

**STUDIES ON MASS PRODUCTION METHODS
AND STORAGE TEMPERATURE OF *Neoseiulus baraki*,
A PREDATORY MITE OF COCONUT MITE**

A dissertation submitted to the
Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture of
Uva Wellassa University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Bachelor of Science in Palm & Latex Technology and Value Addition

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2014

ABSTRACT

Coconut mite (*Aceria guerreronis* Keifer) was first reported in Mexico in 1965 and is a microscopic, worm like organism which lives under the perienth of the nuts feeding on the cell sap of the merismatic tissues of the immature nuts. They occur in large numbers as colonies thousands of mites. Coconut mite was first reported in Sri Lanka in 1997. Since then it has been a serious threat to the coconut industry. To control the pest attack biological control agent was introduced. *Neoseiulus baraki* Athias-Henriot is the most common predator mite in Sri Lanka. This study was conducted to find the best storage temperature of the sachets method of *N. baraki*. Five treatments (temperatures of 24, 26, 27, 28 and 30⁰C) were used to determine the best storage temperature and among these treatments temperature of 26⁰C gave the highest population density throughout the experiment. Temperature of 30⁰C is not suitable for the storage of the *N. baraki*. After 9 days, population density was drastically decreased at this temperature. Mass production method of *N. baraki* was done with two sizes (small and medium) plastic boxes. Medium size box is gave the highest population density of the *N. baraki*.

Key words : *Aceria guerreronis* Keifer, *Neoseiulus baraki* Athias-Henriot, mass production method, storage temperature