

# "The control and destruction of plant pests is a continual problem..."

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**T**he control and destruction of plant pests is a continual problem: first of all the pest has to be identified on the evidence of the damage it causes and then the proper means must be found to destroy it systematically while causing as little damage to the plants themselves as possible. It is a problem which has to be tackled in every garden where vegetables, flowers and fruit are attacked by insects or worms that eat, suck, lay eggs or bore. It is a greater problem where the entire garden or orchard is attacked and the whole crop threatened. The problem is more acute still in the case of plantations in tropical countries, where these plantations sometimes stretch over very large areas. For most of the year the warm and damp climate with its heat and heavy rain creates ideal conditions for insect pests to develop and multiply. It is this acute problem of cultivation in the tropics that gave rise to this book. It was felt that some sort of manual might guide the planter, so that knowing the typical pattern of damage, he could identify the organisms affecting his crops. Such a manual should then go on to tell him what sort of pesticide should be used, with full details of the degree of concentrations and the mode of application, so as to stop the attack in good time and prevent any recurrence.

Mr. R. WYNIGER has produced such a manual in the present book. The ideas embodied in it were developed not only in the laboratory and at his work-desk, but, in particular, during his extended visits to tropical Africa. This book, therefore, sums up the experience acquired by its author on the spot, from observing the mode of action of the pests in the actual plantations, by applying his extensive biological knowledge, in advising the planters, and by conducting his own practical experiments in pest-control with new methods and products. His camera was always with him and was able to record characteristic phases of damage and stages of pests; the author's own photographs, in fact, account for most of the about 600 excellent illustrations which are scattered throughout the book and which so very effectively support the text.

Mr. WYNIGER is not an academically trained biologist. He has, nevertheless, acquired more knowledge of his subject than many

an academic through his twenty-five years of solid practice as a member of the technical staff of the Pesticides Division of the Basle firm J. R. GEIGY S. A.—itself known all over the world for its activity in the field of pest control. During this time he has bred countless varieties of pests, including tropical pests, and has studied their effect on all possible types of plant as well as the best way of combatting them by chemical means. His work frequently took him on field experiments to other parts of Europe and the tropics, where he was able to obtain first-hand evidence of the many and complex economical aspects of the problem. Finally, he has for several years held the position of lecturer in entomology and pest control at the Tropical School of the Swiss Tropical Institute in Basle, where sugar chemists and managers of all types of plantation receive their training, and he has also been Senior Lecturer at the Rural Aid Centre founded by the Basle Foundation for Aid to Developing Countries at Ifakara in Tanganyika. The reader of this book will be in excellent hands, and will constantly find himself admiring the breadth of the author's experience. It was only after innumerable empirical tests, carried out in the laboratory and in the field, that I felt justified in persuading him to undertake the mammoth task of compiling this book. With untiring energy he has, in my opinion, succeeded admirably, and in the straightforward language of the practical man has put together a manual which will find a very warm reception at the hands of English-speaking planters in warm climates all over the world, whatever they may grow. This is even more certain in view of the fact that no book approaching it in scope has ever been available until now. The tremendous energy and drive of the author have also been rewarded in another way, for, among the many others whose assistance is acknowledged in the foreword, he has managed to obtain the services of Mr. and Mrs. VESSEY, whose linguistic ability and knowledge of the subject have proved so valuable in translating the book into English. Mrs. VESSEY was for a number of years librarian of the Swiss Tropical Institute at Basle, and Mr. VESSEY, who is English by birth, was for many years a planter in the tropics. The work of translating the book has been accomplished in a masterly manner and a great service rendered thereby to author and readers alike.

Although this book is now printed, it is not, in one sense, finished, nor can it ever be, for research and the correlation of constantly accumulating experience still continue apace, and indeed the development of our knowledge is hardly anywhere in such a state of flux as in the field of pest control. For this reason, and to ensure that the work is continually brought up to date, it is intended to re-edit Chapter V on Control Measures, which is attached to the book as a separate appendix, every few years. These supplements will be offered to all users of the manual at regular intervals, and on each

occasion the author will adjust their content so as to exclude methods which have been superseded by better ones.

In the present period of social and political change in tropical countries, where every community must solve its own problems and where the question of food is so fundamental to stability, this book comes when it is most needed. It is to be hoped that it will prove truly useful and that it will win the approval it deserves.

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