

**PHYTOREMEDIATION OF SOIL CONTAMINATED WITH COPPER AND ZINC  
FROM PIG WASTE**

**By**

**WANG YAN**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science**

**January 2005**

## **DEDICATION**

I wish to dedicate this thesis to my beloved parents, Wang Shou Quang, Xie Yu Ying and my brother Wang Min

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science

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**Chairman: Associate Professor Liang Juan Boo, PhD**

**Faculty: Agriculture**

Copper (Cu) and Zinc (Zn) are two elements of great concern due to their potential toxicity to plants and/or animals. Most pig farmers in Malaysia fed two to three folds of the recommended Cu and Zn to their animals. Only about 15% of the dietary Cu and Zn were apparently digested while the remaining 85% were excreted mainly via the feces. It is estimated that 390 tons of Cu and 303 tons of Zn are being excreted annually by approximately two million pigs in Malaysia. Appropriate management of the pig waste is, therefore, essential to ensure that these heavy metals do not pollute the environment.

Phytoremediation, the use of plants to restore polluted sites, has recently become a popular alternative to the traditional techniques of cleaning up polluted soils. Five locally available plants, namely Kenaf (*Hibiscus cannabinus L.*), Typha (*Typha spp.*), Vetiver (*Vetiveria zizanioides*), Canna (*Canna x generalis*), Cyathula (*Altemanthera Ficoidea cv. "Sanguinea"*) were shown to exhibit their ability to accumulate Cu and Zn from the soil applied with pig manure. Roots were the main site for Cu and Zn accumulation followed by

stems and leaves. On the average, Cu and Zn concentrations in all parts of *Cyathula* were the highest. However, because of its low biomass, accumulation of Cu and Zn per plant basis for *Cyathula* was significantly lower than the other plants, particularly *Canna* and *Typha*.

Since, heavy metal tolerance in plants is often species and metal specific, different plants can better accumulate heavy metals in the different plant tissues or cell organelles. Examination of heavy metal accumulation at cellular level is thus important to understand the tolerance mechanism of the metal-accumulating plants. Ultrastructural investigation of the root-tips of *Kenaf*, *Canna* and *Cyathula* indicated that Cu and Zn mainly deposited in the cell wall, cytoplasm and nucleus. In leaves, the main sites of deposition were chloroplast and nucleus, followed by cell wall, cytoplasm and mitochondria. Vacuole had the lowest Cu and Zn deposition. High concentration of Cu and Zn deposition resulted in changes in root cell structure, including cell wall deformation and vacuolization. The above effects were, however, not consistent among the three plant species studied. For examples, cell wall deformations were observed in root cells of *Canna*, but not *Kenaf* and *Cyathula* while strong vacuolization of root cells was observed only in *Cyathula*. Cell wall deformation and vacuolization in cells could be symptoms of toxicity and/or self defense mechanism to prevent toxicity of heavy metals to the plant tissues. There was no observable change in the leaf cell structures of these plants under different Cu and Zn treatments, presumably because of the low level of Cu and Zn accumulation in the leaf cells were below the toxicity level.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk jazah Master Sains

**FITOREMEDIASI TANAH YANG DICEMARI DENGAN KUPRUM DAN ZINK  
DARIPADA SISA KHINZIR**

Oleh

**WANG YAN**

**Januari 2005**

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Kuprum (Cu) dan zink (Zn) adalah dua elemen yang penting kerana berpotensi menyebabkan toksik kepada tumbuhan dan/atau haiwan. Di Malaysia, kebanyakan penternak khinzir memberi dua hingga tiga kali ganda Cu dan Zn yang dicadangkan kepada ternakan mereka. Hanya 15% Cu dan Zn dalam makanan dihadamkan manakala 85% yang tertinggal dikumuhkan dalam najis. Adalah dianggarkan bahawa 390 ton Cu dan 303 ton Zn dikumuhkan oleh lebih kurang dua juta ekor khinzir di Malaysia pada setiap tahun. Oleh itu, pengurusan sisa khinzir yang berkesan adalah diperlukan supaya logam berat ini tidak mencemarkan persekitaran.

Fitoremediasi, penggunaan tumbuhan untuk membaiki pulih kawasan tercemar, menjadi alternatif yang hangat kepada teknik tradisional sejak kebelakangan ini. Lima spesis tumbuhan tempatan, iaitu Kenaf (*Hibiscus cannabinus L.*), Typha (*Typha spp.*), Vetiver (*Vetiveria zizanioides*), Canna (*Canna x generalis*), Cyathula (*Altemanthera Ficoidea cv. "Sanguinea"*) telah menunjukkan keupayaan untuk mengumpul Cu dan Zn daripada tanah yang beraplikasi dengan sisa khinzir. Akar adalah bahagian utama untuk mengumpul Cu

dan Zn diikuti oleh batang dan daun. Secara keseluruhannya, kepekatan Cu dan Zn dalam semua bahagian *Cyathula* adalah tertinggi. Walaupun demikian, disebabkan biojisimnya yang rendah, pengumpulan Cu dan Zn berdasarkan setiap tumbuhan adalah signifikan secara rendah berbanding dengan spesis tumbuhan lain, terutamanya *Canan* dan *Typha*.

Sejak ketahanan logam berat dalam tumbuhan biasanya bergantung pada spesis dan spesifikasi logam, tumbuhan yang berbeza berupaya mengumpul logam berat dalam tisu tumbuhan atau organel sel yang berlainan. Oleh itu, kajian pengumpulan logam berat pada tahap selular adalah diperlukan untuk memahami mekanisme ketahanan tumbuhan pengumpul logam. Penyelidikan secara ultrastruktur pada hujung akar *Kenaf*, *Canna* dan *Cyathula* menunjukkan kebanyakan Cu dan Zn disimpan dalam dinding sel, sitoplasma dan nukleus. Dalam daun, tempat penyimpanan utama adalah dalam kloroplas dan nukleus, diikuti dengan dinding sel, sitoplasma dan mitokondria. Vakuol mempunyai penyimpanan Cu dan Zn yang terendah. Kepekatan penyimpanan Cu dan Zn yang tinggi mengakibatkan perubahan dalam struktur sel akar termasuk perubahan bentuk dinding sel dan vakuolisasi. Walaupun demikian, kesan yang dinyatakan di atas adalah tidak konsisten antara tiga spesis tumbuhan yang dikaji. Contohnya, perubahan bentuk dinding sel telah diperhatikan dalam sel akar *Canna* tetapi tidak dalam *Kenaf* dan *Cyathula* manakala vakuolisasi sel akar yang kuat dijumpai pada *Cyathula* sahaja. Perubahan bentuk dalam dinding sel dan vakuolisasi dalam sel mungkin merupakan satu gejala toksik dan/atau mekanisme pertahanan diri untuk mengelakkan keracunan logam berat dalam tisu tumbuhan. Tiada perubahan diperhatikan dalam struktur sel daun tumbuhan kajian di bawah pelbagai rawatan Cu dan Zn, dan diandaikan ini disebabkan oleh tahap pengumpulan Cu dan Zn dalam sel daun adalah rendah di bawah tahap toksik.

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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan. 2005 to conduct the final examination of Wang Yan on her Master of Science thesis entitled “Phytoremediation of soil contaminated with copper and zinc from pig waste” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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## **DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

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**WANG YAN**

Date:

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>DEDICATION</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ABSTRAK</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>APPROVAL</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES</b>	<b>xiv</b>
<b>LIST OF PLATE</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>xvi</b>
<b>CHAPTER</b>	
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. LITERATURE REVIEW</b>	<b>3</b>
2.1 Heavy Metal and Environment	3
2.1.1 Heavy Metal	3
2.1.2 Benefit of Cu and Zn	6
2.1.4 Harmfulness of Cu and Zn	6
2.2 Pig Production and Environment	8
2.2.1 Pig Production and Waste in Malaysia	8
2.2.2 Dietary Cu and Zn for Pigs	9
2.2.3 Pig Waste Treatment System	11
2.3 Phytoremediation of Cu and Zn	13
2.3.1 Heavy Metal Pollution Treatment in the Soil	13
2.3.2 Definition and Function of Phytoremediation	14
2.3.3 General Features of Phytoremediation	15
2.3.4 Metal-Accumulating Plants for Phytoremediation	19
2.3.5 Mechanisms of Metal Hyperaccumulation in Plants	25
2.3.7 Molecular Mechanisms of Ion Transport in Plant Cells	28
2.4 Use of electro microscopy for cellular examination of Cu and Zn	29
<b>3. A SURVEY ON THE UTILIZATION OF COPPER AND ZINC</b>	<b>32</b>
3.1 Introduction	32
3.2 Materials and Methods	33
3.2.1 Sample Collection	33
3.2.2 Laboratory analyses	34
3.2.3 Calculations	35
3.2.4 Statistical Analysis	35
3.3 Results and Discussion	36
3.3.1 Concentration of Cu and Zn in Pig Diets	36
3.3.2 Concentrations of Cu and Zn in Pig Wastes	37
3.3.3 Copper Utilization	39
3.3.4 Zinc Utilization	40
3.4 Conclusions	41

<b>4. PHYTOREMEDIATION OF COPPER AND ZINC FROM CONTAMINATED SOIL</b>	43
4.1 Introduction	43
4.2 Materials and Methods	46
4.2.1 Location of Study	46
4.2.2 Experimental Design and Treatments	47
4.2.3 Preparation of Plant Materials	47
4.2.4 Preparation of Soils	51
4.2.5 Plant Sampling and Measurement	51
4.2.6 Soil Sampling and Measurement	52
4.2.7 Chemical Analysis	52
4.2.8 Statistical Analysis	53
4.3 Results and Discussion	53
4.3.1 Soil pH	53
4.3.2 Soil Organic Matter (OM)	54
4.3.3 Copper Concentration in the Soil	55
4.3.3 Zinc Concentration in the Soil	57
4.3.4 Concentration of Cu in Plants	58
4.3.5 Concentration of Zn in Plants	59
4.3.6 Accumulation of Cu and Zn in the Different organs of Plants	61
4.4 Conclusions	63
<b>5. ACCUMULATION OF COPPER AND ZINC IN CELLS AND THEIR EFFECTS ON CELL STRUCTURE OF PLANTS</b>	64
5.1 Introduction	64
5.2 Materials and Methods	65
5.2.1 Preparation of Experimental Plant	65
5.2.2 Preparation of Plant Samples for EFTEM	69
5.2.3 Viewing Samples under EFTEM	71
5.2.4 Statistical Analysis	71
5.3 Results and Discussion	72
5.3.1 Concentration of Cu and Zn in Different Plant organs	72
5.3.2 Cellular distribution of Cu and Zn	74
5.3.3 Effect of Cu and Zn on Cell Structure	87
5.4 Conclusion	93
<b>6. GENERAL DISCUSSION</b>	95
<b>7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	
7.1 Conclusions	102
7.2 Recommendations	102
<b>REFERENCES</b>	103
<b>APPENDIX</b>	105
<b>BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR</b>	114
	118

