

Letter to the Editor

NOVEL STUDIES WITH CUBAN FRUIT FLIES

Dear Sr.

Tephritidae is one of the largest families of Diptera with about 4,450 species belonging to 500 genera. They occur throughout the world but the number of species is greater in tropical and subtropical areas. The family includes some of the most damaging agricultural pests in the world.

Studies related to the geographical distribution, host range, conventional diagnostic, traps and chemical control of native flies have been carried out in Cuba. However, recent researches in the world are focused in advanced technology for diagnostic.

For the first time, some Cuban Tephritidae specimens are being studied using molecular techniques. A molecular characterization of *Anastrepha suspensa* and *Anastrepha obliqua* from several localities was started by specialists from the National Centre for Animal and Plant Health (CENSA), Cuba on October 2006 in collaboration with the Central Science Laboratory (CSL) of York, England.

Several DNA extraction methods are being tested with adults and larvae. Sequences obtained from COI and ITS 1 of both fly species will be analysed for their use in barcode as diagnostic tool. Phylogenetic analysis is also being carried out.

Sincerely yours,

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