

## Fundecitrus to tackle the leprosis mite by enhancing pesticides efficacy

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"We have few acaricides for leprosis mite control in citrus," said Fundecitrus researcher Renato Bassanesi, who stressed that the continuous use of the same acaricides leads to losses in their effectiveness due to the selection of resistant mites.

"Therefore, it is important for pesticide companies to understand the size of our citrus industry and the importance of leprosis, so they can develop new acaricides to assist in controlling this disease," he added.

Fundecitrus recently hosted a visit from representatives of the agrochemical companies, Gowan Brasil and Agro-Kanesho. Also attending the meeting was Daniel JÃºnior de Andrade, acarologist professor at the SÃ£o Paulo State University (UNESP Jaboticabal).

Some of the representatives came from the US, Japan and South Korea, and closely observed the work carried out by the institution. Additionally, they sought to understand the potential of the citrus industry market, to decide whether to invest in the development of acaricides for controlling leprosis mite, a disease that causes significant losses to citrus growers.

Caused by the Citrus leprosis virus (CiLV) and transmitted by the *Brevipalpus phoenicis* mite, leprosis can cause production losses and reduce the lifespan of weakened trees. The disease affects tropical and subtropical regions and is restricted to the Americas. There are reported cases in South America (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia and Venezuela) and, more recently, in Central America (Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras), as well as in North America (Mexico).