

Poster

**THREATS TO DURIAN TREES (*DURIO ZIBITHINUS*) AND THEIR
MANAGEMENT IN GAMPAHA DISTRICT**

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ABSTRACT

Durian (*Durio zibithinus*) is an important valuable income earning fruit crop in Sri Lanka. It is also a major fruit crop in Gampaha district too. A study was conducted from 2014 to 2016 in Gampaha Agrarian Service division to identify field problems in durian crop and to find recommendations. The study was mainly concentrated in the Urapola area. *Phytophthora* root and stem rot and stem boring beetle damages were severe threats in the study area. Weakening and deaths of trees were also due to poor drainage. Shot hole borer damage and Termites attack were also found as minor reasons. It was found that stem borers damage and root, stem and fruit rot damage incidences were 24.1% and 26.4% respectively. Shot hole borer damage was 10.3%. Even though the termites attacks were 35.6%, severity of the damage was very low. An integrated approach of management strategies was identified and the approach was concentrate more on cultural, mechanical and appropriate chemical methods. The package includes enhancing field sanitation, proper drainage, fertilization of crops, application of Calcium fertilizers to enhance pH in order to reduce fungal rot, treatment of damaged branches of tree with fungicides. Dumping of undecomposed organic matter at the base of the tree should be avoided as it attracts termites to the root zone. Tying up of cattle to the tree trunks will lead to damage roots and stems. The collective efforts of farmers and extension officers should be taken with short term and long term measures. Inspection and management of these problems should start from the month of December and it should be continued up to end of the harvest in the next year. The control programme should be continued for few years while new young plants should be essentially grown in well drained upper elevation areas.