



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**EFFECTS OF TAPPING AND STIMULATION FREQUENCY
ON PERFORMANCE OF YIELD AND SELECTED LATEX
PHYSIOLOGICAL PARAMETERS OF RUBBER
(HEVEA BRASILIENSIS MUELL.ARG.)
CLONES RRIM 600 AND GT 1**

DO KIM THANH

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(*HEVEA BRASILIENSIS* MUELL. ARG.)
CLONES RRIM 600 AND GT 1**

by
DO KIM THANH

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Agricultural Science
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiii
ABSTRACT	xiv
ABSTRAK	xviii
 CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION	1
II REVIEW OF LITERATURE	4
The rubber tree	4
Biological characteristics.	4
Bark anatomy.	5
The function of latex	9
The constituents of latex	10
Rubber biosynthesis	12
Latex exploitation of <i>Hevea brasiliensis</i>	16
Tapping...	16
Evolution of tapping	17
Stimulation.	18
Tapping and stimulation notation.	19
History of latex stimulation	22
Factors influencing the response to stimulation	26
Effect of planting materials.	26
Effect of the age of the tree	27
Effect of environment	28



Effect of nutrient status	28
Effect of intensity of tapping	30
Effect of stimulation practices	32
Effect of latex physiological parameters.	33
Mechanism of action of yield stimulation . . .	34
III MATERIALS AND METHODS	37
Experimental details	37
Experiment 1: Effects of stimulation frequency on yield performance of clone RRIM 600	37
Experiment 2: Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on yield performance of clone GT 1	38
Experiment 3: Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on performance of yield and selected latex physiological parameters of clone RRIM 600	40
Selection of experimental trees	41
Tapping systems	42
Stimulation practice	42
Recording of yield	43
Dryness incidence	44
Methodology on measuring of latex physiological parameters	45
Plugging index and initial flow rate	45
Determination of bottom fraction	45
pH measurement	46
Other parameters	46
Light microscopy of bark anatomy	47
Bark sampling	47
Number of latex vessel	47



	Measurement of bark thickness	48
	Measurement of bark consumption	48
	Statistical analysis	48
IV	RESULTS	49
	Experiment 1	49
	Effects of stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t)	49
	Effects of stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per hectare per annum (kg/ha/year)	52
	Effects of stimulation frequency on cumulative dry rubber yield per hectare (kg/ha) for 14 years of tapping	53
	Effects of stimulation frequency on dryness incidence	54
	Experiment 2	55
	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t)	55
	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per hectare per annum (kg/ha/year)	61
	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on cumulative dry rubber yield per hectare	63
	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on dryness incidence	64
	Experiment 3	65
	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t)	65
	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per hectare per year (kg/ha/year)	67
	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on cumulative dry rubber yield per hectare	68



Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on dryness incidence	69
Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on latex physiological parameters of RRIM 600	70
Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on bark structure of RRIM 600	76
Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on rate of bark consumption of RRIM 600	77
V DISCUSSIONS	79
Yield response to tapping and stimulation frequency	79
Effect of tapping frequency on long-term yield performance of clone GT1	76
Effects of stimulation frequency on yield performance of clones GT 1 and RRIM 600 tapped on d/3 frequency	82
Interaction between tapping and stimulation frequency	83
Intensive stimulation in relation to tapping frequency over 4 years	85
Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency in relation to position of tapping cut	87
Incidence of tree dryness in response to tapping and stimulation frequency	88
Latex physiological parameters related to the effect of tapping and stimulation frequency	89
Bark structure in relation to tapping and stimulation	96
VI SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	98
BIBLIOGRAPHY	103
APPENDIX (additional tables)	116
VITA	130



LIST OF TABLES

Table		page
1	Organic non-rubber constituents of latex	13
2	Experimental details	37
3	Effects of stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t) of RRIM 600 over 14 years of tapping	49
4	Effects of stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t) of RRIM 600 under different tapping panels	50
5	Effects of stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per hectare per annum (kg/ha/year) of RRIM 600 over 14 years of tapping	53
6	Effects of stimulation frequency on cumulative dry rubber yield (kg/ha) of RRIM 600 for 14 years of tapping	53
7	Effects of stimulation frequency on dryness incidence (%) of RRIM 600	54
8	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t) of GT 1 over 14 years of tapping	55
9	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t) of GT 1 at tapping panel B0-1	56
10	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t) of GT 1 at tapping panel B0-2	57
11	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t) of GT 1 at tapping panel BI-1	58
12	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per hectare per annum (kg/ha/year) of GT 1 over 14 years of tapping	61
13	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on cumulative dry rubber yield per hectare (kg/ha) of GT 1 for 14 years of tapping	64



14	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on dryness incidence of GT 1	64
15	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t) of RRIM 600 over 4 years of tapping	65
16	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield per hectare per year (kg/ha/year) of RRIM 600 over 4 years of tapping	68
17	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on cumulative dry rubber yield per hectare (kg/ha) of RRIM 600 over 4 years of tapping	68
18	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on dryness incidence of RRIM 600	69
19	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on plugging index of RRIM 600	70
20	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on initial flow rate (ml/minute) of RRIM 600	71
21	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on dry rubber content (%) of RRIM 600	72
22	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on bottom fraction (%) of RRIM 600	72
23	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on thiols content (mM) of RRIM 600	73
24	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on total solid content (%)	74
25	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on inorganic phosphorus (mM) of RRIM 600	74
26	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on sucrose content (mM) of RRIM 600	75
27	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on latex pH of RRIM 600	75
28	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on the thickness of virgin bark (mm) of RRIM 600	76
29	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on the number of latex vessels in virgin bark of RRIM 600	77



30	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on rate of bark consumption of RRIM 600	78
31	International tapping and stimulation notation	115
32	Cumulative applied stimulant (mg a.i.) with different stimulation frequencies	116
33	The summary of ANOVA tables on mean dry rubber yield of RRIM 600 over 14 years of tapping	117
34	The summary of ANOVA tables on mean dry rubber yield (g/t/t) of RRIM 600 at each tapping panel	117
35	The summary of ANOVA tables on mean dry rubber yield (g/t/t) of RRIM 600 at each tapping year	118
36	Analysis of variance of treatment effect on dryness incidence (%)	119
37	The summary of ANOVA tables on mean dry rubber yield of GT 1 over 14 years of tapping	120
38	Analysis of variance of tapping and stimulation effect on mean dry rubber yield (g/t/t) of GT 1 over tapping panels	120
39	The summary of ANOVA tables on mean dry rubber yield of GT 1 at each tapping year	121
40	Analysis of variance of tapping and stimulation effect on dryness incidence (%)	123
41	The summary of ANOVA tables on mean dry rubber yield of RRIM 600 over 4 years of tapping	124
42	Analysis of variance of tapping and stimulation effect on mean dry rubber yield (g/t/t) of RRIM 600 at each year of tapping	124
43	Analysis of variance of tapping and stimulation effect on dryness incidence (%) of RRIM 600	125
44	The summary of ANOVA tables of latex physiological parameters	126
45	Analysis of variance of tapping and stimulation effect on bark anatomy and bark consumption	127



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	Three dimensional diagram of <i>Hevea</i> bark	6
2	Scheme of rubber biosynthesis in <i>Hevea brasiliensis</i> latex	15
3	Yield performance of RRIM 600 tapped 1/2S d/3 system in response to different stimulation frequencies over 14 years of tapping	52
4	Yield performance (g/t/t) of GT 1 tapped half spiral cut with different tapping and stimulation frequencies over 14 years of tapping	60
5	Yield performance (kg/ha) of GT 1 tapped half spiral cut with different tapping and stimulation frequencies over 14 years of tapping	62
6	Effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on mean dry rubber yield (g/t/t) of RRIM 600 over four years of tapping	66



LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

a.i.	Active ingredient
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
BF	Bottom fraction
DRC	Dry rubber content
ET	Ethephon
Ga	Groove application
GT	Gondang Tapeng
g/t/t	Grams of dry rubber yield per tree per tapping
IFR	Initial flow rate
IRCA	Institut des Recherches sur le Caoutchouc
Kg/ha	Kilograms of dry rubber per hectare
mM	Milimoles per litre
MW	Molecular weight
Pi	Inorganic phosphorus
PI	Plugging index
RCBD	Randomized Complete Block Design
RRIES	Rubber Research Institute Experiment Station
RRIM	Rubber Research Institute of Malaysia
R-SH	Thiol group
TSC	Total solid content



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Three experiments were conducted on two rubber clones to study the effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on performance of yield and some selected latex physiological parameters. The first experiment studied the long-term effects of various frequencies of 2.5% ethephon stimulation on yield performance of RRIM 600 over 14 years duration. The second experiment investigated the various combinations of tapping and stimulation frequency on the yield performance of GT 1



over 14 years duration. A short-term experiment of four years constituted the third experiment which studied the effects of tapping and stimulation frequency on performance of yield, some selected latex physiological parameters and bark characteristics of RRIM 600.

Low tapping frequencies of third-daily (d/3) and fourth daily (d/4) generally produced higher mean dry rubber yield per tree per tapping (g/t/t) than the conventional tapping frequency of alternate daily (d/2). This was true for both clones RRIM 600 and GT 1 irrespective of duration of yield recording and frequency of stimulation application. However, variable results were obtained with regard to mean dry rubber yield per hectare per year (kg/ha/year). With clone GT 1 under no stimulation or when stimulated at low frequency of two rounds per year (2/y), low tapping frequencies (d/3 and d/4) resulted in lower mean yield (kg/ha/year) than the d/2 tapping frequency. However, with increased stimulation frequency of 4 - 6 rounds per year, mean yield (kg/ha/year) were comparable among the three tapping frequencies. With clone RRIM 600, low tapping frequency (d/4) always resulted in lower mean yield (kg/ha/year) than d/2 tapping frequency irrespective of stimulation.

Long-term responses to stimulation were governed by clonal differences as well as frequency of tapping and



stimulation application. With RRIM 600 tapped on low frequency of d/3, stimulation at eight rounds per year resulted in higher mean yields (g/t/t and kg/ha/year) than the unstimulated control. With GT 1, stimulation at four rounds per year was sufficient to give significant response when tapped at low tapping frequencies of d/3 and d/4. However, when tapped at high frequency of d/2, no positive response to stimulation was obtained. Low frequency of stimulation application was necessary for sustained and positive response. When very high stimulation frequency of 30 rounds (30/y) or 60 rounds (60/y) per year were applied, the bulk of the increase in response was only recorded in the first year of tapping, with increase thereafter being marginal when compared to the control. No significant differences were obtained between stimulation frequencies of 30/y and 60/y. Frequency of stimulation up to as high as 30 rounds per year did not result in significant incidence of dryness.

Trees tapped on d/4 frequency in contrast to d/2 recorded consistently higher readings of latex physiological parameters such as plugging index (PI), initial flow rate (IFR), total solid content (TSC) and dry rubber content (DRC). However, d/4 tapping frequency resulted in lower bottom fraction (BF), thiol content (R-SH) and inorganic phosphorus content (Pi) than d/2 tapping frequency. Intensive stimulation (30/y and 60/y)



produced lower values of PI, IFR, TSC and DRC but higher values of BF and Pi when compared to unstimulated control or low stimulation frequency of four rounds per year.

Bark thickness and number of latex vessels were not affected by tapping and stimulation treatments.



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**KESAN PENOREHAN DAN FREKUENSI PERANGSANGAN
KE ATAS PRESTASI HASIL DAN PARAMETER
FISIOLOGI LATEKS TERPILIH GETAH
(*HEVEA BRASILIENSIS* MUELL. ARG.)
KLON RRIM 600 DAN GT 1**

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Tiga percubaan telah dilaksanakan ke atas dua klon, untuk mengkaji kesan-kesan penorehan dan frekuensi perangsangan ke atas prestasi hasil dan beberapa parameter fisiologi lateks terpilih. Percubaan pertama mengkaji kesan jangkamasa panjang beberapa frekuensi perangsangan etefon 2.5% ke atas prestasi hasil RRIM 600



untuk tempoh 14 tahun. Percubaan ke dua mengkaji beberapa kombinasi frekuensi torehan dan perangsangan ke atas prestasi hasil GT 1 untuk tempoh 14 tahun. Percubaan jangka masa pendek selama empat tahun merupakan percubaan ke tiga yang mengkaji kesan frekuensi penorehan dan perangsangan ke atas prestasi hasil, beberapa parameter fisiologi lateks terbilah dan sifat kulit klon RRIM 600.

Torehan berfrekuensi rendah tiga hari sekali ($d/3$) dan empat hari sekali ($d/4$) secara amnya menghasilkan purata hasil kering yang tinggi per pokok per torehan ($g/t/t$) berbanding dengan frekuensi torehan konvensional selang sehari ($d/2$). Ini adalah nyata pada kedua-dua klon RRIM 600 dan GT 1 tanpa mengira tempoh hasil direkodkan dan frekuensi amalan perangsangan. Sungguhpun demikian, hasil yang berbeza diperolehi apabila mengambil kira purata hasil kering se hektar setahun ($kg/ha/tahun$). Bagi klon GT 1, samada tanpa perangsangan atau apabila dirangsangkan dengan frekuensi rendah dua pusingan setahun ($2/y$), serta ditoreh dengan torehan berfrekuensi rendah ($d/3$ dan $d/4$), akan memberikan purata hasil ($kg/ha/tahun$) yang kurang menggalakkan berbanding dengan frekuensi torehan $d/2$. Walau bagaimanapun, dengan peningkatan frekuensi perangsangan ke 4-6 pusingan setahun, purata hasil ($kg/ha/tahun$) adalah setanding di antara tiga frekuensi torehan. Bagi



klon RRIM 600, torehan berfrekuensi rendah (d/4) selalunya memberikan purata hasil yang rendah (kg/ha/tahun) berbanding dengan torehan berfrekuensi d/2 tanpa mengira perangsangan.

Respon perangsangan jangka masa panjang dipengaruhi oleh perbezaan sifat klon dan juga frekuensi torehan dan amalan perangsangan. Klon RRIM 600 apabila ditoreh dengan frekuensi rendah d/3 dengan perangsangan lapan pusingan setahun, memberikan purata hasil yang tinggi (g/t/t dan kg/ha/tahun) berbanding dengan kawalan tanpa perangsangan. Bagi klon GT 1, perangsangan empat kali setahun adalah memadai untuk memberikan respon yang signifikan apabila ditoreh dengan torehan berfrekuensi d/3 dan d/4. Sungguhpun demikian, apabila ditoreh dengan kekerapan yang lebih tinggi d/2, tiada respon positif yang dihasilkan. Amalan perangsangan berfrekuensi rendah adalah perlu untuk respon yang positif dan berpanjangan. Apabila frekuensi perangsangan yang terlalu tinggi, 30 pusingan (30/y) atau 60 pusingan (60/y) di amalkan, sebahagian besar peningkatan respon hanya direkodkan pada tahun pertama penorehan, dengan peningkatan seterusnya adalah setara apabila dibandingkan dengan kawalan. Tiada pebezaan yang signifikan dihasilkan di antara frekuensi perangsangan 30/y dan 60/y. Frekuensi perangsangan sehingga 30 pusingan setahun tidak mengakibatkan kejadian kekeringan yang ketara.

Pokok-pokok yang ditoreh dengan torehan berfrekuensi d/4 setiasa menunjukkan bacaan parameter fisiologi lateks yang tinggi berbanding dengan d/2, seperti indeks palam (PI), kadar pengaliran awal (IFR), kandungan jumlah pejal (TSC) dan kandungan getah kering (DRC). Walau bagaimanapun, frekuensi torehan d/4 mengasihkan bacaan yang rendah ke atas bahagian bawah getah (BF), kandungan thiol (R-SH) dan kandungan posforan bukan organan (Pi) berbanding dengan frekuensi torehan d/2. Perangsangan yang intensif (30/y dan 60/y) memberikan nilai PI, IFR, TSC dan DRC yang rendah tetapi menunjukkan nilai BF dan Pi yang tinggi apabila dibandingkan dengan kawalan tanpa perangsangan atau frekuensi perangsangan yang rendah empat pusingan setahun.

Ketebalan kulit dan bilangan saluran lateks tidak dipengaruhi oleh rawatan penorehan dan perangsangan.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The planting of rubber trees as a plantation crop in the early part of the century provided the impetus for extensive studies on development of exploitation systems for latex production. The exploitations used today besides various tapping systems include several stimulation practices. The half spiral alternate daily tapping system has been a widely used and popular system over the years (RRIM, 1957; Edgar, 1958; Ng et al., 1969; Lukman, 1992). The use of this system which results in high yields per hectare, generally gives lower yields per tree per tapping when compared to less frequent tapping systems, viz. half-spiral third daily tapping system (de Jonge, 1961; Paardekooper et al., 1976; Gan et al., 1986). It is assumed that the higher yield per tapping with less frequent tapping is due to the longer duration between tappings available for regeneration in the latex vessels (Gener and du Plessix, 1976; Jacob et al., 1989).



Although extensive research had been carried out on stimulation nevertheless Abraham et al. (1968a) was the first to report the use of a very potent stimulant, namely 2-chloroethyl phosphonic acid (ethephon) on rubber trees. It was reported that with this stimulant yield can be increased two to three folds compared to unstimulated trees. Since then, extensive research has been carried out on the effective use of ethephon to improve the productivity of *Hevea* trees (Abraham et al., 1971a; 1971b; 1972). Ethephon has consequently become a very wide and extensively used stimulant in most of the rubber growing countries of the world (d'Auzac, 1989).

In the early stages of ethephon use, the primary objective was to enhance the yield production on existing moderate to intensive tapping systems with high concentrations of ethephon. However, it was established that there was yield depression after two to three years of continuous stimulation. In the face of these developments, ethephon stimulation was re-examined and emphasis placed on the application of lower concentrations at less frequent intervals for moderate to intensive tapping systems (Abraham and Ismail, 1983). It was apparent that the interactions between tapping and stimulation frequency would be of critical importance in terms of the long term productivity of *Hevea* trees (Eschbach and Lacrotte, 1989; Paardekooper, 1989).



In the light of this scenario, studies were also carried out simultaneously to establish the effects of stimulation on latex physiological parameters. These studies have provided a better understanding of the physiological condition of the laticiferous system in relation to tapping and stimulation (Jacob et al., 1986).

Studies were consequently concentrated to develop appropriate judicious methods of stimulation, that would allow for the uniform and sustained yield productivity over the long term. Thus several long-term experiments were established to study these various aspects. The parameters concerned in these experiments include reduced frequency of tapping in combination with the application of low concentrations of ethephon at less frequent intervals. The scope of the present investigation was to examine and analyse in depth the data obtained from two such long-term experiments to establish the long-term effects of judicious methods of exploitation on yield productivity and related aspects over successive tapping panels of two widely planted clones, viz. RRIM 600 and GT 1. In addition, the effects of intensive stimulation over limited duration on latex physiological parameters and bark anatomy were examined on clone RRIM 600.

