
PCA IMPLEMENTS ORGANIC COCOLISAP TREATMENT PROTOCOL IN CERTIFIED ORGANIC COCO FARMS

(Press Release)

If the ‘cocolisap’ infestation in CALABARZON will be left unabated, the country will be losing up to P12 billion. Presently, the invasive and prolific insect, which causes a 55-60% loss in nut production, has infested more than two million nut-bearing palms.

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), under the leadership of Mr. Romulo N. Arancon, Jr. as Administrator, is the lead government agency that is tasked to develop the coconut industry to its full potential. President Aquino’s Executive Order (EO) No. 169 issued last June 05, 2014 categorically mandated the PCA to take all legitimate and moral actions to control and manage the spread and damage of coconut scale insect (*Aspidiotus rigidus*) in the Philippines and mitigate its impact on the coconut industry. The PCA is under the Office of the Presidential Assistant for Food Security and Agricultural Modernization, headed by Secretary Francis ‘Kiko’ Pangilinan.

After a series of consultations with coconut industry stakeholders including the Governors, Mayors and local leaders of affected provinces, scientists and researchers from various agencies comprising the PCA, PCAARRD-DOST, DA, and NCPC-UPLB, a general protocol for the emergency, area-wide control of CSI was established. The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) protocol



being implemented by the PCA-led R & D Task Force is based on the results of multidisciplinary research and various collaborative S&T undertakings conducted by PCA, UPLB and PCAARRD. This science-based IPM protocol was officially endorsed by DOST Secretary Mario G. Montejo to Secretary Francis ‘Kiko’ Pangilinan for implementation by the PCA.

The IPM protocol on CSI currently being implemented consists of the following:

pruning of infested leaves and cutting/chopping these infested parts; harvesting all harvestable nuts (the next harvest should only be done 60 days after); trunk injection of a systemic insecticide. The specific systemic insecticide was found effective by our scientists and given certification for use for coconuts by the Fertilizer and Pesticide Authority (FPA). A certification by FPA means that the insecticide is effective and safe for use at the recommended dosage; organic spraying 30 to 60 days after trunk injection depending on the degree of

infestation as assessed by UPLB and PCA scientists; and release of biocontrol agents reared by PCA-certified laboratories not earlier than 2 weeks after organic spraying, when the degree of infestation has reached a manageable level as assessed by UPLB and PCA scientists.

Coconuts cultivated in certified organic farms were not spared by the aggressive, leaf-sucking scale insects. To protect the organic status of coconut farms which supply organic coconut-based food products in the local and foreign markets, only the standard pruning of infested fronds and the application of Bureau of Agriculture and Fisheries Standards (BAFS) – certified organic and/or botanical pesticides will be applied. Thus, the *Organic Cocolisap Treatment Protocol* is implemented in certified organic coconut farms and on those farms which are in the process of accreditation as organic farms.

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI), pursuant to the provisions of BPI Special Quarantine Order



No. 1, series of 2014, in close collaboration with the PCA, PNP and the LGU, leads the establishment of checkpoints and quarantine stations to prevent the transportation of unprocessed or untreated parts of coconut, coconut seedlings and other host or vector plants from quarantined areas. Likewise, the BPI deputizes personnel of the PCA, Philippine National Police (PNP) and other law enforcement offices to strictly implement the

existing Quarantine Rules and Regulations.

To hasten the recovery of treated palms, PCA-recommended fertilizers will be applied. Programs on massive coconut replanting and intercropping with high-value crops including *pinakbet* seeds will also be implemented to raise productivity and income of coconut farmers, to sustain their livelihood.

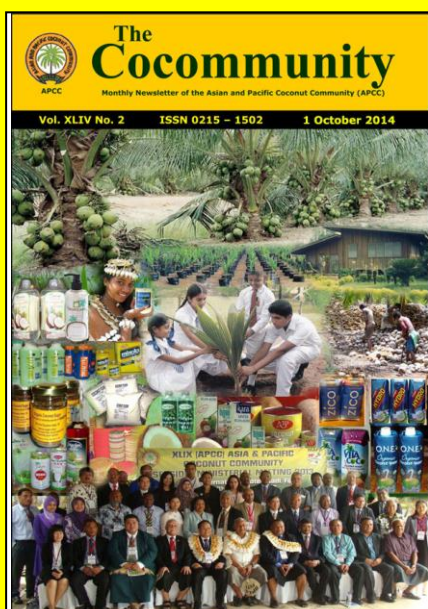
The R & D Task Force continues to research on other appropriate cost-effective FPA-registered insecticides, organic or botanical pesticides and other suitable biocontrol agents. Studies on the relationship between the coconut tree and the coconut scale insects for a better understanding of the problem and to be able to provide appropriate S & T-based interventions, not only to manage the current infestation but more importantly to prevent its recurrence in the future, will also be undertaken.

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References:

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