

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR- 58557

Title: PHYTOSANITARY SURVEY IN CITRUS PRODUCTION UNITS IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF APORÃ , INHAMBUPE, AND SÃ TIRO DIAS.

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity			✓	
Significance			✓	

Reviewer Name: **ANAPANA GOPAL**

Reviewer's Comment for Publication.

General Comments

The manuscript addresses an important topic concerning phytosanitary monitoring of citrus orchards in Bahia, Brazil. The survey of 137 production units provides useful baseline information regarding pest occurrence and confirms the absence of major quarantine pests such as Huanglongbing (HLB) and Citrus Canker. The study is relevant for integrated pest management (IPM), phytosanitary surveillance, and regional agricultural planning. However, the manuscript is primarily descriptive and requires substantial revisions to improve its scientific rigor, novelty, statistical presentation, discussion, figure presentation, and English language before it can be considered for publication.

Minor Comments

1. Novelty is insufficiently highlighted

Although the survey provides valuable regional information, the manuscript does not clearly explain its scientific novelty.

The authors should explicitly state:

- Why these three municipalities were selected.
- What new information this survey contributes beyond previous citrus pest surveys.
- How this work advances phytosanitary monitoring in Brazil.

The research gap should be clearly identified in the Introduction.

2. Methodology requires more detail

Several important methodological details are missing.

Please include:

- Orchard selection criteria.
- Sampling strategy used to select the 137 production units.
- Orchard age.
- Plant density.

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- Citrus varieties surveyed.
- Orchard management practices.
- Number of inspectors involved.
- Training and calibration procedures.
- GPS coordinates or geographic distribution.
- Climatic conditions during the survey period.

These details are essential for reproducibility.

3. Pest identification needs validation

The manuscript indicates that pest identification was performed through field inspection.

However, it is not clear whether:

- laboratory confirmation was performed,
- microscopic identification was conducted,
- molecular confirmation was used for important pathogens,
- expert taxonomic verification was performed.

The identification procedure should be clarified, particularly for fungal diseases.

4. Statistical analysis is lacking

The study reports pest frequencies only.

No statistical analyses are presented.

The manuscript would be significantly improved by including:

- frequency analysis,
- confidence intervals,
- comparisons among municipalities,
- Chi-square analysis,
- cluster analysis,
- diversity indices,
- multivariate analysis (if appropriate).

Currently, the manuscript remains descriptive.

5. Discussion requires greater scientific depth

The discussion mainly repeats known information regarding citrus pests.

The authors should explain:

- why certain pests were dominant,
- environmental factors influencing pest occurrence,
- differences among municipalities,
- seasonal influences,
- implications for integrated pest management.

The discussion should interpret the results rather than simply describing them.

6. Absence of quarantine pests

The absence of Citrus Canker and Huanglongbing is an important finding.

However, the manuscript should discuss:

- possibility of false negatives,
- sampling limitations,
- detection sensitivity,
- need for periodic surveillance,

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- comparison with neighboring regions.

This would provide better scientific balance.

Specific Comments

Abstract

The abstract is clear.

However,

- include numerical percentages for the major pests,
- report the most prevalent pest,
- mention total number of production units earlier,
- avoid general statements.

The abstract should contain quantitative findings.

Introduction

The introduction is well organized.

However,

- reduce excessive background information,
- include more recent literature (2023–2026),
- clearly state the research hypothesis,
- explicitly define the scientific contribution of the study.

Materials and Methods

The methodology should specify:

- sampling intensity,
- orchard ownership characteristics,
- orchard size categories,
- survey duration per orchard,
- diagnostic criteria,
- equipment used,
- quality assurance procedures.

These additions will improve reproducibility.

Results

The figures effectively summarize pest occurrence.

However,

- include percentages instead of only counts,
- add statistical comparisons,
- improve figure resolution,
- ensure consistent figure numbering.

There is an important editorial issue:

Several figures are incorrectly numbered.

For example,

- Figure 2 appears multiple times.
- Figure numbering is inconsistent throughout the manuscript.

This should be corrected before publication.

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Discussion

Expand discussion by comparing findings with studies from:

- São Paulo,
- Minas Gerais,
- Paraná,
- other tropical citrus-producing countries.

Explain ecological factors influencing pest distribution.

The discussion should also address implications for sustainable pest management.

Conclusion

The conclusion is concise.

However,

it should include:

- study limitations,
- future monitoring recommendations,
- need for continuous surveillance,
- recommendations for growers.

Avoid simply repeating the results.

Language and Editorial Comments

The manuscript requires thorough English editing.

Examples include:

- "identifiedsuch as" → missing space.
- Several sentences are excessively long.
- Inconsistent capitalization.
- Scientific names should be italicized consistently.
- Figure captions require uniform formatting.
- "Figure 2" is repeated multiple times.
- Reference formatting is inconsistent.
- Some Portuguese references should be formatted according to journal style.

Strengths

- Relevant topic.
- Large field survey (137 production units).
- Practical importance for citrus growers.
- Supports phytosanitary surveillance.
- Useful baseline information.
- Confirms absence of major quarantine pests.
- Good integration of field observations with agricultural data.

Weaknesses

- Limited novelty.
- No statistical analysis.
- Discussion lacks interpretation.
- Methodology requires greater detail.
- Figure numbering errors.
- English language requires editing.
- Limited comparison with recent international literature.

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- Study limitations are not discussed.

Editorial Recommendation

The manuscript presents valuable regional phytosanitary information and has potential to contribute to citrus pest management. Nevertheless, significant revisions are needed to improve the methodological transparency, analytical depth, statistical treatment, discussion, and manuscript presentation.

Final Recommendation: Minor Revision.