

A new entomopathogenic nematode isolate, *Steinernema kushidai* KKM strain

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ABSTRACT : Indigenous entomopathogenic nematode was isolated from soil sample collected from Agricultural College and Research Institute, Killikulam and it was identified as *S. kushidai* KKM strain based on its morphometric measurements. Soil samples were taken from A, B, C, D and E blocks and from the sites around the perennial crops in orchard and new orchard area of Agricultural College and Research Institute, Killikulam. Entomopathogenic nematode was found to be predominantly distributed in the soil sample, where moisture and shade prevailed always. Soil samples taken around neem trees in 'E' Block near water tank showed the presence of EPN and nematode recovery was nil in all the soil samples collected from other places. The IJs and first generation males were slide mounted and the morphometric values obtained from the observations were analysed with taxonomic keys of different *Steinernematid* species. The isolated native EPN strain in soil sample was identified as *Steinernema kushidai*. KKM strain.

Key Words : Entomopathogenic nematode, *Steinernema kushidai*, KKM strain.