

***IN VITRO* MASS PRODUCTION OF ENTOMOPATHOGENIC NEMATODES IN DIFFERENT ARTIFICIAL MEDIA**

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Received June 6, 2010 and Accepted October 21, 2010

ABSTRACT: Six artificial media viz., Wout's medium, wheat flour medium, dog biscuit medium, egg yolk medium, nutrient agar medium and agar-agar medium were evaluated *in vitro* for production of three species of entomopathogenic nematodes, *Steinernema masoodi*, *S. seemae* and *S. mushtaqi*. Maximum yield of *S. masoodi*, *S. mushtaqi* and *S. seemae* were observed on egg yolk medium (3.9×10^6 , 4.6×10^6 and 4.9×10^6 IJs/flask, respectively), followed by Wout's medium (2.8×10^6 , 3.2×10^6 and 3.6×10^6 IJs/flask, respectively). All tested species of EPN were unable to multiply on dog biscuit medium, wheat flour medium and nutrient agar. Poor multiplication of *S. masoodi* (0.034×10^6) and *S. seemae* (0.039×10^6) were observed on agar-agar medium. The present study indicated that *in vitro* multiplication behaviour of these EPN species are specific to media for their multiplication. Hence for their mass multiplication and use in IPM programme.

Key Words: Entomopathogenic nematodes, *Steinernema*, mass production, artificial media.