Research Note

Anthills in Sugarcane Fields of Northwestern Uruguay[1]

Anthills of *Camponotus* sp. (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) (fig. 1)[2] are a common feature in Mollisols and Vertisols of northwestern Uruguay, where sugarcane is grown (fig. 2). They reach a height of 60 cm in a year. They are usually broken down with hoes or with mechanical equipment; pesticides are not used. Reduction in cane yields attributable to anthills is not significant but anthills are bothersome during harvesting and subsequent cultivation of ratoon crops. In the course of a recent survey, anthill counts were made on 100 m rows on three sugarcane fields. The results are summarized in the following tabulation:

Field	Anthills/100 m row
1	5.18
2	8.69
3	8.14

Mean number of anthills/100 m row was 7.34. On the basis of 70 rows/ha there would be 514 anthills/ha.

Data on weight of cane on selected individual anthills is summarized as follows:

Anthill	Cane, kg
1	0.88
2	2.18
3	2.43
4	.59
5	2.47
6	1.71
7	2.04
8	1.59
9	1.08

Cane weight/anthill ranged from 0.59 to 2.47 kg with a mean value of 1.66. This cane is not sent to the mill, but cut and discarded after the anthills are destroyed. Otherwise, cutting would slow normal harvesting,

[1] Manuscript submitted to Editorial Board October 19, 1981.

[2] Ants were collected on fields near the mill of the Cooperativa Agropecuaria Ltda. Norte Uruguayo, in the area of Bella Unión. They were identified by D. R. Smith of the Insect Identification and Beneficial Insect Introduction Institute, SEA, AR, USDA, Beltsville, MD 20705.

FIG. 1.—*Camponotus* sp. ant.

FIG. 2.—Camponotus anthills in a sugarcane field.

which is done with machetes. Mean cane losses are 1.66 kg/anthill or 853 kg/ha. On the basis of a total production 45 t/ha, losses attributable to anthills amount to 1.8%.

It has been estimated under local conditions at Bella Unión that one

worker with a hoe can destroy 12 anthills/h, i.e., 43 h/ha. On the basis of wages of $8/h total cost/ha would amount to $344. If anthills are destroyed mechanically with a bar pushed by a tractor, the cost can be reduced to US $5 to $6/ha. These expenses are recurrent since anthills reappear on the same site year after year.

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ERRATUM

The following table substitutes table 2 in page 18 of the January issue (Vol. LXVII, No. 1) of The Journal of Agriculture of the University of Puerto Rico.

TABLE 2.—*Mean yields of the ten best performing cassava cultivars at Corozal, Puerto Rico*

Cultivar	P.R. P.I.[1]	Yield	
		Total yield per ha	Marketable yield per ha
		t	*t*
IAC-12-829	12901	41.98 a[2]	35.71 a
IAC-Mantequeira	12902	39.24 a	34.24 a
Jamaica 18		35.16 ab	28.18 ab
SRT-59B-Sta. Catarina	12903	31.44 ab	26.70 ab
Trinidad 14-56		27.05 b	19.82 b
Ceiba		25.94 b	18.44 b
Llanera		25.20 b	20.01 b
Cubana		24.58 b	18.56 b
Jamaica 4C		16.83 c	12.52 c
Seda		16.44 c	10.24 c

[1] University of Puerto Rico Agricultural Experiment Station, plant introduction number.

[2] Means followed by one or more letters in common do not differ significantly at P = .05, according to Duncan's multiple range test.