Biotechnologies towards Sustainable Development in Malaysia

Zarina Zainuddin

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Chapter 25

Optimisation of transformation system for chilli embryo (Capsicum annuum

variety Kulai) using particle bombardment

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Introduction

Capsicuum annuum or chilli which belongs to the family Solanaceae, ranks as one of the most popular fruit vegetables in this country. Chillies are used around the world in various forms such as fresh, dried or preserved products, as vegetables, spice or condiments. According to Berke (2002), chilli is important in almost every Asian country and it is considered as a number one vegetable in Malaysia and Bhutan. This is shown in vegetable production data for the year 2002 obtained from Department of Agriculture Malaysia where chilli production contributes to 115,513.36 924.26%) metric tonne out of 476,097.80 metric tonne of total vegetable production. As compared to the other vegetable production, chilli and 'sawi bunga' contribute to the total vegetable production and in the top of rank (DOA, 2005). By observation, among the most popular commercial varieties of *C. annuum* are MC12 variety and Kulai variety.

There are five major constraints in regards to chilli production, which are complex virus infection, root rot, pest, bacterial diseases and cultivars quality. Among them viral diseases are a significant constraint to the crop, that causes poor fruit yield and quality. In Malaysia, the occurrence of virus diseases has become a major production constraint of hot peppers in both