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To
The Editor,

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Sir,

I request that the following matter may kindly be published in your esteemed daily:

Procedure for sending soil and root sample for nematode testing

The symptoms caused by plant parasitic nematodes on crops include yellowing and marginal necrosis of leaves, stunting, patchiness and day-wilting, which are similar to that caused by micro nutrient deficiency and to that of lack of enough soil moisture. Hence, it becomes mandate to check the soil and roots once in a way for the presence of plant parasitic nematodes so as to take necessary management steps at the appropriate time. In a field containing stunted chlorotic plants apparently due to presence of nematodes, approximately ten samples have to be collected from the rhizosphere of plants, from which a composite sample of 200 cc with 5g roots has to be collected.

Nematode population is usually more in the rhizosphere region and hence the 1-3cm of top soil which is usually dry and will not encourage nematode activity can be removed with the help of a spade or shovel. After removing the upper soil, a V shaped pit of 15cm depth has to be taken for most of the annual crops such as vegetable and flower crops. The fibrous feeder roots that are encountered in the pit and the soil scrapped from the sides and base of the pit has to be collected either in a basin or a polythene bag.

Likewise, in case of banana, onion, tuberose and turmeric, the partially rotten portions of the corm, bulbs and rhizome along with the adhering soil and fibrous roots have to be collected.

For taking sample from fruit crops such as citrus, guava, pome etc., which has deeper roots, 30cm pit has to be dug out around the crop and soil and root samples collected from within the pit. For taking samples from rice, collect tender fibrous roots and soil around the plants selected randomly without disturbing the plants. To test the presence of white tip nematode which caused the chaffy grain, a composite sample of 10-12 panicles have to be collected.

The collected soil, root and corms have to be packed in a recyclable polythene bag or cloth bag so as to avoid loss of moisture, properly labelled with information like farmer's name, location, crop, variety and collected date preferably written using a pencil to avoid smudging caused by the soil moisture and send to the below address through Unregistered Post Parcel on the day itself or next day of sample collection to the below address for nematode analysis:

The Professor and Head,
Department of Nematology,
Centre for Plant Protection Studies,
Tamil Nadu Agricultural University,
Coimbatore- 641003.
Phone no: 0422 6611264.

Public Relations Officer