

Report on survey conducted at thrips infested chilli fields of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

Survey was conducted to inspect the thrips infested chilli fields of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana from 30 November 2021 to 02 December 2021 as per the request of Horticultural commissioner, Government of Telangana. The survey team consisted of four scientists, Dr Krishna Reddy (Head of Crop protection division), IIHR, Bengaluru, Dr Madhavi Reddy Principal Scientist (Plant breeding and Genetics), IIHR, Bengalru, Dr V. Sridhar, Principal Scientist (Entomology), IIHR, Bengaluru and Dr R.R. Rachana, Scientist (Entomology), ICAR-NBAIR, Bengaluru. The team visited thrips infested farmer's fields of both the states and inspected the situation. The chilli fields were severely infested with thrips and the species associated was identified as *Thrips parvispinus* (Karny), an invasive species reported from India in 2015. Representative thrips samples were collected from each field visited and brought to laboratory for further analysis. Along with thrips incidence, virus infection transmitted by whitefly was also noticed in the visited fields. But the identified thrips species is not reported as a vector of Tospoviruses. All the visited fields were heavily infested with thrips and each flower carried a thrips load of 10-30. Three farmer-scientists interaction sessions were organized and cost effective thrips management practices were recommended. Farmers were advised to take neem oil spray mixed with chemical sprays and install blue sticky traps @ 25/acre. Drenching of insecticides was also recommended since the species pupates in soil. The survey team updated the status of thrips infestation and recommendations to be followed for the management to Mr V.P. Gautham, IAS, District Collector, Khammam and Mr S.S. Sridhar, IFS, Horticulture Comissioner, Andhra Pradesh for their needful action.

