



MANAGING NEMATODES

Managing plant parasitic nematodes in south African plum orchards require an integrated, multi-pronged strategy. The most common nematodes in south Africa are root-knot nematode (Meloidogyne) and ring nematode (Criconeimoides)

1. Management strategies

- » Managing nematodes start before planting.
- » Extract soil samples in hectare size blocks to determine species and density.
- » Take samples in the rootzone 20-60cm in depth.

2. Rootstock selection

- » The second step in managing nematodes is choosing resistant rootstocks.
- » Marianna and Maridon perform well but are susceptible to ring nematode.
- » GF 677, Cadaman and Atlas show good performance in heavily infested soils.



Root-knot nematode

Ring nematode

3. Soil Preparation

- » Fumigation with appropriate agents is essential, especially in sandy soils with a history of stonefruit or nematode problems.
- » Biofumigation by planting covercrops like mustard or sorghum-sudan grass that produce toxic substances can be the natural alternative.
- » Soil solarization is when the soil is covered with plastic during summer months to raise temperatures enough to kill nematodes. This is only effective in the very top part of the soil up to around 15 cm.



4. Cultural Practices

- » Can help in controlling nematode infestation
- » Cleaning equipment and proper orchard sanitation such as removing dead material totally is an effective tool.

5. Managing nematodes

In orchards which is in production is slightly more difficult but can be very effective:

- » Using registered rproducts or biological options can be applied through irrigation.
- » Adding compost encourages beneficial microorganisms that fight nematodes
- » Proper irrigation and fertilization help trees withstand the stress on infestation.

Kind regards

The Custom Plum team