

## RESEARCH NEWS

### INTERNAL BROWNING SYNDROME OF BANANA FRUITS.

S. S. WEERASINGHE, P. WEERASINGHE, K. H. RUWANPATHIRANA

and

H. R. PREMALAR

*Regional Agriculture Research and Development Centre, Angunakolapelessa.*

An internal discolouration in fruits of banana has been recorded in all parts of the dry zone of Sri Lanka during the last few years. Very recently this syndrome has also been recorded in the southern wet zone too. The occurrence of the disease condition is very common under irrigated conditions in the dry zone.

Only the dessert types of *Embul*- AAB (Mysore) and *Kolikuttu*- AAB (Silk) are known to be affected. This condition has not been observed in cooking types-ABB or in Cavendish- AAA type in the country.

In the affected bunches, almost all the fruits in the first few hands show the symptoms. The number of hands affected may vary from 1-3 in *Kolikuttu* and 6-8 in *Embul*. However, the rest of the hands too could show the symptoms but only a few fruits may be affected in different places of the bunch.

The discoloration seems to be initiated at the nipple end of the fruit and develop towards the stalk end through the vascular bundles. The browning discolouration extends up to the outer most tissues of the fruits, but not to the peel. Neither the crown nor the peduncle is affected. External appearance of the fruits are markedly different from that of the healthy fruits, exhibit a prominent nipple and uneven filling. This leads to the formation of non-cylindrical fruits.

It is interesting to note that the bunches of the ratoon crops do not show the browning syndrome. Eventhough the symptoms show much similarity with either Bugtok disease or Blood disease, not a single pathogen was found so far in affected fruits. Therefore it is suspected that this is an induced nutritional /physiological disorder. Studies are underway to ascertain the causes and develop the management techniques of the syndrome.