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Studies on the effect of weather parameters and time of planting on the incidence of early shoot borer, *Chilo infuscatellus* Snell in sugarcane

Kammili Jhansi, Kannaji Prasada Rao and Kakkumanu Subash Chandra Bose

Abstract

Studies were conducted at Sugarcane Research Station, Vuyyuru to know the effect of meteorological factors and time of planting on the incidence of early shoot borer, *Chilo infuscatellus* Snell in Sugarcane. Three varieties viz., 99V30, 2000V59 and 2003V46 were planted at fortnight intervals from January to April. The percent incidence of shoot borer was recorded weekly starting from 3rd week after planting to 18th week in the three varieties in all the eight plantings. The corresponding meteorological data were also recorded. Correlation coefficient of the variety and time of planting, the percent shoot borer incidence recorded at weekly intervals showed positive correlation with max temp, min temp and sunshine hours and negative correlation with was worked out. Irrespective forenoon and afternoon relative humidity and rainfall for the current week and preceding two weeks.

Keywords: Sugarcane, *Chilo infuscatellus* (Early shoot borer), weather parameters

Introduction

Sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) is an important commercial crop grown in India, supporting the second largest agro – based industry. Among the various factors attributed to low productivity and recovery levels, ravages of pests is an important one, as this crop was reported to be infested by more than 100 pests, out of which 49 were major pests [9]. Sugarcane early shoot borer, *Chilo infuscatellus* Snell is distributed throughout the sugarcane growing areas and is said to be a key pest in early stages of crop growth causing economic loss [1]. In Andhra Pradesh, it commences its infestation from germination as shoot borer and continues up to the formative phase. In a year of drought and scanty rainfall it also extends damage to the growing cane. The shoot damage is done by the larvae by boring into it initially, followed by feeding on the growing point. As the larvae feed on the basal portion of the youngest leaf, due to which the leaf is being cut off from the plant and forms the “dead heart” after drying, that can be easily pulled out. The dead heart emits an offensive odour and is described as the distinct symptom of infestation of ESB, *C. infuscatellus*. The pest infests rainfed sugarcane crop severely taking toll of over 70 percent shoot [12]. According to Patel and Hapase [4], it was reported that the ESB causes about 22 to 33 percent loss in cane yield, 12 percent in sugar recovery, 2 percent in commercial cane sugar and 27 percent in jaggery. Infestation of ESB, results in both quantitative and qualitative losses subjecting cane growers and sugar industry to a substantial loss. A number of cultural, mechanical, biological and chemical methods have been evolved from time to time for suppression of early shoot borer. Considering the seriousness of the pest, it was felt essential to undertake investigation on the incidence of the pest in different plantings at fortnight intervals and its relationship with meteorological factors.

Materials and Methods

Experiments were conducted to study the factors associated for the incidence of early shoot borer in sugarcane at Sugarcane Research Station, Vuyyuru. The experiment was laid out in strip plot with three varieties having 12 x 8 x 0.8 meter plot size (12 rows of 8 meters length). The plantings were done from January to April at fortnight intervals. The recommended doses of NPK were applied @ 168: 75: 100 per hectare. Irrigations were given once in 6 days during vegetative phase, as and when necessary during rainy season and once in three weeks during maturity phase.

All the agronomical practices like weeding, inter cultivation were followed to maintain a healthy crop. First tier and second tier trash twist propping were also taken up, to prevent lodging due to rains and winds. In all the eight plantings in all the three varieties, the incidence of early shoot borer was recorded starting from 3rd week to 18th week after planting. The corresponding meteorological data were also recorded. The percentage incidence of shoot borer was calculated by counting total number of healthy and affected shoots. Statistical analysis of the data on percent incidence of shoot borer and weather factors were carried out to determine correlation co efficient.

Results and Discussion

There was no much variation in the per cent incidence of shoot borer between the three varieties *viz.*, 99V30, 2000V59 and 2003V46 in different plantings *ie.*, from January to April at fortnight intervals (all the eight plantings) as depicted in Fig1. There was gradual increase in the percent incidence of shoot borer from 3rd week after planting up to 10-13th weeks after planting and there after a gradual decline (Fig2).

Irrespective of the variety, the stage of the crop is playing an important role in shoot borer incidence (Fig 1, 3, 4 and 5). Once the internodes are formed there was decline in the borer incidence. Tillingering phase is more vulnerable for borer incidence [12, 16].

The shoot borer incidence was observed to be comparatively high in March and April plantings compared to January and February plantings (Fig 2) in all the three varieties (Fig 3, 4 and 5). High incidence of early shoot borer in March and

April planted crop was due to synchrony and peak activity of *C. infuscatellus* with vulnerable stage of the pest as observed by Mali [10], Duhra *et al.* [2] and Jena and Patnaik [6]. Similar results of less incidence of early shoot borer was observed by Sithanatha *et al.* [14] and high incidence in late plantings by Thirumurugan *et al.* [16].

The present study made to observe the correlation between early shoot borer, *Chilo infuscatellus* and weather parameters showed a significant positive correlation with ESB incidence and significant negative correlation with forenoon and afternoon relative humidity (Tab1). Some earlier workers had also found that high day temperatures coupled with moderate relative humidity was conducive for multiplication of ESB [7], [8], [15]. The current week rainfall had a significant negative correlation and preceding two week rainfall a non-significant negative correlation with shoot borer incidence (Table 1), which is in conformity with the findings given by Prasada Rao *et al.* [12] and Samui [13]. The sunshine hours had a weak positive correlation with pest incidence as reported by Hasabe and Khaire [5].

Studies on relationship of meteorological parameters with ESB indicated maximum temperature and minimum temperature showed significant positive correlation. The morning and evening relative humidity showed significant negative correlation. The rainfall and sunshine hours showed non-significant negative and positive correlations respectively. The results are in conformity with the earlier findings by Hapase *et al.* [4], Gajjar *et al.* [3] and Umashankar and Patel [17].

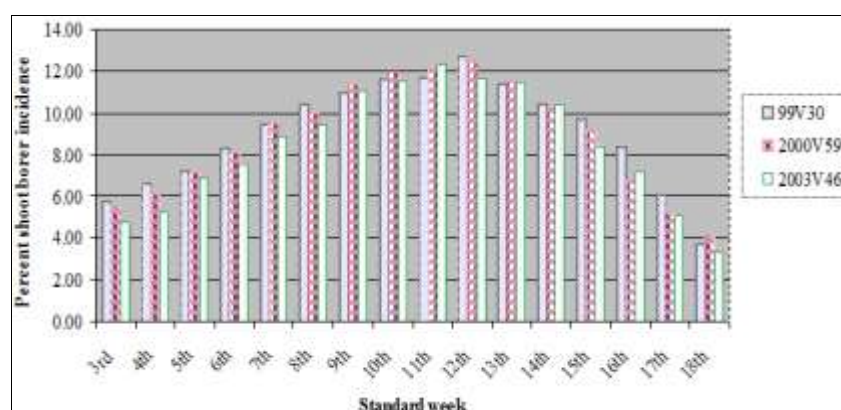


Fig 1: shoot borer incidence in different varieties

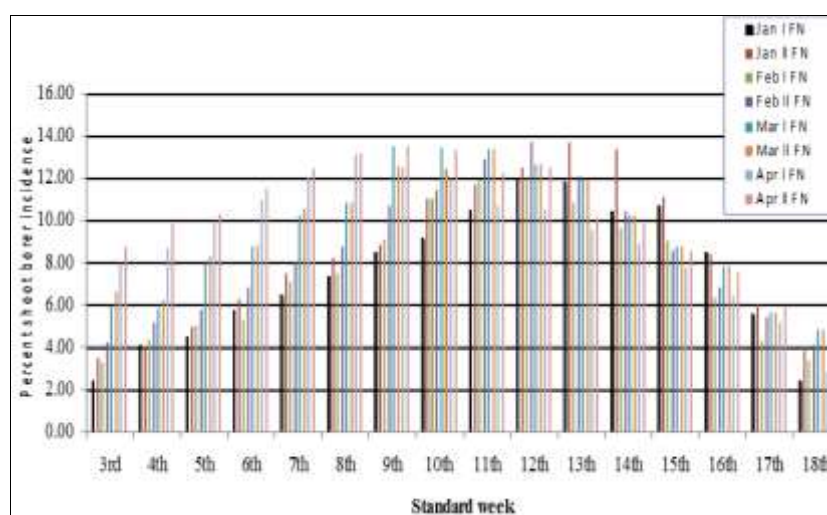


Fig 2: Shoot borer incidence at different times of plantings

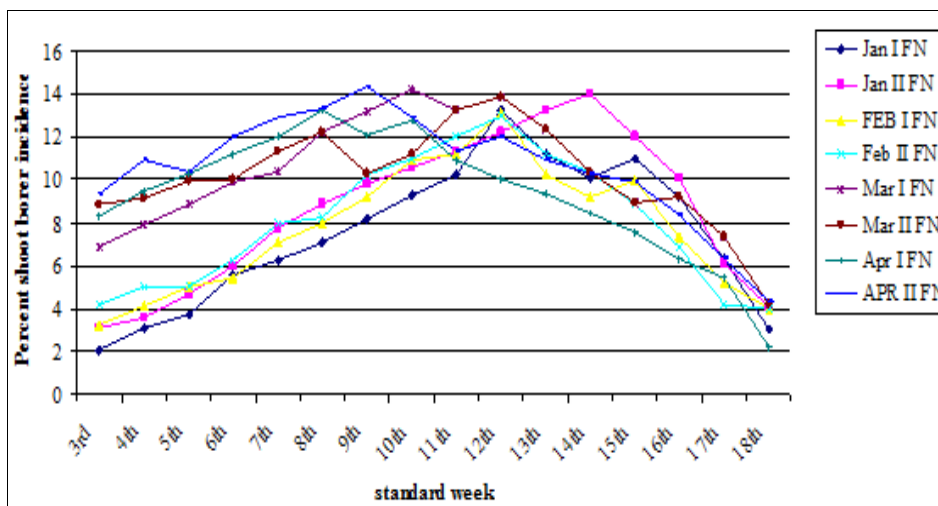


Fig 3: Shoot borer incidence in 99v30 at fortnight intervals planting

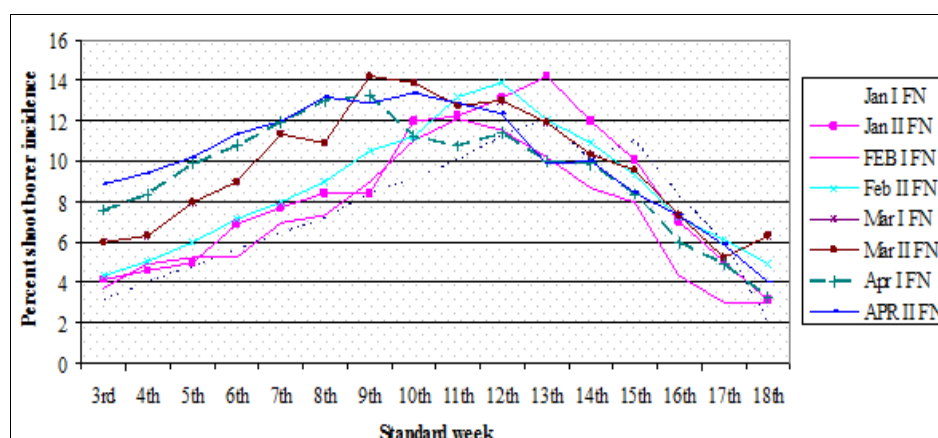


Fig 4: Percent shoot incidence in 2000 V 59 at fortnight intervals planting

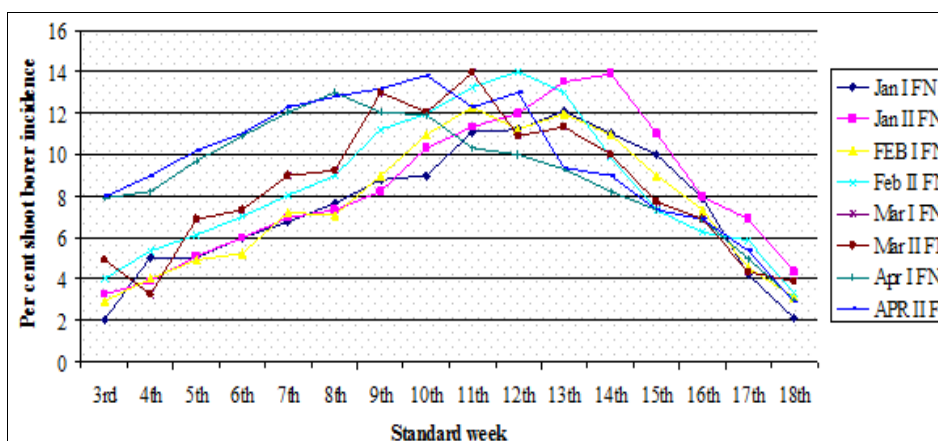


Fig 5: Shoot borer incidence in 2003 V 46 at fortnight intervals planting

Table 1: Influence of weather parameters on incidence of ESB

Weather parameter	Correlation co- efficient	
	corresponding week	Preceding two weeks
Maximum Temperature °C	0.41 **	0.40 **
Minimum Temperature °C	0.38 **	0.40 **
Relative humidity % – F.N	- 0.39 **	- 0.28 **
Relative humidity % – A.N	- 0.28 **	- 0.26 **
Rainfall (mm)	- 0.18 *	- 0.10
Sunshine Hours	0.11	0.21

Conclusions

The shoot borer incidence is influenced by neither the variety nor the time of planting. The tillering stage of the crop is most

vulnerable for the pest attack. Maximum temperature, minimum temperature and sunshine hours had a positive correlation and forenoon and after noon relative humidity and rainfall had a negative correlation with shoot borer incidence. From foregoing results it may be concluded that it is difficult to find out the direct cause and effect relationship between any single climatic factor and pest activity. The impacts of weather on pest incidence are usually compound.

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