



## Bioefficacy of Newer Molecules Insecticides against Tea Mosquito Bug, *Helopeltis theivora* Waterhouse under Laboratory Condition

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### Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

### Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/IJPSS/2022/v34i230838

### Open Peer Review History:

This journal follows the Advanced Open Peer Review policy. Identity of the Reviewers, Editor(s) and additional Reviewers, peer review comments, different versions of the manuscript, comments of the editors, etc are available here: <https://www.sdiarticle5.com/review-history/83335>

Original Research Article

Received 07 November 2021

Accepted 09 February 2022

Published 10 February 2022

## ABSTRACT

**Aims:** Bio-efficacy of newer insecticides against the Tea mosquito bug (TMB) in Tea.

**Study Design:** CRD

**Place and Duration of Study:** R&D center, Parry Agro Industries Limited, Murugali Tea Estate, Valparai, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu between September 2019 and September 2021.

**Methodology:** Field populations of *H. theivora* were collected and Bouquet bioassay method was used to assess the efficacy. Eleven insecticides with three replications (15 shoots/ replication) and Completely Randomized Design (CRD) was followed. The treatments includes *viz.*, T1- Chlorantraniliprole 18.5 SC @ 0.3ml/lit., T2- Spirotetramate +Imidacoprid 11.01 SC @ 2ml/litre., T3 - Thiacloprid 21.7 SC @ 1ml/lit., T4 - Thiamethoxam 25 WG @ 0.5gm/lit., T5- Spinosad 45 SC @ 0.5ml/lit., T6- Dinotefuran 20 SG @ 0.5g/lit., T7- Emamectin benzoate 5 SG @ 0.5g/lit., T8- Buprofezin 25 SC @ 3ml/lit., T9- Sulfaxaflor 21.8 SC @ 1.8ml/lit., T10- Tolfenpyrad 15% EC @

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2ml/lit., and T11- Control (Water). The shoots were sprayed with hand atomizer and observations on the % adult mortality and Feeding puncture/ shoots were recorded at 24, 48 and 72 hours after treatment (HAT). Moribund insects were consider as dead and taken for the count and data were analyzed statistically.

**Results:** Among all the treatments tested, tolfenpyrad 15% EC after 72 HAT treated tea shoots having less no of feeding punctures (85.33 Nos) and maximum 100 percent adult mortality followed by dinotefuran 20 SG (100.00%), sulfaxaflor 21.8 SC (93.33%), emamectin benzoate 5 SG (90.00%), thiacloprid 21.7 SC (88.33%), spirotetramate + imidacoprid 11.01 SC (81.67%), buprofezin 25 SC (75.00%), thiamethoxam 25 WG (71.67%), chlorantraniliprole 18.5 SC(68.33%), spinosad 45 SC (61.67 %). The feeding punctures were maximum in untreated control (167.22 Nos).

**Conclusion:** The present study revealed the application of Tolfenpyrad 15% EC @ 2ml/lit. is the optimum dose for the effective control of *Helopeltis theivora* under laboratory conditions.

**Keywords:** Bio-efficacy; insecticides; tea; tea mosquito bug; sucking pests and Hemiptera.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tea, *Camellia sinensis* (L.) O Kuntze is one of India's most important economic crops and is mainly grown for its leaf. Tea, the most popular non-alcoholic beverage consumed worldwide, is produced by processing the young leaves of the tea plant. Tea belongs to the family Theaceae, originated from the high regions of South and northwest India. The tea plant is predominantly grown in Asia, followed by Africa and to a minimal extent in Europe, South America, Australia, and New Zealand. India ranks second in production and area as compared to china. However, Asia-Pacific dominates the global market and accounts for 40% of the total demand in the tea market [1,2]. In 2021 tea production was 1.28 billion kg in India, and Tea production in West Bengal was approximately 25 million kilograms in March 2021, the highest of any other region in the country [3,4].

Several species viz., Tea mosquito bug, red, pink, and purple mites, thrips, termites, red slug caterpillar, looper, caterpillar, green leafhopper, Aphid, and Shot hole borer to attack tea plants [5]. Tea mosquito bug, *Helopeltis theivora* Waterhouse (Hemiptera: Miridae) is considered one of the most notorious pests is causing considerable economic loss up to 25% to 50% [6-8]. Out of a total 4.36 lakh hectares in India, 3.49 lakh hectares (80%) of tea plantations suffer from *Helopeltis theivora* [9]. During the last few decades, TMB, *Helopeltis* sp. Waterhouse, (Hemiptera: Miridae) has become a serious pest and cause severe threats to most tea growing areas in India. During a severe infestation, tea leaves curl up, become badly deformed, remain small, gradually these shoots dry up, and sometimes crop loss is near total [10]. This insect

was considered the most severe pests in Kerala, Vandiperiyar, Peermadu, Mundagayam (Idukki Dist) and entered some regions of Anamalais. It mainly attacks young tea leaves, which are essential for tea manufacturing. Adults and nymphs suck the sap from buds, young leaves and petioles, and tender tea shoots. Among them, the tea mosquito bug, *Helopeltis theivora* Waterhouse is an important one causing considerable economic loss [11].

The distribution and abundance of problems significantly arthropods are greatly influenced by weather, altitude, crop variety, harvesting, pruning, manuring, regulation of shade, use of pesticides. In beginning several different insecticide used to control TMB, but in present, only the safer insecticides having low MRL values such as thiamethoxam, thiacloprid deltamethrin, profenofos, bifenthrin and quinalphos were used for the management of insect pests in tea. The insecticides lamdacyhalothrin, Profenofos and fenpropathrin have ovicidal action against the eggs of TMB [12]. Large-scale and sometimes indiscriminate pesticides have upset the natural ecosystem by enhancing secondary pest outbreaks and often created pesticide residue problems in made teas. It has become a significant concern to the tea industry in recent years. The importing countries impose stringent restrictions for the acceptability of the made tea due to pesticide residues. An essential problem in controlling *H. theivora* is its capability to develop resistance quickly to frequently used insecticides. Keeping in view of all above statements, the present study was designed the newer molecules were tested against the tea mosquito bug the break the resistance chain.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

### 2.1 Mass Culturing of Tea Mosquito bug (*H. theivora*)

Field populations of *H. theivora* were collected from Parry Agro Industries Limited, Murugali Tea Estate in Valparai area, (10°19'36.88" N 76°57'4.18" E) District of Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. The collected insect was kept as a mother culture and cultured in separate cages (47.5 x 47.5 x 47.5 cm) on young tea foliage (variety – UPASAI - 9) shoots were directly collected from estate nursery and maintained in a BOD at 27 ± 2°C, 80 % RH and a photoperiod of 16 h light: 8 h dark. These insects were taken for conducting bioassay studies under laboratory conditions.

### 2.2 Bioassay

Two to five days old adult male and female *H. theivora* was collected from laboratory at Parry Agro Industries Limited, Murugali Tea Estate in Valparai, (10°19'36.88" N 76°57'4.18" E) District of Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu. These insects were taken for conducting bioassay studies under laboratory conditions. Eleven treatments with three replication (15 shoots/ replication) in Completely Randomized Design (CRD). The treatments viz., T1- Chlorantraniliprole 18.5 SC @ 0.3ml/l, T2- Spirotetramate +Imidacoprid 11.01 SC @ 2ml/l, T3 - Thiacloprid 21.7 SC @ 1ml/l, T4 - Thiamethoxam 25 WG @ 0.5gm/l, T5- Spinosad 45 SC @ 0.5ml/l, T6- Dinotefuran 20 SG @ 0.5g/l, T7- Emamectin benzoate 5 SG @ 0.5g/l, T8- Buprofezin 25 SC @ 3ml/l, T9- Sulfaxaflor 21.8 SC @ 1.8ml/l, T10- Tolfenpyrad 15 EC @ 2ml/l, and T11- Control (Water). Before the bioassay, the tea mosquito bugs adults was released in an empty cage for 30 minutes as starvation. Field recommended dosage of insecticides was diluted in water. Toxicity assays were conducted using the standard 'Bouquet method' recommended by the Insecticide Resistance Action Committee (IRAC). Healthy shoots (three leaves and a bud) of UPASI - 9 clones were collected from an experimental plot, washed thoroughly with distilled water and air-dried. Fifteen tea shoots for each treatment were sprayed with each chosen insecticide separately at the respective dilutions using a hand sprayer (27.3 x 5.5 x 3.5 cm). Then they were kept in a glass tube (8.2 x 13.2 cm) containing water and wrapped with cotton. The sprayed tea shoots were kept under ceiling fans for 15 min to evaporate the emulsion. The glass tubes containing tea shoots were placed in a glass

cage (20 x 15 cm). The tubes were kept at 27 ± 2°C in culture room. Thirty adults of *H. theivora* were released separately into each cage containing tea shoots. Observations on the % adult mortality and Feeding puncture/ shoots were recorded as 24, 48 and 72 hours after treatment (HAT). Test TBM adults were collected from laboratory for LC<sub>50</sub> bioassay. Collected adults were exposed to different dosage of Tolfenpyrad 15 EC and Dinotefuran 20 SG for 24h. Absorbed mortality was substituted in SPSS software based on Finney probit analysis method [13] to find out the LC<sub>50</sub> values of the selected insecticides. Moribund insects were considered dead and taken for the count, and collected data were analyzed using statistical software OPSTAT. The mortality data were converted to corrected per cent mortality using Abbott's formula [14].

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bioefficacy of newer insecticide molecules against Tea Mosquito Bug revealed that among all the treatments, Tolfenpyrad 15% EC treated tea shoots at 72 HAT had 100 percent adult mortality followed by Dinotefuran 20% SG (100.00%), Sulfaxaflor 21.8 SC (93.33%), Emamectin benzoate 5% SG (90.00%), Thiacloprid 21.7% SC (88.33%), Spirotetramate +Imidacoprid 11.01 SC% (81.67%), Buprofezin 25% SC (75.00%), Thiamethoxam 25% WG (71.67%), Chlorantraniliprole 18.55 SC (68.33%), Spinosad 45% SC (61.67 %) and Water (Nil), respectively (Table 1). Bioefficacy of newer insecticide molecules against Tea Mosquito Bug revealed that among all the treatments, Tolfenpyrad 15% EC treated tea shoots having less no of feeding punctures (85.33 Nos) followed by Dinotefuran 20% SG (89.11), Sulfaxaflor 21.8% SC (91.11), Thiacloprid 21.7 % SC (102.78), Emamectin benzoate 5% SG (103.89), Spirotetramate +Imidacoprid 11.01 SC% (103.89), Thiamethoxam 25% WG (111.44), Buprofezin 25% SC (111.56), Chlorantraniliprole 18.5 SC% (11.56), Spinosad 45% SC (116.67) and the feeding punctures was maximum in control (167.22 Nos) (Table 2). In LC<sub>50</sub> bioassay, Dinotefuran 20 SG showed the lowest LC<sub>50</sub> value (90.75 ppm) followed by Tolfenpyrad 15% EC (305.80 ppm) (Table 3, Figs. 1 & 2).

The present results are in agreement with Qu et al. [15], who reported that dinotefuran was the most toxic among six tested insecticides against two invasive whiteflies *Bemisia tabaci*

**Table 1. Mortality percentage of *H. theivora* adults exposed to tea shoots treated with different insecticides under laboratory conditions**

S.No.	Treatment details	Dose (ml or g/l)	Adult mortality %			Mean % Mortality	% reduction over control
			24 HAT	48 HAT	72 HAT		
1.	Chlorantraniliprole 18.5 SC	0.3	21.67 <sup>b</sup> ±0.10	38.33 <sup>cd</sup> ±0.16	68.33 <sup>de</sup> ±0.06	42.78	88.31
2.	Spirotetramat 11.01 +Imidacloprid 11.01 SC	2.0	28.33 <sup>b</sup> ±0.22	51.67 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.07	81.67 <sup>bcd</sup> ±0.11	53.89	90.72
3.	Thiacloprid 21.7 SC	1.0	28.33 <sup>b</sup> ±0.08	55.00 <sup>b</sup> ±0.11	88.33 <sup>abc</sup> ±0.14	57.22	91.26
4.	Thiamethoxam 25 WG	0.5	21.67 <sup>b</sup> ±0.18	38.33 <sup>cd</sup> ±0.16	71.67 <sup>cde</sup> ±0.16	43.89	88.61
5.	Spinosad 45 SC	0.5	18.33 <sup>b</sup> ±0.10	28.33 <sup>d</sup> ±0.08	61.67 <sup>c</sup> ±0.06	36.11	86.15
6.	Dinotefuran 20 SG	0.5	48.33 <sup>a</sup> ±0.07	75.00 <sup>ab</sup> ±0.10	100.00 <sup>a</sup> ±0.00	74.44	93.28
7.	Emamectin benzoate 5 SG	0.5	25.00 <sup>b</sup> ±0.16	51.67 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.07	90.00 <sup>ab</sup> ±0.10	55.56	91.00
8.	Buprofezin 25 SC	3.0	21.67 <sup>b</sup> ±0.10	48.33 <sup>b</sup> ±0.07	75.00 <sup>bcd</sup> ±0.10	48.33	89.66
9.	Sulfaxaflor 21.8 SC	1.8	45.00 <sup>ab</sup> ±0.00	71.67 <sup>ab</sup> ±0.06	93.33 <sup>ab</sup> ±0.09	70.00	92.86
10.	Tolfenpyrad 15 EC	2	51.67 <sup>a</sup> ±0.07	81.67 <sup>a</sup> ±0.06	100.00 <sup>a</sup> ±0.00	77.78	93.57
11.	Control (Water)	-	5.00 <sup>c</sup> ±0.00	5.00 <sup>e</sup> ±0.00	5.00 <sup>f</sup> ±0.00	5.00	-
	CD (P=0.05)	-	0.35	0.28	0.27	-	-
	SE(d)	-	0.18	0.14	0.13	-	-

Means ± SE within a column followed by the same letter are not significantly different from each other at 5% level of significance (LSD test)  
HAT- Hours After Treatment

**Table 2. Feeding damage of *H. theivora* adults exposed to tea shoots treated with different insecticides under laboratory conditions**

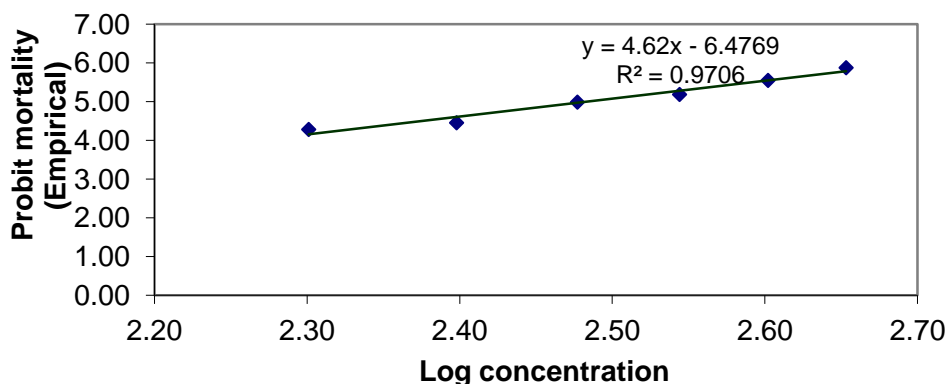
S. No.	Treatment details	Dose (ml or g/l)	Feeding punctures			Cumulative Feeding puncture	% reduction over control
			24 HAT	48 HAT	72 HAT		
1.	Chlorantraniliprole 18.5 SC	0.3	76.33 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.38	109.67 <sup>b</sup> ±0.13	131.00 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.12	112.56	32.69
2.	Spirotetramat 11.01 +Imidacloprid 11.01 SC	2.0	65.67 <sup>c</sup> ±0.34	102.00 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.25	120.33 <sup>c</sup> ±0.13	103.89	37.87
3.	Thiacloprid 21.7 SC	1.0	64.00 <sup>cd</sup> ±0.33	99.67 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.41	121.33 <sup>c</sup> ±0.09	102.78	38.54
4.	Thiamethoxam 25 WG	0.5	73.67 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.15	110.33 <sup>b</sup> ±0.39	131.67 <sup>b</sup> ±0.21	111.44	33.36
5.	Spinosad 45 SC	0.5	81.00 <sup>ab</sup> ±0.23	115.33 <sup>b</sup> ±0.24	135.00 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.22	116.67	30.23
6.	Dinotefuran 20 SG	0.5	52.33 <sup>d</sup> ±0.20	88.33 <sup>c</sup> ±0.10	101.00 <sup>d</sup> ±0.09	89.11	46.71
7.	Emamectin benzoate 5 SG	0.5	67.67 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.25	102.67 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.23	122.00 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.21	103.89	37.87
8.	Buprofezin 25 SC	3.0	69.67 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.28	111.00 <sup>b</sup> ±0.32	129.33 <sup>bc</sup> ±0.20	111.56	33.29
9.	Sulfaxaflor 21.8 SC	1.8	54.67 <sup>d</sup> ±0.16	91.33 <sup>c</sup> ±0.20	104.00 <sup>c</sup> ±0.15	91.11	45.51
10.	Tolfenpyrad 15% EC	2	53.00 <sup>d</sup> ±0.17	86.33 <sup>c</sup> ±0.13	98.33 <sup>c</sup> ±0.06	85.33	48.97
11.	Control (Water)	-	96.00 <sup>a</sup> ±0.21	154.00 <sup>a</sup> ±0.13	233.33 <sup>a</sup> ±0.34	167.22	-
	CD (P=0.05)	-	0.76	0.74	0.54	-	-
	SE(d)	-	0.36	0.35	0.26	-	-

Means ± SE within a column followed by the same letter are not significantly different from each other at 5% level of significance (LSD test)

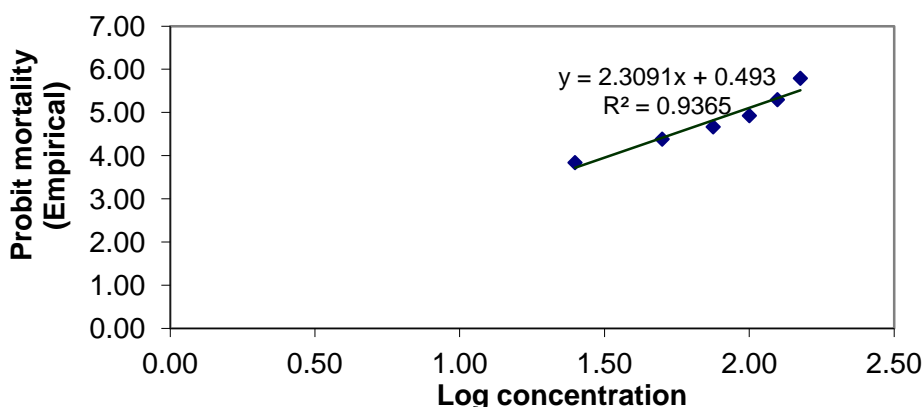
HAT- Hours After Treatment

**Table 3. The LC<sub>50</sub> values of Tolfenpyrad and Dinotefuran on *H. theivora* adults after 24 h of exposure**

Insecticide	Regression equation	LC <sub>50</sub> (ppm)	Fiducial limit	Table χ <sup>2</sup>	Calculated χ <sup>2</sup>
Tolfenpyrad 15% EC	y = 4.62x - 6.48	305.80	289.14 - 323.43	9.49	2.79
Dinotefuran 20% SG	y = 2.31x + 0.49	90.76	81.11 - 101.56	9.49	7.25



**Fig. 1. The LC<sub>50</sub> value of Tolfenpyrad on *Helopeltis theivora* adults after 24h of exposure**



**Fig. 2. The LC<sub>50</sub> value of Dinotefuran on *Helopeltis theivora* adults after 24h of exposure**

(Gennadius), Middle East-Asia Minor1 (MEAM1 or biotype B), and Mediterranean (MED or biotype Q). The spray application of imidacloprid, thiamethoxam, and diafenthiuron effectively reduced the sucking pests population on chilli, brinjal and arecanut were reported by [1,16,17] and [18]. According to Venkateshalu and Mahesh [19], dinotefuran 20 % SG @ 30 g a.i./ha was found highly effective against sucking pests of Okra. Similarly, the dinotefuran 20 % SG @ 30 g a.i./ha was found superior against leafhoppers, aphids, thrips, and whiteflies in the cotton ecosystem were reported by [8,20] and [21]. [22] was reported that thiamethoxam reduced 85.90% of the TMB population in the Bi-

lashcherra Experimental Farm of Bangladesh Tea Research Institute (BTRI). The present finding was also strengthened by the previous results by [23,22] and [24]. A comparison of the expected effective dose of thirteen insecticides against tea mosquito bug based on their LC<sub>50</sub> values with recommended dose revealed a pronounced shift in the level of susceptibility of *H. theivora* to all the chosen insecticides except acephate was reported by [25]. The LC<sub>95</sub> values suggest medium to high resistance for endosulfan and low to medium resistance for cypermethrin, lambda-cyhalothrin, imidacloprid, and quinalphos. However, there was not much chance for the other registered insecticides, and

they were found to be still effective at their recommended doses was reported by [26].

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The present investigation revealed the application of Tolfenpyrad 15% EC @ 2ml/lit. is the optimum dose for the effective control of *Helopeltis theivora* under laboratory conditions. Thus, Tolfenpyrad 15% EC @ 2ml/lit. it can be recommended for widespread application to manage *Helopeltis theivora* successfully. However, field trials in the future must be carried out before recommendations.

#### DISCLAIMER

The products used for this research are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and producers of the products because we do not intend to use these products as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by the producing company rather it was funded by personal efforts of the authors.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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