

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Characteristics of farmers and agro-ecological knowledge of termites and their devastation in semi-irrigated farming system of central India

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ABSTRACT

Investigations were carried out during four consecutive years (2007-08 to 2010-11) at farmers' fields of Satpura plateau and Gird agro-climatic zones of Madhya Pradesh to evaluate the assessment of infestation, characteristics and farmers' agro-ecological knowledge about termites. Termites infestation and their abundance is an important problem of the farmers in sandy light soils. It needs to pay attention in the characterization of the dominant farming system to formulate the agro-ecologically acceptable sustainable termite management strategies. Focus group discussion and in depth individual interview schedule were conducted of 150 farmers to collect the information of termite in the region. About 83.3 per cent of the respondents were engaged in both of the farming and livestock production and 92.0 per cent belonged to male gender. Approximately, 86.7 per cent could not achieve above Higher Secondary education. Only 17.3 per cent respondent farmers were having above 10 ha land, majority came under marginal land holding and 80.66 per cent recognized termite problem before fifteen years. About 81.0 and 74.0 per cent respondents cultivated mustard and wheat crop with 22.0 and 21.0 per cent plant infestation caused by termites, respectively. 72.0 per cent respondents stated that the termite infestation and damage levels were higher during January to June in sandy light soils with 48.7 per cent. Termetaria was present in 88 per cent of the farmers' fields and 30.66 per cent respondents accepted that it was a major factor responsible for spreading and enhancement of termite damage in field crops.

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