



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**EVALUATION OF FREE-LIVING NEMATODE PANAGRELLUS
REDIVIVUS AS A LIVE FOOD ORGANISM FOR SILVER BARB
BARBODES GONIONOTUS LARVAE**

ABDOLSAMAD JAHANGARD

FP 2003 7

EVALUATION OF FREE-LIVING NEMATODE *PANAGRELLUS REDIVIVUS* AS A LIVE FOOD ORGANISM FOR SILVER BARB *BARBODES GONIONOTUS* LARVAE

By

ABDOLSAMAD JAHANGARD

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

March 2003



DEDICATION

To my most beloved wife, Ladan,

for all her understanding, patience and support during all difficulties and for
her technical help during my study

To my father and mother,

for their support, principle guide and encouragement since my childhood

To all scientists and researchers,
who have contributed directly and indirectly in the quest of knowledge

Abstract of the thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

EVALUATION OF FREE-LIVING NEMATODE *PANAGRELLUS REDIVIVUS* AS A LIVE FOOD ORGANISM FOR SILVER BARB *BARBODES GONIONOTUS* LARVAE

By

ABDOLSAMAD JAHANGARD

March 2003

Chairman: Associate Professor Dr. Mohd. Salleh Kamarudin

Faculty: Agriculture

A series of experiments were conducted to develop mass production and improve nutritional quality of free-living nematode *Panagrellus redivivus*. The performance of nematodes *P. redivivus* produced on different culture media on growth and survival of silver barb *Barbodes gonionotus* larvae were also studied.

Prior to evaluation of *P. redivivus* as a larval live food organism, a study was conducted on the optimal stocking density of *B. gonionotus* larvae. Best larval growth and survival were obtained at 10 larvae L^{-1} for a 16-days rearing period. However, a range of 34-65 larvae L^{-1} was recommended for its commercial hatchery production.

A comparative study on performance of nematode, rotifer, *Moina* and *Artemia* was carried out. *B. gonionotus* larvae fed with *Artemia* and

nematode exhibited significantly ($P<0.05$) highest growth followed by those fed with rotifer and *Moina* respectively. *P. redivivus* was found to be a suitable food for *B. gonionotus*. A following study indicated that 20 nematodes mL^{-1} was the optimal feeding density for silver barb *B. gonionotus* stocked at 10 larvae L^{-1} for a 16-days culture period.

The study also revealed that 8% starch is the optimal level for the maximum production of *P. redivivus*. Nematodes produced at 8% starch also gave the best growth and survival of silver barb larvae. A following study showed that the total production of free-living nematode *P. redivivus* was significantly affected by the source of starch in culture medium. Potato starch was the best starch for culture of *P. redivivus*. Starch sources, however, did not have any significant ($P>0.05$) effect on the biochemical composition and nutritional value of *P. redivivus* for silver barb *P. gonionotus* larvae. Another study was conducted to determine the effect of lipid enrichment on the production of *P. redivivus*.

The results showed that the best lipid enrichment level for the maximum production of *P. redivivus* was 3.43%. The extremely low production of *P. redivivus* in unenriched medium suggested that lipid has an important role in reproduction, metabolism and as the main energy source. The results of a feeding trial showed that nematodes grown in media enriched with $> 2.6\%$ oil level were unsuitable for silver barb *B. gonionotus* larvae.

Finally, this study demonstrated that lipid source has an enormous effect on production and fatty acid composition of *P. redivivus*. The highest production

was achieved when nematodes were grown on sunflower oil enriched medium, followed by those grown in corn, linseed, fish, bleached palm kernel and bleached palm oil enriched respectively. The fish feeding trial, however, demonstrated that silver barb *B. gonionotus* larvae had a high capability to utilize a wide range of lipid source and dietary fatty acids without any negative effect on its growth and survival.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PENILAIAN NEMATOD *PANAGRELLUS REDIVIVUS* SEBAGAI
MAKANAN LARVA LAMPAM JAWA, *BARBODES GONIONOTUS***

Oleh

ABDOLSAMAD JAHANGARD

Mac 2003

Pengerusi: Prof. Madya Dr. Mohd. Salleh Kamarudin

Fakulti: Pertanian

Beberapa eksperimen telah dilakukan bagi membangunkan pengeluaran dan peningkatan mutu pemakanan nematod *Panagrellus redivivus* secara besar-besaran. Prestasi pengeluaran nematod *P. redivivus* menggunakan media kultur yang berlainan terhadap pertumbuhan dan kemandirian larva lampam Jawa *Barbodes gonionotus* juga telah dikaji.

Sebelum kajian penilaian *P. redivivus* dijalankan, satu kajian telah dilakukan untuk menentukan kadar perlepasan optimum larva *B. gonionotus*. Kadar perlepasan 10 larva L⁻¹ telah memberi pertumbuhan dan kemandirian tertinggi dalam tempoh 16 hari pengkulturan. Kadar perlepasan 34-65 larva L⁻¹ bagaimanapun telah disarankan untuk pengeluaran benih lampam Jawa secara komersial.

Satu kajian perbandingan prestasi nematod, rotifer, *Moina* dan *Artemia*. telah dilakukan. Larva lampam Jawa yang diberi *Artemia* dan nematod menunjukkan pertumbuhan tertinggi ($P<0.05$), diikuti oleh rotifer dan *Moina*. Nematod didapati sesuai sebagai makanan larva lampam Jawa. Kajian selanjutnya menunjukkan 20 nematod mL^{-1} adalah kadar pemberian makanan optimum bagi larva lampam Jawa pada kadar perlepasan 10 larva L-1 dalam tempoh 16 hari pengkulturan.

Kajian ini juga menunjukkan 8% adalah paras optimum kanji dalam media bagi pengeluaran maksimum *P. redivivus*. Larva lampam Jawa yang diberi nematod yang dikultur menggunakan media 8% kanji juga menunjukkan pertumbuhan dan kemandirian yang tertinggi.

Kajian selanjutnya menunjukkan sumber kanji dalam media mempengaruhi pengeluaran keseluruhan nematod *P. redivivus*. Kanji kentang merupakan sumber yang terbaik pagi pengeluaran nematod. Bagaimanapun sumber kanji didapati tidak mempengaruhi komposisi kimia dan nilai pemakanan *P. redivivus* terhadap larva lampam Jawa, *B. gonionotus*.

Kajian selanjutnya telah dilakukan bagi menentukan kesan paras pengkayaan lipid dalam media terhadap pengeluaran *P. redivivus*. Keputusan menunjukkan paras pengkayaan lipid maksimum bagi pengeluaran *P. redivivus* adalah 3.43%. Pengeluaran yang amat rendah dalam media tanpa lipid menunjukkan lipid berperanan penting dalam pembiakan, metabolisme dan sebagai sumber utama tenaga bagi nematod. Kajian juga menunjukkan nematod yang dikultur dalam media yang

diperkaya dengan lipid melebihi >2.6% didapati tidak sesuai untuk larva *B. gonionotus*.

Kajian juga menunjukkan sumber lipid mempunyai kesan penting terhadap pengeluaran dan komposisi asid lemak *P. redivivus*. Pengeluaran nematod tertinggi didapati apabila ia dikultur dalam media diperkaya dengan minyak bunga matahari, disusuli oleh minyak jagung, minyak bijan, ikan, isirong kelapa sawit diluntur dan kelapa sawit yang diluntur. Keputusan kajian pemberian makanan menunjukkan larva *B. gonionotus* memiliki keupayaan untuk menggunakan ranj sumber lipid dan asid lemak dietari yang luas tanpa sebarang kesan pada kemandirian dan pertumbuhannya.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I want to thank Associate Professor Dr. Mohd. Salleh Kamarudin, chairman of my advisory committee, for providing me with a wonderful opportunity to complete my doctoral studies under his exceptional guidance. Other than the provision of the necessary funding, this work would not have been possible without his patience, constant encouragement, guidance and knowledge. Through frequent meetings and his open door policy, Dr. Kamarudin made an immense contribution to this dissertation and my academic growth, as well as my professional and personal life.

My sincerest appreciation is also extended to Dr. Che Roos Saad and Associate Professor Dr. Kamaruzaman Sijam, who are members of my supervisory committee, for their constructive suggestions and guidance during the study period. I am also grateful for their willingness to serve on my committee, provide me assistance whenever required, involvement in my oral qualifying examination, and for reviewing this dissertation. I would like also to extend my most sincere gratitude and thanks to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Razak Alimon who provided me some laboratory facilities and cooperation during the course of the study.

I would also like to extend my appreciation and thanks to:

- The European Union for providing the research grant (ERB1C18-CT 98-0333) for this project;

- Dr. Manuele Ricci of BioTecnologie B.T. s.r.l. Pantalla di Todi, 06050 PG, Italy who provided me a training course relevant to my study and for his warm hospitality and continuous technical advices;
- Dr. Paymon Rostaian, Dr. Hamid Rezai and Dr. Ehsan Kamrani for their sincere and deep friendship, scientific guidance and technical advices;
- My laboratory mates in Aquatic Biotechnology Laboratory, Dr. Annie Christianus, Manuel, Emil, Reza and Carina for their technical assistance during the conduct of this study;
- Professor Abdul Rahman Abd. Razak for his advices and constructive criticism during the major part of my study period;
- Mr. Kambiz Shamsi for his critical review and editorial assistance, Alireza for his valuable computer assistance and Yasmin for her support, encouragement, moral, spiritual, faith and concern during my study;
- The staff of Aquatic Resources Technology Laboratory, Faculty of Agriculture, UPM especially Mr. Jasni for their valuable assistance;
- Mr. Kavoos Kasbi for his financial support in the beginning of my study and Dr. Farshad Shishechian for his technical assistance;
- My family and most of all, my brother Ali and sister Mahvash, for their love, understanding and encouragement, and my parents in-law for their moral support towards this achievement; Above all, to the GOD almighty for making this study possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
ABSTRAK	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ix
APPROVAL SHEETS.....	xi
DECLARATION	xiii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	xiv
LIST OF TABLES	xviii
LIST OF FIGURES	xx
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxii

CHAPTER

I INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background of the Study	1
Statement of Problem.....	3
The Significance of Study.....	5
Objectives	6
II LITERATURE REVIEW.....	8
Free Living Nematode <i>Panagrellus redivivus</i> : Its Biology, Culture and Application	8
Biology	8
Growth and Development.....	9
Population Growth	10
Temperature	11
pH	12
Osmotic Regulations.....	13
Light	13
Oxygen.....	13
Biochemical Composition and Nutritional Value	14
<i>P. redivivus</i> Culture/ Production	15
Application of Nematode <i>P. redivivus</i> in Fish Larviculture	18
Application of <i>P. redivivus</i> in Shrimp Larviculture	18
Enrichment with Different Lipid Sources	19
Bioencapsulation of Drugs Using Nematode <i>P. redivivus</i>	20
Silver Barb <i>Barbodes gonionotus</i>	21
Biology, Ecology and Culture	21
Feed and Feeding.....	22
Larval Nutrition	23
Common Live Food Organisms for Larviculture	26
Rotifer	27
Artemia.....	28
Moina	30
III GENERAL METHODOLOGY.....	32
Location of the Study.....	32
Experimental Fish.....	32
Mass Production of Live Food.....	33

Green Water	34
Rotifer Culture.....	34
<i>Moina</i> Culture.....	34
<i>Artemia</i> Preparation.....	35
Small Scale Nematode Culture (Petri dish Culture)	36
Mass Scale Nematode Culture (Axenic Culture Method).....	37
Experimental Set-up.....	39
Water Management.....	39
Samplings.....	39
Proximate Analyses of Live Food and Fish Samples	40
Total Protein.....	40
Total Lipid	40
Fatty Acids	40
Carbohydrate	41
Statistical Analyses	42
IV EFFECTS OF STOCKING DENSITY ON GROWTH, SURVIVAL AND YIELD PRODUCTION OF SILVER BARB <i>BARBODES GONIONOTUS</i> LARVAE	43
Introduction.....	43
Materials and methods.....	44
Experimental Design.....	44
Larval Rearing.....	45
Survival, Growth and Yield	45
Water Quality	46
Data Analysis	46
Results	47
Discussion	51
Conclusion.....	56
V EFFECTS OF FREE LIVING NEMATODE <i>PANAGRELLUS REDIVIVUS</i> AND SELECTED LIVE FOOD ORGANISMS ON GROWTH AND SURVIVAL OF SILVER BARB <i>BARBODES GONIONOTUS</i> (BLEEKER) LARVAE	57
Introduction.....	57
Materials and Methods.....	59
Larval Rearing.....	59
Survival, Growth and Yield	60
Biochemical Analysis	61
Statistical Analysis	61
Results	62
Water Quality	62
Growth and Survival.....	62
Biochemical Composition.....	65
Discussion	66
Conclusion.....	68
VI AN OPTIMAL FEEDING DENSITY OF FREE-LIVING NEMATODE <i>PANAGRELLUS REDIVIVUS</i> FOR SILVER BARB <i>BARBODES GONIONOTUS</i> (BLEEKER) LARVAE	69
Introduction.....	69

Materials and Methods	71
Spawning and Incubation.....	71
Larval Rearing.....	71
Feeding Trial	71
Water Quality	72
Fish Growth and Survival.....	72
Statistical Analysis	73
Results	73
Discussion	77
Conclusion.....	82
VII EFFECTS OF VARYING STARCH LEVEL ON THE PRODUCTION AND BIOCHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF FREE- LIVING NEMATODE <i>PANAGRELLUS REDIVIVUS</i> AND ITS EVALUATION USING SILVER BARB <i>BARBODES GONIONOTUS</i> (BLEEKER) LARVAE	83
Introduction.....	83
Materials and Methods.....	84
Nematode Culture	84
Larval Rearing.....	85
Water Quality	86
Survival and Growth.....	86
Biochemical Analysis	87
Statistical Analysis	87
Results	88
Nematode Production	88
Water Quality	88
Survival and Growth of Larvae	89
Biochemical Composition.....	93
Discussion	97
Conclusion.....	100
VIII EFFECTS OF STARCH SOURCES ON THE PRODUCTION OF FREE-LIVING NEMATODE <i>PANAGRELLUS REDIVIVUS</i> AND ITS NUTRITIONAL VALUE FOR SILVER BARB <i>BARBODES GONIONOTUS</i> LARVAE	101
Introduction.....	101
Materials and Methods.....	102
Nematode Culture.....	102
Larval Rearing.....	103
Water Quality	103
Survival and Growth.....	104
Viscosity Measurement.....	104
Biochemical Analysis	105
Statistical Analysis	105
Results	106
Physical and biochemical properties of starches.....	106
Nematode Production and Biochemical Composition	106
Survival and Growth of Fish Larvae.....	109
Water Quality	112
Biochemical Composition.....	112
Discussion	113

Conclusion.....	115
IX EFFECTS OF LIPID ENRICHMENT LEVEL ON PRODUCTION AND BIOCHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF FREE-LIVING NEMATODES <i>PANAGRELLUS REDIVIVUS</i> AND ITS EVALUATION USING SILVER BARB <i>BARBODES GONIONOTUS</i> (BLEEKER) LARVAE	116
Introduction.....	116
Materials and Methods.....	117
Nematode Culture.....	117
Larval Rearing.....	118
Water Quality	119
Fish Survival and Growth.....	119
Biochemical Analysis	120
Statistical Analysis	120
Results	121
Nematode Production	121
Survival and Growth of Fish Larvae.....	122
Water Quality	124
Biochemical Composition.....	126
Discussion	131
Conclusion.....	135
X EFFECTS OF LIPID ENRICHMENT USING DIFFERENT OIL SOURCES ON PRODUCTION AND BIOCHEMICAL COMPOSITION OF FREE-LIVING NEMATODE <i>PANARELLUS REDIVIVUS</i> AND ITS NUTRITIONAL EVALUATION USING SILVER BARB <i>BARBODES GONIONOTUS</i>, (BLEEKER) LARVAE	136
Introduction.....	136
Materials and Methods.....	138
Nematode Culture.....	138
Larval Rearing.....	139
Chemical analysis	140
Statistical Analysis	140
Results	142
Nematode Production	142
Survival and Growth of Larvae	144
Proximate Composition of Nematodes	147
Proximate Composition of Fish.....	147
Fatty Acid Composition of Nematode	150
Fatty Acid Composition of Fish	150
Discussion	153
Conclusion.....	158
XI GENERAL DISCUSSION.....	159
REFERENCES	165
APPENDICES.....	189
VITA.....	193

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Physical-chemical parameters in rearing tanks of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae grown at different stocking density, during 16 days of rearing period.....	47
2. Survival, final body weight, final total length, body weight gain, total length gain, specific growth rate and total wet weight yield of <i>B. gonionotus</i>	48
3. Mean total length, total width and biochemical composition of different live food organisms.....	60
4. Survival and growth parameters of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed with different live foods for a period of 21-days	63
5. Protein and lipid composition of fish larvae <i>B. gonionotus</i> fed on different live food organisms.....	66
6. Survival, final body weight, final total length and final yield of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> fed on different nematode density	74
7. Summary of multiple regression analysis of survival and growth of fish (dependent variables) versus feed concentration, ammonia and pH in culture tanks.....	77
8. Optimal feeding densities of different live foods used by different authors for larval rearing of fish.....	81
9. Mean production, multiplication factor and medium cost of nematode <i>P. redivivus</i> grown on varying levels of starch.....	88
10. Survival, specific growth rate, total length, body weight, total length gain and weight gain of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed on nematodes grown on different starch level for a period of 16-days.....	91
11. Proximate composition (% DW) of <i>P. redivivus</i> cultured on different levels of starch media.....	93
12. Proximate composition (% DW) of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed with nematodes grown on different starch levels.	94
13. Proximate composition (% dry matter) and viscosity ($\times 10^3$ CPS) of different starch sources.....	105
14. Mean production, multiplication factor and medium cost of nematodes <i>P. redivivus</i> grown on different starch sources for a period of 14-days.....	106
15. Proximate composition (% dry matter) of <i>P. redivivus</i> cultured on media of different starch sources	108
16. Mean survival, total length, body weight, length gain, weight gain and specific growth rate of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed on nematodes grown on different starch sources for a period of 16-days.....	109

17. Proximate composition (% dry matter) of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed with nematodes grown in different starch sources.....	111
18. Mean production, multiplication factor and medium cost of nematode <i>P. redivivus</i> grow on various lipid levels for a period of 14-days.....	120
19. Survival, growth and yield production of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed on different level of lipid-enriched nematodes reared for a period of 16 days	122
20. Biochemical composition of nematode <i>P. redivivus</i> cultured on media of different levels of lipid enrichment.....	126
21. Biochemical composition of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed on nematodes <i>P. redivivus</i> grown on media of different levels of lipid enrichment	127
22. Results of multiple regression analysis between survival and growth of fish (Dependent variables) and dietary nutritional factors.....	130
23. Iodine value and fatty acid compositions of different lipid sources used in the experiment	140
24. Mean production, multiplication factor and medium cost for nematode <i>P. redivivus</i> grow in enriched media of various oil sources for a period of 14-days.....	142
25. Multiple regression analysis between production of free-living nematodes <i>Panagrellus redivivus</i> (dependent variable) and characteristics of lipid sources	142
26. Survival, mean body length, mean body weight, length gain, weight gain, specific growth rate production of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae, fed on nematodes grown on enriched media of different oil sources for a period of 16-days.....	145
28. Proximate composition of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed on nematodes <i>P. redivivus</i> grown on media enriched with different oil sources.....	148
29. Fatty acid compositions (percent of total FAME) of nematodes grown in media enriched with different oil sources	150
30. Fatty acid composition (percent of total FAME) of fish fed with nematodes grown in enriched media of different oil sources.....	151

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Survival of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae reared at different stocking density over the 16-days experimental period.....	49
2. Changes in a) mean total length and b) mean body weight of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae reared in six different stocking densities for 16-days.	50
3. Optimum stocking density of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae based on polynomial (second order) regression model (Zeitoun <i>et al.</i> , 1976) of larval yield versus stocking density.....	51
4. Optimum stocking density for hatchery production based on a) acceptable body weight and b) acceptable total length of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae.....	55
5. Effects of nematodes and selected live food organisms on larval <i>B. gonionotus</i> yield. Means with different alphabetical letter are significantly different ($P<0.05$).....	64
6. Total length size frequency histograms of fish larvae fed on different live food organisms.	65
7. Changes in a) total length b) body weight of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed on different nematode densities (nematodes mL^{-1}) over a 16-days feeding trial	75
8. Survival of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed on different nematode densities (nematodes mL^{-1}) over the 16-days experimental period.....	76
9. Survival of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed on nematodes from various levels of starch during a 16-days trial.....	89
10. Changes in a) total length and b) total body weight of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> fed on nematodes grown on different levels (%) of starch during a 16-days of feeding.....	90
11. Relationship between medium starch level and a) nematode carbohydrate content, b) nematode lipid content and c) nematodes energy content.....	95
12. Relationship between a) nematode lipid content and fish lipid content b) nematode energy content and fish energy content.....	96
13. Relationship between carbohydrate content (% DW) of starch sources and nematode production.....	107
14. Relationship between starch viscosity of starch sources and nematode production.....	107
15. Changes in a) total body length b) body weight of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> fed on nematodes grown on different starch sources for a 16-days trial.	110

16. Polynomial (second order) regression model: lipid enrichment level vs <i>P. redivivus</i> multiplication factor for a period of 14-days culture period.....	121
17. Survival of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed with different lipid enrichment level of nematodes during a 16-days feeding trial.	123
18. Changes in a) total length b) body weight of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> fed nematodes grown on different lipid enrichment level during a 16-days feeding trial.	124
19. Relationships between medium lipid enrichment and a) nematode lipid content (% DW) b) nematode energy content c) nematode carbohydrate content (% DW).	128
20. Relationships between nematode lipid content and a) fish lipid contents b) fish energy content.	129
21. Optimal lipid enrichment level of <i>P. redivivus</i> for <i>P. gonionotus</i> larvae.....	133
22. Survival of <i>B. gonionotus</i> larvae fed with nematodes grown in enriched media of different oil sources during a 16 d feeding trial.	143
23. Changes in growth a) total length b) total body weight of silver barb <i>B. gonionotus</i> fed on nematode grown in enriched media of different oil sources during a 16-days feeding trial.	144

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AOAC	Association of Official Analytical Chemist
BW	Body weight
BSA	Bovine Serum Albumin
CHCl ₃	Chloroform
CH ₃ OH	Methanol
CRD	Complete Randomised Design
DHA	Decosahexanoic acid
DMRT	Duncan Multiple Range Test
DW	Dry weight
DO	Dissolved oxygen
EFA	Essential fatty acid
Expt.	Experiment
FAME	Fatty acid methyl esters
HCl	Hydrochloric acid
H ₂ SO ₄	Sulphuric acid
HUFA	Highly unsaturated fatty acid
M.F.	Multiplication factor
MSA	Methanol sulphuric acid
MUFA	Mono unsaturated fatty acid
N	Normality
NaCl	Sodium chloride
NaOH	Sodium hydroxide

NPK	Nitrogen Potassium Phosphorous
NPU	Net protein utilization
RGR	Relative growth rate
RPM	Revolution per minute
SAS	Statistical analysis system
SEAFDEC	Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Centre
SFA	Saturated fatty acid
SGR	Specific growth rate
SEM	Standard error of mean
TRT	Treatment
μm	Microgram
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
UV	Ultra Violet
YSI	Yellow spring instrument

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Asia has the world's highest production and consumption of aquaculture products (Liao, 1991). Similar to other Asian developing nations, seafood is also one of the major sources of dietary protein for Malaysians. Fish culture was introduced to Malaysia with the immigration of Chinese workers to Malaya. However, the industrial farming of several species of fish and shellfish in this country has recently and rapidly expanded due to technology advancement, government support, tropical condition and sufficient water sources (Endinkeau and Kiew, 1993). Despite of rapid development in culture techniques, inadequate fry supply coupled with relatively high feed prices limits Malaysian aquaculture production (Ang, 1993). Most of fish and shellfish hatcheries in Malaysia are very dependent on imported expensive *Artemia* cysts (USD 50-80kg⁻¹) as a main larval food source, which could cost up to 80% of the total production cost *per se* (Sorgeloos, 1980). However, *Artemia* may not always be the best larval food for all species (Jones *et al.*, 1993). Therefore, cheaper alternative live food should be explored.

Free-living nematode *Panagrellus redivivus* with its suitable wide size range, ease of culture, high nutritional value and low cost production (Fontaine *et al.*, 1982; Kahan and Appel, 1975; Kahan *et al.*, 1980) has been found to be