



MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Recommendation Sheet No. 29

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SCALE INSECT (*AULACASPIS*) ON SUGARCANE SETTS

Planting cane setts infested with the scale insect (*Aulacaspis tegalensis*) can reduce germination and vigour of early growth. Furthermore, it must be stressed that the scale insect is not destroyed when it is covered with soil at planting. Consequently, these setts can establish foci from which infestation can spread early in the newly planted fields. Every care should therefore be taken to avoid planting scale-infested setts, but if clean setts are unavailable, resort should be made to specific measures :

1. Preference should be given to a short hot water treatment (HWT) either 50 °C for 30 minutes or 52 °C for 20 minutes.

This treatment will give a complete kill of all stages of the insect.

2. If HWT cannot be effected, an alternative is to completely dip the cane setts in insecticide, rubbing or brushing off scale crusts while doing so. The insecticide can be added to the standard fungicide dip. Suitable insecticides are :

Dursban 4 @ 1 ml/L
or Folithion 50% @ 2 ml/L
or Gusathion @ 2 ml/L

It is essential that plastic gloves be worn while dipping setts in this way.

3. Varieties with tightly adhering leaf sheaths, like S 17 and R 570, are usually very susceptible to this scale insect and particular care should be taken with planting material of such varieties to avoid spreading this pest.