



MAURITIUS SUGAR INDUSTRY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Recommendation Sheet No. 52

(August, 1989)

DISINFECTION OF KNIVES

Various important sugar cane diseases, especially leaf scald, gumming and ratoon stunting, are readily transmitted by cane knives. Transmission of these diseases can therefore occur while preparing cane cuttings; this will lead to the contamination of nursery plots and create foci of infection in newly planted fields. It can also occur when cane is harvested manually or mechanically.

To minimize the transmission of the important bacterial diseases named above, knives and harvester blades should be disinfected with one of the iodine compounds enumerated below.

Harvest in commercial fields

Iodine should be used at a concentration of 125 ppm. Thus, ONE of the following iodine formulations is recommended as follows:

Iodocor 50	: 1.8 ml/litre
Mikrolene	: 7.2 ml/litre
Antec	: 4.2 ml/litre

Disinfection of knives and harvester blades should be done in the morning before the start of the harvest and when moving from one field to another.

This Recommendation Sheet cancels No. 10 of July 1981

Preparation of cuttings

The products should be used at twice the concentration recommended above, that is at 250 ppm.

A fresh solution must be prepared every day. Accumulation of dirt and cane debris in the solution should be kept to a minimum.

For dipping knives, the disinfectant should preferably be kept in a cylindrical container. Treatment of the blades of mechanical harvesters can be effected with a sprayer.

Because of the corrosive nature of the chemicals recommended above, plastic containers or sprayers are advocated; at the same time the breakdown of the active principle will be reduced.