

Capacity Building in Plant Nematology

- Extending the Network in Tanzania



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Nematode pests cause >20% yield losses in a range of crops in Tanzania and some are totally destroyed but there is no trained nematologist conducting research in the country. Nematicides to control these pests are too expensive and inappropriate for widespread use by resource-poor farmers, and agricultural land is too limited for effective crop rotations to be practised. To manage nematodes without such control methods requires the inputs of innovative nematologists conducting high quality research to apply a range of control measures that are adapted to local needs.



Established in 2005, the Nematology Initiative in Eastern & Southern Africa (NIESA) uses support from the Gatsby Charitable Foundation to build capacity in plant nematology in the region and links nematologists at Rothamsted Research, University of Reading and CABI Biosciences in the UK with colleagues in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

NIESA has:

- established a core of 10 trained nematologists in the region
- provided equipment for establishing six regional Nematology research laboratories (two in Tanzania)
- provided an interactive website - <http://www.africannematology.info/index.asp> - with access to key nematological journals
- developed collaborative research aimed at sustainable nematode management systems
- trained >60 scientists and technicians in 6wk, 3wk or 2-day courses

Support from The Royal Society Tanzania-UK Science Networking Scheme in April, 2008 established links between the Ministry of Agriculture & Food Security, Tanzanian Horticultural Association (TAHA), Research, Institutes in Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Kibaha and Morogoro and nematologists in NIESA, which led to presentations in Arusha at the annual meeting of TAHA and a one-week training workshop for Plant Health Inspectors.

Future collaborations are essential to:

- Increase awareness of nematodes of economic importance amongst growers, advisors, industry representatives and policy makers.
- Provide an equipped core of expertise able to diagnose and advise on nematode problems and develop research programmes to underpin local and regional development.



Plant Health Inspectors Course, University of Sokoine, Tanzania, August, 2008

