

OUR NATIONAL ENTOMOLOGIST



Rana Mushtaq Ahmad is an entomologist with 30+ years of field experience in Pakistan’s cotton sector. A 1987 Entomology graduate from the University of Agriculture Faisalabad, he built his expertise in the private sector, focusing on pest management and pesticide formulation. He is the founder and Managing Director of Hexon Chemicals in Multan, known for developing practical, locally suited crop solutions. He is respected for his technical authority, integrity, and humble leadership.

Modern tools, value-chain training, certifications and digital marketing can boost performance and visibility at national and international levels. Most beekeepers focus only on honey production and do not produce value-added products. This is a brief version of the article. To read the full article, please visit our website www.entosociety.pk

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS OF BEEKEEPING IN PAKISTAN

Beekeeping is a growing agricultural sector with over 10,000 beekeepers and 20,000 allied stakeholders producing nearly 13,500 tons of honey annually. Punjab leads production, with

major areas in Rawalpindi, Attock, Jhelum, Chakwal, Sargodha, Mianwali and Layyah, while Karak, Kohat, Bunnu and Nizampur are key contributors in KP. Pakistan produces a wide range of honey types, with Beri honey standing out for its export value.

The honey value chain is mainly based in Peshawar, Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore and Karachi. Peshawar serves as the largest trading hub, with over 1,300 traders and 500 more across KP and Punjab. The sector can grow through better processing, storage, marketing and quality control.



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Entomologists & CEOs Biography

Discovery of New Termite Species in California Brings Notable Insights for Termite Pest Management

A new study confirms that two known species of subterranean termites in southern California are actually three. Researchers led by Joanne Chen in Chow-Yang Lee’s lab at UC Riverside, along with collaborators from the U.S. Forest Service, National Taiwan University, and UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, have confirmed that *Reticulitermes rusti* (pictured here, in winged alate form), joins *R. hesperus* and *R. tibialis*, and the distinction will allow for pest management strategies that are more specific to each. Previously, only *R. hesperus* and *R. tibialis* were recognized, but through genetic analysis (mitochondrial loci and microsatellites), morphological comparison, and cuticle chemistry, *R. rusti* was shown to be distinct.



The discovery matters for pest management: *R. rusti* displays behavioral traits different from *R. hesperus*, which could explain past inconsistencies in termite control efforts.

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Ian Newton said a biocontrol product for fall armyworm is ready to be used but requires approval. (ABC Far North: Brendan Mounter)



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AUSTRALIAN SCIENTISTS DISCOVER BIOCONTROL AGENTS AGAINST UNSTOPPABLE FALL ARMYWORM

Researchers from CSIRO and Queensland’s Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, including Dr. Ian Newton, Dr. Melina Miles, and Dr. Bea Apirajkamol, have discovered that native fungi and bacteria can effectively control the invasive fall armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*), a pest threatening maize and other crops worldwide.



Laboratory trials led by these teams showed that strains of fungi such as *Beauveria* and *cal*s, improving safety for farmers, and supporting long-term pest management. *Metarhizium*, along with the bacterium *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), caused rapid mortality in fall armyworm larvae—some within 24 hours. These biocontrol agents offer a sustainable alternative to chemical pesticides.

Commercial development of these biopesticides is expected once regulatory approvals are completed, offering a long-term solution to one of agriculture’s most damaging invasive pests.



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PYRILLA AND WHITEFLY INFESTATIONS PUT SUGARCANE YIELDS IN DANGER

Islamabad: The Ministry of National Food Security and Research has warned that rising levels in humidity has triggered severe pyrilla and whitefly infestations, posing a major threat to sugarcane production in Pakistan. Farmers have been urged to take immediate preventive steps, including field inspections, close contact with plant protection departments, and the timely use of recommended pesticides like Imidacloprid.

The pests attack the underside of sugarcane leaves by sucking out their juice, weakening the plants and drastically reducing yield potential. When the leaves become weak, the plant cannot grow properly. In addition, pyrilla releases a sticky liquid (honeydew) on the leaves. This sticky layer attracts a fungus that makes the leaves turn black. Black leaves cannot make food for the plant, which further reduces the sugarcane yield.

At a meeting chaired by Food Security Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain, the government announced awareness campaigns and coordinated efforts with agriculture departments to safeguard the crop and prevent irreversible losses.



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