



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**INDUCTION OF SUPPRESSIVE SOIL IN THE MANAGEMENT OF
FUSARIUM WILT ON BANANA SEEDLINGS**

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**INDUCTION OF SUPPRESSIVE SOIL IN THE MANAGEMENT OF
FUSARIUM WILT ON BANANA SEEDLINGS**

By

ADELNE TING SU YIEN

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirement for the
Degree of Master of Agricultural Science in the Faculty of Agriculture
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

April 2001



For my Beloved ones:

*Pa, Ma, Eve, Jarrod,
and, Steve;*

*"Yesterday, it was a wish,
Today, it is a meaningful wonder,
Tomorrow, it will be an inspiration,
and always will be."*

Thank You for Everything.



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

**INDUCTION OF SUPPRESSIVE SOIL IN THE MANAGEMENT OF
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Chairman: Professor Sariah Meon, Ph.D.

Faculty: Agriculture

This study determined the potential of using artificially 'induced' suppressive soil to suppress the development of *Fusarium* wilt on susceptible banana seedlings (cultivar Berangan). *Trichoderma harzianum* (UPM 40) was selected as the microbial antagonist, and calcium nitrate ($\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$) as the soil amendment. Both biotic and abiotic components, respectively, were incorporated into the soil to mimic the contents of naturally existing *Fusarium* suppressive soils. The potential of *T. harzianum* as a biocontrol agent was confirmed from the series of antagonism tests, with positive results in lysis, antibiosis and mycoparasitism tests. *In vitro* tests determined that *T. harzianum* required early establishment prior to challenge with *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* race 4 (FocR4), to ensure effective antagonistic activity. Both *T. harzianum* and FocR4 tolerated pH 5-8, and Ca^{2+} concentrations within 5–750 ppm. Soil pH was not affected by $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ application, indicating



compatibility of inoculating *T. harzianum* together with $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ application. When tested on Berangan seedlings in the glasshouse, treatment with $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ alone provided better disease suppression compared to treatment with both *T. harzianum* and $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$, and treatment with *T. harzianum* alone. Treatment with $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ alone recorded low disease incidence (DI) of 51% as compared to 59% and 69% from combined treatments and *T. harzianum* alone, respectively, 8 weeks after inoculation. Calcium reduced the population of FocR4, promoted plant growth, and induced host resistance through increased peroxidase and polyphenoloxidase activity, and phenol content. Increased enzymatic activities and phenol content was related to extensive cell wall lignification as revealed by histological observations, resulting in resistance to FocR4 hyphal penetration. The formation of Ca-pectate also contributed to host resistance. Biocontrol efficiency of *T. harzianum* was dependent on soil environment, as the glasshouse trial did not suppress disease incidence, contrary to its antagonistic effect in *in vitro* tests. *T. harzianum* did not induce host resistance, instead, predisposed the seedlings to infection by increasing root growth and infection sites. Disease suppression achieved through treatment with $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ was dependent on Ca^{2+} availability in the soil and Ca^{2+} content in the plant tissues. A more frequent application using suitable rates is then suggested as follow-up studies.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains Pertanian.

**INDUKSI TANAH PENINDAS DALAM PENGURUSAN PENYAKIT
LAYU *FUSARIUM* PADA ANAK POKOK PISANG**

Oleh

ADELINE TING SU YIEN

April 2001

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Kajian ini menentukan potensi menggunakan tanah penindas 'buatan' untuk menindas kejadian penyakit layu *Fusarium* pada anak pokok pisang yang peka (kultivar Berangan). *Trichoderma harzianum* (UPM 40) dipilih sebagai mikrobial antagonistik, manakala kalsium nitrat ($\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$) dipilih sebagai bahan pemulih tanah. Kedua-dua komponen biotik dan abiotik ini ditambah ke dalam tanah untuk meniru komposisi sebenar tanah penindas *Fusarium* yang sediaakala. Potensi menggunakan *T. harzianum* sebagai agen kawalan biologi terbukti dari siri ujian antagonistik yang dijalankan, dengan keputusan positif dalam ujian lisis, antibiosis dan parasitism. Ujian *in vitro* telah mengesahkan pentingnya *T. harzianum* diinokulat lebih awal sebelum didedahkan kepada *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* ras 4 (FocR4), supaya efisiensi aktiviti antagonistiknya terjamin. *T. harzianum* dan FocR4 diperhatikan mempunyai toleransi terhadap pH 5-8, serta kepekatan Ca^{2+} 5-750 bsj. Aplikasi $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ tidak mempengaruhi pH tanah, sekaligus membuktikan

kesesuaian menginokulat *T. harzianum* bersama rawatan $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$. Apabila diuji pada anak pokok pisang Berangan, rawatan dengan $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$ sahaja menunjukkan potensi paling baik untuk menindas insiden penyakit *Fusarium*, berbanding rawatan dengan kedua-dua *T. harzianum* dan $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$, dan rawatan menggunakan *T. harzianum* sahaja. Rawatan dengan $\text{Ca}(\text{NO}_3)_2$, mencatatkan insiden penyakit yang rendah sebanyak 51% berbanding 59% dan 69% oleh rawatan kombinasi dan *T. harzianum* sahaja, 8 minggu selepas rawatan. Kalsium juga mengurangkan populasi FocR4 dalam tanah, mengalakkan pertumbuhan anak pokok pisang, dan mengalakkan sistem pertahanan teraruh melalui peningkatan aktiviti enzim *peroxidase*, *polyphenoloxidase* dan kandungan fenol. Peningkatan aktiviti enzim ini dikaitkan dengan lignifikasi pada dinding sel sebagaimana yang diperhatikan dari ujian histologi, yang meningkatkan keroskatan kepada penembusan hifa FocR4. Pembentukan Ca-pektat dalam sel juga memperkukuhkan lagi ketahanan hos terhadap serangan penyakit. Efisiensi *T. harzianum* sebagai agen kawalan biologi terhadap FocR4 dipengaruhi oleh keadaan tanah, kerana ujian di rumah kaca membuktikan *T. harzianum* tidak menindas insiden penyakit *Fusarium*, yang berlawanan dengan keputusan dari ujian *in vitro*. *T. harzianum* juga tidak mengalakkan ketahanan teraruh, malah mengalakkan kejadian penyakit melalui pertumbuhan akar dan tapak jangkitan. Kesan penindasan penyakit dipengaruhi oleh kepadatan Ca^{2+} dalam tanah dan kandungan Ca^{2+} dalam tisu tumbuhan. Dengan itu, kawalan yang lebih berkesan dijangka dicapai jika kekerapan aplikasinya ditambah, dengan menggunakan kadar yang sesuai, dan penentuan ini memerlukan kajian yang selanjutnya.

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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 19th April 2001 to conduct the final examination of Adeline Ting Su Yien on her Master of Agricultural Science thesis entitled “Induction of Suppressive Soil in the Management of *Fusarium* Wilt on Banana Seedlings” 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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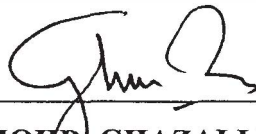
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DECLARATION

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 it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.



ADELINE TING SU YIEN

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| DEDICATION | 2 |
| ABSTRACT | 3 |
| ABSTRAK | 5 |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | 7 |
| APPROVAL | 8 |
| DECLARATION | 10 |
| LIST OF TABLES | 13 |
| LIST OF FIGURES | 17 |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS | 21 |
| CHAPTER | |
| I INTRODUCTION | 22 |
| II LITERATURE REVIEW | 27 |
| Banana Plant | 27 |
| <i>Fusarium</i> wilt | 29 |
| The Disease | 29 |
| The Pathogen <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> | |
| f sp <i>cubense</i> | 31 |
| Disease Symptoms | 35 |
| Disease Epidemiology | 38 |
| Factors Affecting Disease Spread | |
| and Development | 41 |
| Control Measures | 43 |
| Suppressive Soil | 47 |
| Components of Suppressive Soil | 49 |
| Soil Physical and Chemical Characteristics | 49 |
| Soil Amendments | 50 |
| Antagonistic Microorganisms | 56 |
| Host Induced Defense Mechanisms | 59 |
| III MATERIALS AND METHODS | 63 |
| Preparation of Fungal Isolates | 63 |
| Morphological Identification of Fungal Isolates | 63 |



| | |
|--|------------|
| Development of Mechanisms of Suppressiveness | 65 |
| Establishment of the Mode of Antagonism | 65 |
| Effect of pH on the Growth of UPM 40 and FocR4 | 69 |
| Effect of Ca ²⁺ on the Growth of UPM 40 and FocR4 | 71 |
| Uptake of Ca ²⁺ by Banana Seedlings | 73 |
| Glasshouse Trials | 74 |
| Soil Mixture | 74 |
| Planting Material | 74 |
| Inoculum Production | 74 |
| Experimental Layout and Design | 75 |
| IV RESULTS AND DISCUSSION | 87 |
| Characterization and Identification of Fungal Isolates | 87 |
| Development of Mechanisms of Suppressiveness | 90 |
| Mode of Antagonism of <i>T. harzianum</i> against FocR4 | 90 |
| Effect of pH on the Growth of <i>T. harzianum</i> and FocR4 | 98 |
| Effect of Ca ²⁺ on the Growth of <i>T. harzianum</i> and FocR4 | 101 |
| Uptake of Ca ²⁺ by Banana Seedlings | 104 |
| Efficiency of ‘Induced’ Suppressive Soil | 106 |
| Effect of ‘Induced’ Suppressive Soil on Seedling Growth | 137 |
| ‘Induced’ Systemic Resistance Biochemical Responses | 140 |
| V CONCLUSION | 148 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 152 |
| APPENDICES | 164 |
| BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR | 190 |



LIST OF TABLES

| Table | | Page |
|-------|--|------|
| 1 | Treatments used in glasshouse trial | 76 |
| 2 | Type of stains used for detection of lignin, suberin and Ca-pectate | 83 |
| 3 | Antagonistic activity of <i>T. harzianum</i> (UPM 40) against <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> f. sp. <i>cubense</i> race 4 (FocR4) | 91 |
| 4 | The effect of volatile inhibitors produced by <i>T. harzianum</i> towards growth of FocR4 | 95 |
| 5 | Effect of pH on growth of <i>T. harzianum</i> and FocR4 on agar (aerial growth) and in broth (mass weight) | 99 |
| 6 | Effect of different Ca ²⁺ concentration (ppm) on the growth of <i>T. harzianum</i> and FocR4 on agar (aerial growth) and in broth (mass weight) | 102 |
| 7 | Area Under Disease Progress Curve (AUDPC) of <i>Fusarium</i> wilt under different treatment | 109 |
| 8 | Disease Index of seedlings according to weeks | 116 |
| 9 | pH of root tips, rhizosphere and bulk soil under the influence of various treatments | 133 |



| | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 10 | Effect of different treatments on mean pseudostem length, diameter and root growth | 139 |
| 11 | ANOVA Table for Double Plate Test | 165 |
| 12 | ANOVA Table for Culture Filtrate Test | 165 |
| 13 | ANOVA Table for Ca ²⁺ Test | 165 |
| 14 | ANOVA Table for cfu of isolates in Ca ²⁺ treated soils | 166 |
| 15 | ANOVA Table for Disease Incidence | 166 |
| 16 | ANOVA Table for Ca ²⁺ Content | 167 |
| 17 | Table for contrast comparison for Ca ²⁺ Content using GLM | 167 |
| 18 | ANOVA Table for cfu of FocR4 at root tips, rhizosphere and soils | 168 |
| 19 | Table for contrast comparison for pH values using GLM | 168 |
| 20 | Table for contrast comparison on seedling growth using GLM | 169 |
| 21 | ANOVA Table for seedling growth | 169 |



| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 22 | Table for contrast comparison for enzyme activity using GLM..... | 170 |
| 23 | Table for contrast comparison for phenol content using GLM..... | 170 |
| 24 | ANOVA Table for Enzyme Activity..... | 170 |
| 25 | ANOVA Table for Phenol Content..... | 171 |
| 26 | ANOVA Table for Enzyme Activities according to weeks..... | 171 |
| 27 | ANOVA Table for Phenol Content according to weeks..... | 172 |
| 28 | Means Comparison Table for Ca ²⁺ Test..... | 172 |
| 29 | Means Comparison Table for cfu of isolates in Ca ²⁺ treated soils..... | 173 |
| 30 | Means Comparison Table for Disease Incidence..... | 173 |
| 31 | Means Comparison Table for Ca ²⁺ Content..... | 175 |
| 32 | Means Comparison Table for cfu of FocR4 at root tips, rhizosphere and soil..... | 178 |
| 33 | Means Comparison Table for Seedling Growth..... | 179 |



| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 34 | Means Comparison Table for Enzyme Activity..... | 180 |
| 35 | Means Comparison Table for Enzyme Activity according to weeks..... | 181 |
| 36 | Means Comparison Table for Phenol Content according to weeks..... | 187 |



LIST OF FIGURES

| Figure | | Page |
|--------|--|------|
| 1 | Diagrammatic representation of application of treatments according to time frame | 76 |
| 2 | <i>Trichoderma harzianum</i> (Rifa'i), (A) 3 day old culture on PDA, and SEM micrographs showing (B) conidiophores, (C) swollen phialides and (D) phialospores | 88 |
| 3 | <i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> f. sp. <i>cubense</i> (FocR4), (A) 7 day old culture on PDA, and SEM micrographs showing (B) a microconidia and (C) a macroconidia | 89 |
| 4 | Dual culture test, (A) formation of inhibition zone showing inhibitory effect by <i>T. harzianum</i> towards FocR4 and eventual overgrowth (B) | 92 |
| 5 | Failure to produce normal colonies by mycelial plugs from inhibition zone (0 cm) as compared to control and from 2 cm-zone | 92 |
| 6 | Diameter of FocR4 single colony according to different filtrate sampling time | 95 |
| 7 | Initiation of mycoparasitism by growth of <i>T. harzianum</i> hypha alongside the hypha of FocR4 | 96 |
| 8 | Antagonistic effect of <i>T. harzianum</i> towards FocR4 at (A) pH 7, (B) pH 4 and (C) pH 9 | 100 |

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 9 | Colony forming units (cfu) of <i>T harzianum</i> and FocR4 recovered from soils treated with various Ca ²⁺ concentrations | 103 |
| 10 | Longitudinal root sections from treated seedlings showing presence of Ca-pectate (A) as compared to untreated root sample (B) | 105 |
| 11 | Disease assessment scale (0-4) was developed based on foliar-associated symptoms | 107 |
| 12 | Effect of different treatments (T1-T4) on disease progress of <i>Fusarium</i> wilt on banana seedlings of the Berangan cultivar | 108 |
| 13 | Infected pseudostems were discoloured (A) and split at the base (B), as compared to healthy uninfected pseudostem (C) and (D) | 112 |
| 14 | Mycelium of FocR4 on the surface of dead pseudostem tissues | 113 |
| 15 | Infected seedlings (A) rhizomes with reddish vascular strands, (C) roots with yellowish reddish streaks, and (D) pseudostem with visible reddish streaks, uninfected rhizome (B) and pseudostem (E) | 115 |
| 16 | Development of internal symptoms in the rhizome (A) 25%, (B) 50% and complete discolouration of vascular tissues (C), uninfected rhizome (D) | 118 |
| 17 | Cross section of a portion of a root tissue showing hypha of FocR4 penetrating through cell walls into adjacent cells | 119 |

| | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 18 | SEM micrograph showing infected root tissues with gel formation in the xylem vessels | 120 |
| 19 | SEM micrograph showing uninfected tissues | 120 |
| 20 | Lignification thickened cell walls to resist hypha penetration | 122 |
| 21 | Uninfected tissues were not lignified but retained its shape and turgor | 122 |
| 22 | Presence of Ca-pectate in tissues stained reddish brown with Alizarin Red S (A), as compared to tissues without Ca-pectate (B) | 123 |
| 23 | Ca ²⁺ content in root tissues in relation to DI | 124 |
| 24 | Ca ²⁺ content in root of seedlings treated with various treatments, 8 weeks after treatment | 125 |
| 25 | Mean colony forming units (cfu) count of FocR4 recovered from root tips, rhizosphere and soil 8 weeks after inoculation | 126 |
| 26 | SEM micrograph showing spores of <i>T harzianum</i> attached to conidia of FocR4 Failure to germinate affected the antagonistic activity of <i>T harzianum</i> | 128 |
| 27 | SEM micrograph showing root colonization by <i>T harzianum</i> which provided 'protection' from FocR4 colonization | 128 |

| | | |
|----|--|-----|
| 28 | Parasitization of FocR4 conidia by <i>T. harzianum</i> (A) resulted in growth of abnormal colonies as observed on FSM, 7 days after incubation | 130 |
| 29 | pH value of root tips, rhizosphere and bulk soil | 132 |
| 30 | The relation between disease incidence and pH of (A) root tips, (B) rhizosphere and (C) soil | 135 |
| 31 | Effect of FocR4 on mean (A) pseudostem length and diameter, and (B) root weight of banana seedlings, 8 weeks after treatment | 138 |
| 32 | Mean activity for soluble and ionically bound PO and PPO, and phenol content in infected and uninfected seedlings | 142 |
| 33 | Activity of (A) soluble and (B) ionically bound PO in root tissues sampled from 0-8 weeks in comparison to DI (%) | 145 |
| 34 | Activity of PPO (C) and the phenol content (D) in root tissues sampled from 0-8 weeks, with comparison to DI (%) | 146 |
| 35 | Standard curve for the determination of Ca ²⁺ content in root tissues | 188 |
| 36 | Standard curve for the determination of phenol content in root tissues | 189 |

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|--|
| DOA | Department of Agriculture |
| FAMA | Federal Agriculture Marketing Authority (FAMA) |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization |
| INIBAP | International Network for the Improvement of Banana and Plantain |
| MARDI | Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute |
| SIRIM | Standards and Industrial Research Institute of Malaysia |



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The banana industry is a growing fruit industry in most countries worldwide, due to its increasing market demand and relatively low production costs. Most of the bananas produced are mainly for fresh consumption, eaten as dessert fruit or, as staple food because of its high starch content (Valmayor, 1987). Bananas are also commonly used in beer brewing, in vinegar production, in confectioneries to flavour cakes, puddings and muffins, and also as fibre material, wrappers or vegetables (Thurston, 1984; Valmayor, 1987).

As one of the most important fruit crops in many agricultural countries, bananas are produced extensively in Asia (India, Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Taiwan), Africa and, South and Central America (Honduras, Panama, Costa Rica, Guatemala) (Hassan and Pantastico, 1990). In Malaysia, it is the second most important fruit crop, accounting for 20 % of the total hectareage of fruit plantations (Yaacob, 1991). However, land used for banana cultivation has declined over the years from 40 000 ha in 1993 to 39 000 ha in 2000 (Loh, 2000).



The trading of banana grew significantly in the early 1870's, beginning with the trading of the Gros Michel (AAA) variety (Ploetz, 1994). This first commercially cultivated variety was considered as an "ideal variety" because of its large fruit, smooth skin texture, and cream coloured flesh that is moderately firm, slightly aromatic and sweet. Most importantly, it has excellent keeping quality and produces high yields (Hassan and Pantastico, 1990). Thus, the Gros Michel variety was extensively cultivated in new plantations, or in plantations of another banana variety known as the Silk variety (AAB) (Snyder and Smith, 1981).

The emergence of *Fusarium* wilt disease (Panama disease), in the late 1890's, threatened to diminish the banana industry. This disease caused severe losses in fruit yield, and death of plants. In just over 50 years since its first occurrence, it has destroyed more than 40 000 ha of banana plantations in Central and South America (Su et al., 1986).

Initially, only race 1 of the pathogen, *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. *cubense* (FocR1) was identified to be pathogenic towards Gros Michel and Silk varieties (Snyder and Smith, 1981). Race 2 (FocR2) and 3 (FocR3) only infect plantain (cooking) varieties, like Bluggoe (ABB), and *Heliconia* spp., respectively (Su et al , 1986).



Most of the Gros Michel plantations infested with FocR1 then, were successfully replanted with the resistant Cavendish variety. However, resistance to disease development soon vanished with the emergence of race 4 (FocR4), which caused destruction in the Cavendish plantations.

FocR4 spread rapidly and vastly. By 1955, banana varieties of Williams (AAA 'Cavendish') in Australia, have succumbed to FocR4 (Ploetz, 1994). In 1974, Cavendish varieties in the Philippines were severely infected (Snyder and Smith, 1981), and by 1977, FocR4 were reportedly recovered from numerous soils in Taiwan and Canary Islands.

The sudden emergence of FocR4 was believed due to independent mutation that may have occurred in the different Asian regions, as suggested by Su et al. (1986). However, Snyder and Smith (1981) claimed that FocR4 was just one of the many races of Foc, which originated from the Southeast Asian region, which remained undetected, as the discovery of some races of Foc in Vietnam that was undiscovered in other parts of the world. Furthermore, banana is a native of the Indo-Malaya countries, and has long established its existence, together with its diversified pathogens.

