootia natural de *Beauveria bassiana* (Bals.-Criv.) Vuill. en *Hypothenemus hampei* Ferrari en Mayabeque, Cuba

Dear Sir,

In prospections done in coffee (*Coffea arabica* L.) fields in San Jose de las Lajas Municipality (Mayabeque Province, Cuba) in 2012 and 2013, a high infestation of coffee berry borer *Hypothenemus hampei* Ferrari (Coleoptera: Scolytidae) were found in some fields, but many of the insects had their bodies covered by white mycelia. Died insects were collected and transferred to the Plant Health Laboratory in the Agricultural University of Havana for their identification. After isolation on Potato Dextrose Agar, morphological studies were done and the fungus found was *Beauveria bassiana* (Bals.-Criv.) Vuill. (Hypocreales: Cordycipitaceae). This fungus had never before been applied in these coffee fields. Thus, it was considered a natural epizootic, and the farmers were recommended not to use chemical pesticides in the fields in order to preserve the natural strain in these areas. The isolates were deposited in the University collection and virulence tests and mass rearing studies will be carried out.

Sincerely yours;

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