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F-8 IN-VITRO CULTURING OF WOOD DESTROYING TERMITES
MICROCEROTERMES SPECIES (SNYDER).

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KEY WORDS : Termites, Human welfare, Culture, Temperature, Relative humidity.

Very wide range of material is destroyed by termites. They consume cellulose and damage any material containing cellulose. Termites pose a serious threat to structural and processed wood work of various kinds. A study of wood destroying termites becomes very relevant and important for human welfare, as the cost of replacement and repair of wooden structure damage by termites in buildings is rising day by day.

Termites can be cultured in the laboratory under controlled condition of temperature and relative humidity. Although, the requirement of temperature and humidity is highly specific. Culture of Dry-wood termites *microcerotermes* species can be maintained upto 4-6 months successfully in the laboratory. Small chips of mango wood or papita wood is placed along with the test block, treated with different concentration of various pesticides. One thousand active workers of the said species was released in each experimental jar. Each experimental jar contains sterilised soil of termite mound, small piece of termite nest (as shelter), test block and small quantity of perishable wood as a food for termites. Culture were maintained at a temperature of 28 ± 1 and 95 ± 5 relative humidity.

Water was sprinkled regularly after 10-15 days interval to maintain R.H. and to avoid drying of soil in the jar. At least five or six water trays are sufficient to maintain desirable relative humidity of the room (12' x 12' x 14'). During extreme cold winter days, the temperature was regulated with the help of thermostatic controlled heat convector/room heater. For proper aeration 5-6 holes were made on the tin-lid of each experimental jars.