

White fly has damaged coconut cultivations – Board

■ Spray mixture of Margosa oil, soap powder recommended to control disease

The Coconut Cultivation Board says that with the dry weather conditions in the country, the damage of the white fly has again been observed.

Currently, a number of selected areas in Puttalam district have been inspected, and several places in Dankotuwa, Nattandiya, Marawila city around Chilaw, Mugunuwatawana, Ariyagama, Battuluoya and Mundalama have been inspected, and accordingly, king coconut and coconut trees have been found in the inspected areas, especially as before. Also, it has been observed that the damage of the white fly continues.

Also, the Coconut Cultivation Board requested the coconut growers to inquire whether there is white fly disease in other parts of the country.

Agriculture and Plantation Industries Minister Mahinda Amaraweera instructed the Coconut Cultivation Board to immediately inform the coconut growers about the situation and take appropriate



measures to control the disease as the effect of the white fly has been reported.

The Coconut Cultivation Board has further discussed the spread of the white fly and the measures that can be taken in this regard together with the District Secretary of Puttalam and the coconut growers.

Accordingly, the Coconut Research Institute has taken necessary measures to spray the mixture of Margosa oil and soap powder recommended for white fly control. According to the Coconut Cultivation Board,

the Margosa oil currently available in the regional offices will be distributed to the growers immediately through the coconut development officers, the damaged areas have been identified and the coconut trees have been sprayed with a mixture of Margosa oil and soap powder.

Also, steps have been taken to inform all regional managers, farm planning officers, extension officers and coconut development officers of the Coconut Cultivation Board about this.

The coconut development

officers should be informed about the presence of white fly damage in the regional office jurisdictions and the areas where the damage is reported should be identified and reported in writing to the Coconut Cultivation National Disaster Management Operation Unit. Notifications have been given to the remaining Margosa oil growers at the regional offices to spray Margosa oil mixtures for the affected areas as per the supervision and technical instructions of the coconut development officers using power liquid sprayers.

Accordingly, 3,300 litres (200 cans) of Margosa oil are required to control the damage of the white fly, so the Coconut Cultivation Board has also taken steps to purchase Margosa oil.

At present, if there are any diseases and pests of coconut cultivation, including the damage of the white fly, in their area, arrangements have been made to inform the Coconut Cultivation National Disaster

Management Operation Unit established at the Coconut Development Training Centre, Lunuwila by phone number 032-3135255. Also, by calling the hotline number 1228 of the Coconut Research Institute

and the phone number 1920 of the Gannoruwa National Agriculture Information Communication Centre, it has been facilitated to get information about the white fly damage.

The Coconut Cultivation

Board also says that the Margosa oil mixture recommended for controlling white fly damage should be prepared using 10 ml of Margosa oil, 5 grams of soap powder, and 1 litre of water.