

Integrated Pest and Disease Management Module in Groundnut (*Arachis hypogaea* L.) at Tiruchirappalli District

Abstract

Groundnut (*Arachis hypogaea* L.), is not only an important oilseed crop of India but also an important agricultural export commodity and **the second largest producer of groundnut in the world**. The groundnut cultivation is often subjected to significant yield losses annually due to biotic and abiotic stresses which are the major limiting factors for attaining high productivity. In recent years, groundnut insect pest and disease management through integrated pest and disease management (IPDM) solutions has gained prominence due to the vulnerable effects of pesticides. A front line demonstration study (2020) was conducted at Trichy district during Kharif season involving IPDM module revealed that **thrips and *Spodoptera litura*** damage as well as tikka leaf spot was lesser in IPDM module than Farmers Practice (FP) and increased yield by 19 % when compared to FP. From the study it can be concluded that Groundnut under IPDM practices have higher yield than farmer's practice.

Key Words: *Groundnut, Pests, Diseases, Integrated Management, Tiruchirappalli*

Introduction

Groundnut (*Arachis hypogaea* L.), a self-pollinated legume is not only an important oilseed crop of India but also an important agricultural export commodity. Globally Groundnut covers 295 lakh hectares with the production of 487 lakh tonnes with the productivity of 1647 kg per hectare (FAOSTAT, 2019). Asia and Africa account for 95% of global groundnut area where it is cultivated under rainfed conditions with low inputs by resource poor farmers. Groundnut is a cash crop providing income and livelihoods to the farmer. It also contributes to nutrition of farm families through consumption of energy- and protein-rich groundnut kernels and provides nutritious fodder (haulms) to livestock. Thus groundnut cultivation contributes to the sustainability to mixed crop-livestock production systems, the most predominant system of the semi-arid areas. The groundnut cultivation is often subjected to significant yield losses annually due to biotic and abiotic stresses and are the major limiting factors for attaining high productivity in India. Among the several factors responsible for low productivity in groundnut, the biggest threat to groundnut cultivation is the vulnerable and wide spread attacking by insect pests and soil borne diseases. More than 100 species of insect and mites are known to attack groundnut. The avoidable yield loss due to major insect pests of groundnut was recorded to the tune of 48.57 percent in pod and 42.11 percent in fodder (Dabhade et al., 2012). Among the pests attacking groundnut, thrips, *Spodoptera litura* Fab. and the leaf miner *Aproaerema modicella* Deventer are more potential in India. Reduced pod yields can be attributed to many biotic stresses, including **soil borne** and foliar diseases (Vineela et al., 2018). All crop growing areas are experiencing severe damage from fungal diseases such collar rot (*Aspergillus niger*), stem rot (*Sclerotium rolfsii*), and root rot (*Rhizoctonia solani*) (Jadon et al., 2015). The two most common soil-borne diseases that cause considerable crop losses each year are collar rot and stem rot. Among the foliar diseases, leaf spots, rust, and rosette cause substantial losses in yield. Mostly farmers rely on the use of synthetic pesticides and combination of pesticides for the control of pests and diseases. Repeated application of pesticides causes pesticide resistance. In order to overcome this problem of pest and disease infestation, it is necessary to adopt integrated pest

and disease management strategies for the management of insect pests and diseases. Hence, the present investigation was undertaken to demonstrate the integrated pest and disease management package in groundnut.

Materials and Methods

The Integrated Pest and Disease Management (IPDM) package in groundnut was demonstrated in 10 locations of Nettavelampatti and Kamatchipatti of Uppiliyapuram and Musiri, respectively during *kharif*, 2020 through Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Sirugamani, Trichy under rainfed condition. Each demonstration was conducted in an area of 0.4 ha along with a check plot (farmer practice) of 0.2 ha for comparison.

The texture of the soil was red sandy loam. It had a low to medium level of organic carbon (0.33-0.61%). Soil pH was 6.5 to 8. For all interventions, the typical integrated nutrient management schedule of 17:34:54 Kg NPK was adhered. These modules comprised of cultural, biological and chemical practices for the management of insect-pests and pathogens in groundnut. The percent control of thrips and *Spodoptera litura* over untreated control was calculated as suggested by Rajashekhar et al., (2022). During the crucial stages of the crop growth, the fields were irrigated later the crop was harvested and the yield was recorded.

Technology Interventions

The following technologies viz., seed treatment with *Bacillus subtilis* @10 g/kg and *Trichoderma asperellum* @ 4 g/kg of seeds, soil application of *Bacillus subtilis* and *T. asperellum* at last ploughing and at 20 days after sowing (DAS) each @ 2.5 kg/ha, installation of Blue sticky traps @ 5 No./acre, setting up of pheromone trap @ 5 No./acre, release of *Trichogramma chilonis* at 40,000/acre at 40 DAS and 50 DAS and need based application of Azadirachtin 1.0% were adopted in demonstration plots and only pesticides were used in farmers field.

Before the conduct of demonstration, training to farmers was imparted with respect to envisage technological interventions. Visits of farmers and extension functionaries were organized at demonstration plots to disseminate the technology at large scale. Yield data was collected from farmers practice and demonstration plots. The gross returns, cost of cultivation, net returns and benefit cost ratio (B:C ratio) were calculated by using prevailing prices of inputs and outputs.

Results & Discussion

The results revealed that farmers practice recorded 56 percent *Spodoptera* infestation 18.5 percent thrips infestation, and 24.7 per cent Tikka leaf spot incidence whereas the demo plots recorded only 22 per cent *Spodoptera* infestation, 7.3 percent thrips infestation and 10.3 per cent Tikka leaf spot incidence. Sex pheromones have been utilized in the insect pest control programme through population monitoring, survey, mass trapping, mating disruption and killing the target pest in the trap. Higher yield of 16.225 q/ha was recorded in demo plots whereas farmers practice recorded a yield of 13.625q/ha. The demonstration gave increased net return (Rs. 43,350/- /ha) and B: C ratio (1.80) over the farmers practice with the net return of Rs.31, 750/ha and B: C ratio of 1.44.

Table 1. Impact of FLD on pest, disease, yield and Economics in Groundnut

| Treatments | Tikka leaf spot incidence (%) | <i>Spodoptera litura</i> infestation (%) | Thrips incidence (%) | Yield (q/ha) | Per cent increase in yield over FP | Net returns (Rs./ha) | B:C Ratio |
|---|-------------------------------|--|----------------------|--------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| IPDM (BCA, Pheromone, Egg parasitoid, Neem) | 10.3 | 22 | 7.3 | 16.225 | 19 | 43350 | 1.80 |
| FP (Pesticides alone) | 24.7 | 56 | 18.5 | 13.625 | - | 31750 | 1.44 |

Conclusion

The results from the present study revealed that demonstration of integrated pest and disease management practices would reduce the thrips and *Spodoptera* infestation, Tikka leaf spot incidence and further increased the yield in groundnut. Extracts of neem leaf and datura leaf showed excellent performance in controlling tikka leaf spot and increasing pod yield by 53.61 and 51.91 per cent, respectively as compared to control (Hasan *et al.*, 2014).

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