

INTERNATIONAL PLANTATION INDUSTRY CONFERENCE 2016

WHAT PLANTERS NEED TO LOOK FOR TO BECOME SUCCESSFUL

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Experience in the Plantation Business

Service in the Plantation Industry	Years / Months
Kumpulan Guthrie	35
PT Agro Indo Mas	6 months
Ethiopian Plantation Investment Project	3 months
Advisor to MB Selangor	3 months
PT Poliplant Sejahtera	1
Samling Plantations	5
Perbadanan Kemajuan Pertanian Selangor (PKPS)	>2
Total Service in the Plantation Industry	>44

Presentation for this paper is strictly from my long experience in the plantation industry,
locally as well as overseas

What and who are Planters

Planters are a special breed of people – tough and resilient

Whenever planters are termed Good Planter, are they excellent planters ?

No, they are Good Ole Planters

SOLVING PROBLEMS IN PLANTATIONS - IS IT AN ART OR SCIENCE

Solving problems in Plantations are both
Science and Art

RESISTANCE TO CHANGES - WHY

- Why are Plantations reluctant to change their management style and techniques as well as improving their facilities / infrastructures
- Is profit their driving force at the expense of losing their workers?
- However, there are Plantations with good facilities but still loses workers to their neighbours who do not have such good infras.
- Why are Malaysian and even Indonesian plantations have stagnant performance
- One reason is their reluctance to change as a result of comfortable profits over the last few years when commodity price was very high
- Do not believe training is important to improve plantation performance

Success is not automatic or good luck but concerted efforts to overcome all hurdles in the work routines whether it is a short term effort or long term objectives

Leadership

**Leadership Is Not About Size,
It's An Attitude**



Suggested Methodologies

Imaginative and Creativity

- Set your goals and priorities correctly
- Day dreaming may be good if it does not go astray too much. It may be the beginning of “thinking out of the box”
- For new projects, e.g. ponder over it for a few times and consult others before embarking on it. This will prevent likelihood of making mistakes

Good Leadership

Be compassionate to everyone

- Attend weddings, funerals, religious festivals, sports, games and other social activities
- Willingness to meet, greet and listen to anyone

Do not forget to acknowledge each time workers wave at you. Best for you as a leader to greet them before they do. There is nothing to lose by doing so !

- Not authoritative
- Be humble, try to control hot tempers as far as possible despite work pressures, etc.
- Conduct regular meetings with a cross sections of the Plantation population to show that you care.

This gives you good feedback to remedy any wrongdoings, overdue repairs to buildings or even the workers quarters on time. Priority #1 - Water, Priority #2 - electricity

- Self-motivated and at the same time motivating others. This will encourage bright ideas and promoting loyalty
- Respect every single team members and that includes gardeners, cleaners, sweepers and even septic tank cleaners. (Without them, you will face problems)

Sports and Recreational for Team Members



Sports and Recreational for Team Members - Ladies Nite



Worker's Safety and comfort



Passenger Area



Passenger Trailer for Workers



Chemical Pump
Storage Area

Comfort
Capacity 15 Person



Housing, Welfare & Recreation



Workers' Quarters



Shop Houses



Football Field



Chinese Temple



Surau



Hindu Temple

Socially Responsible



Ceramah Agama



Trip to Melaka for long service workers



Police Station



Tamil School



Creche for Worker's Children

Safety Signage & Activities



Post Pesticide Handling – Safety Activities



Ladies'
Toilet, Changing & Wash Room



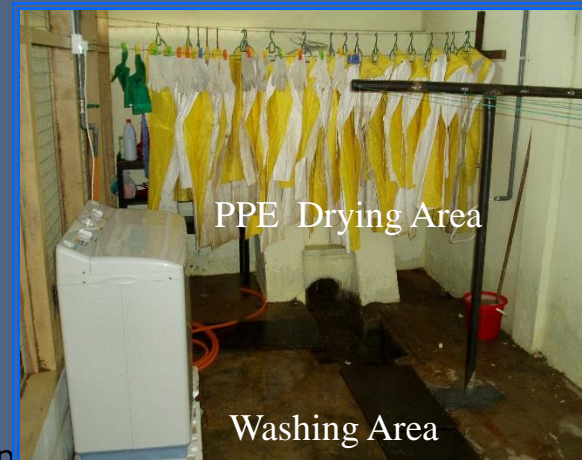
Personal Locker



Gents'
Toilet, Changing & Wash Room



Washing & Drying Clothes



PPE Drying Area

Washing Area



Clothes Drying Area

Field Calibration - Training



Skills upbringing

- Force ourselves to be knowledgeable first on all sectors of work as far as possible
- Select interesting topics
- Then give lectures / teach to various groups followed by practical training
- Train the trainers to take over
- Have an effective follow through system
- Lectures relating to human values, disciplines and cultures are even relevant to make them enjoy listening. It will bring them closer and make them work as a team and eventually loyal to you as well as the organisation

Examples of Basic Technical Knowledge on Oil Palm

Rhizosphere

What is Rhizosphere ?

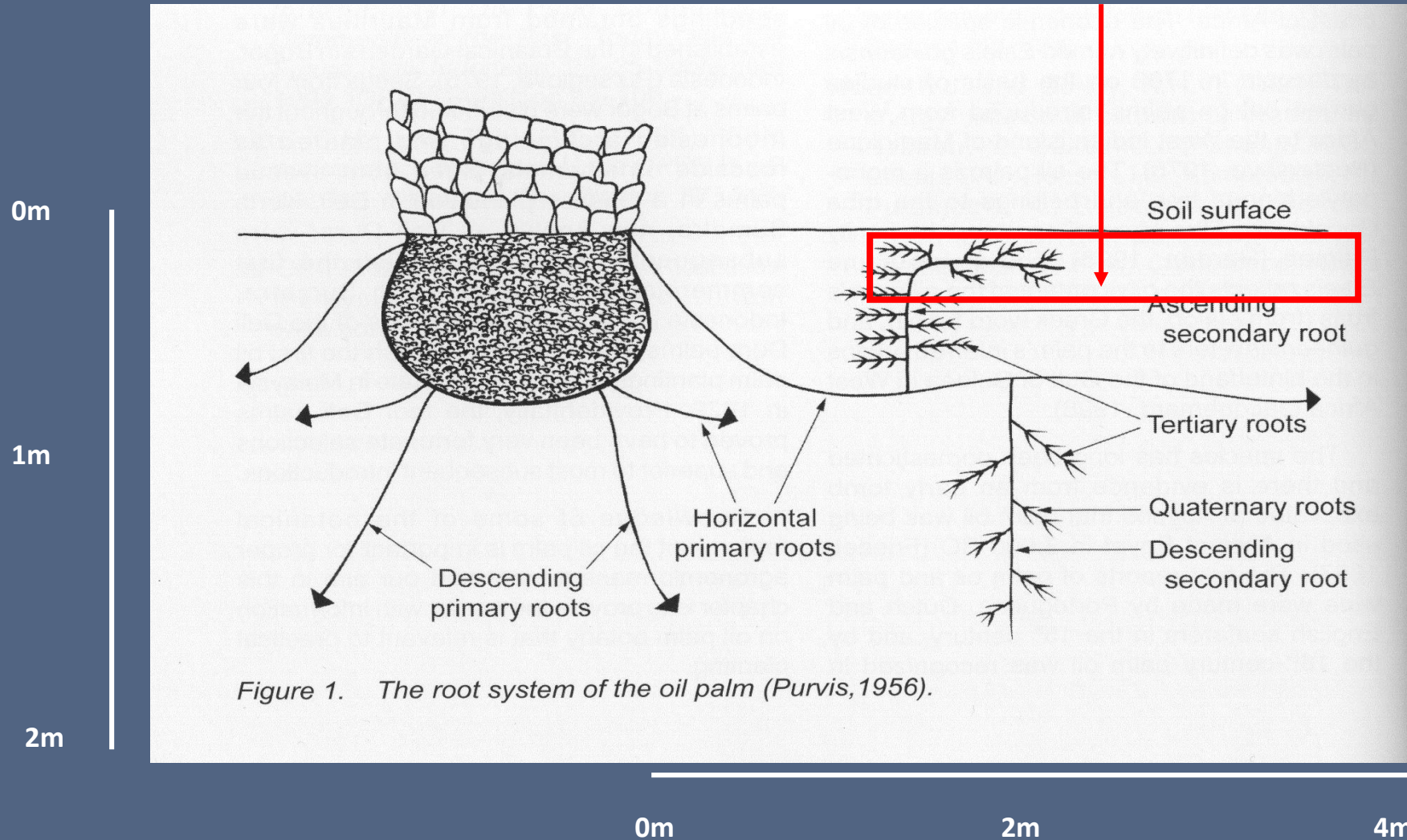
Rhizosphere = Where optimum uptake of nutrients & water is taking place in the root system of a crop

Where is the Active Rhizosphere of Oil Palm?

Active Rhizosphere Zone of Oil Palm (>6 years)

Vertical depth = 10-30cm

Horizontal spread = 1.5m - >10m





Feeding zone

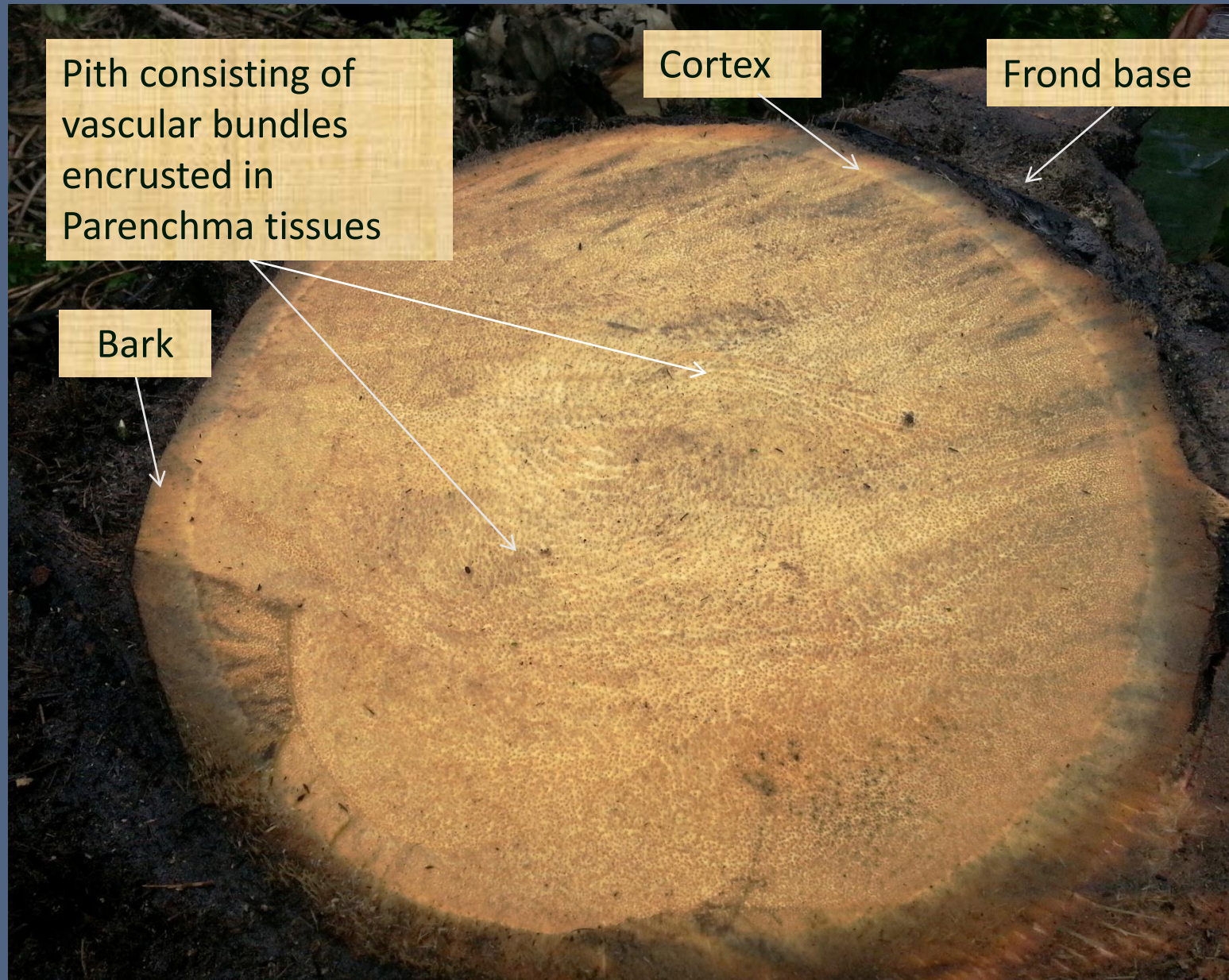
- Secondary Roots
- Tertiary Roots
- Quaternary roots
- Primary Roots

Location beside water pit

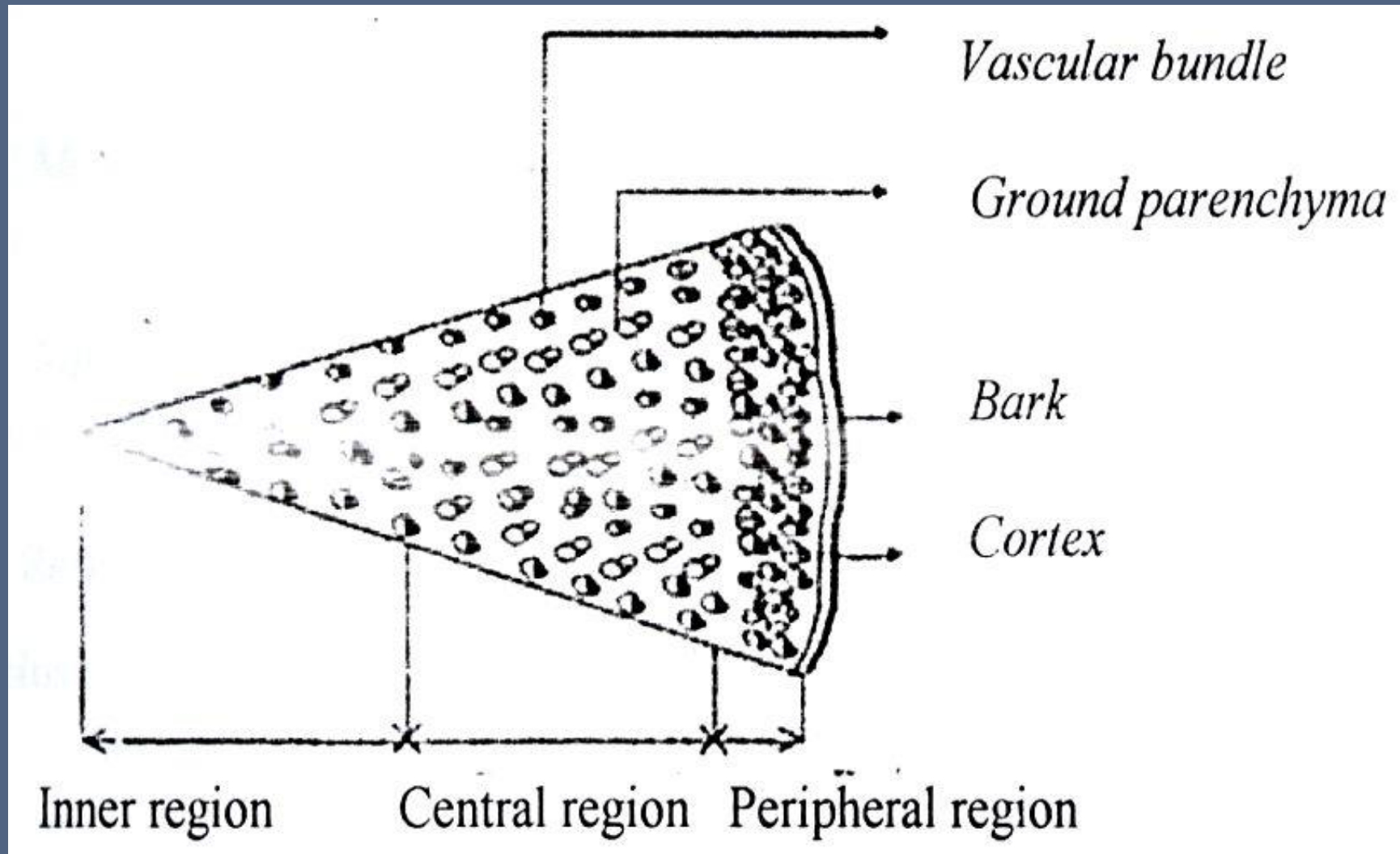
OP TRUNK



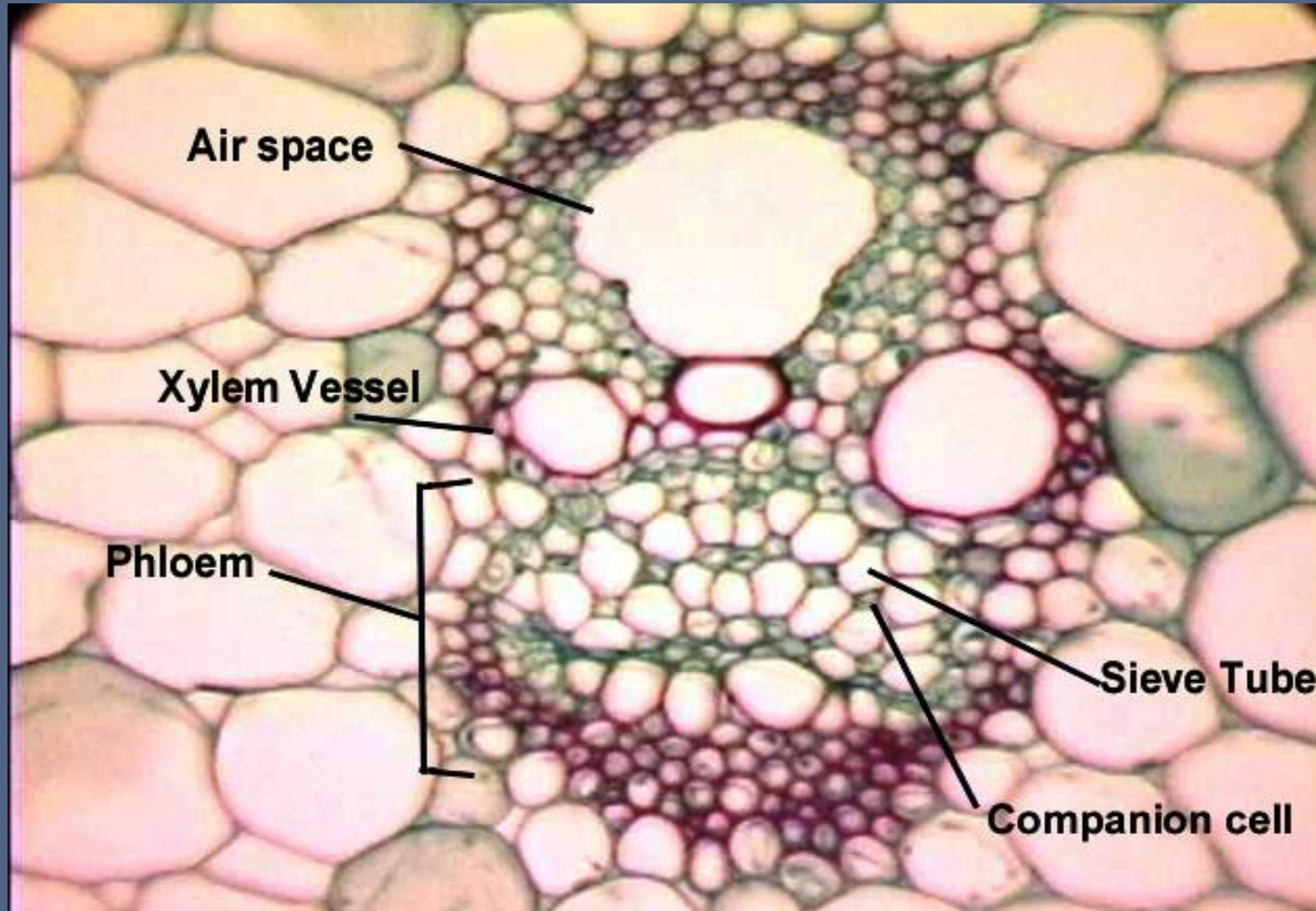
Cross Section of the Stem



Components in the OP Trunk



Components in the Vascular Bundle



APICAL MERISTEM (UMBUT)



Apical Meristem (Palm Heart)



YOUNG UNOPENED FLOWERS

Female Flower



Tiny formation of Flowers

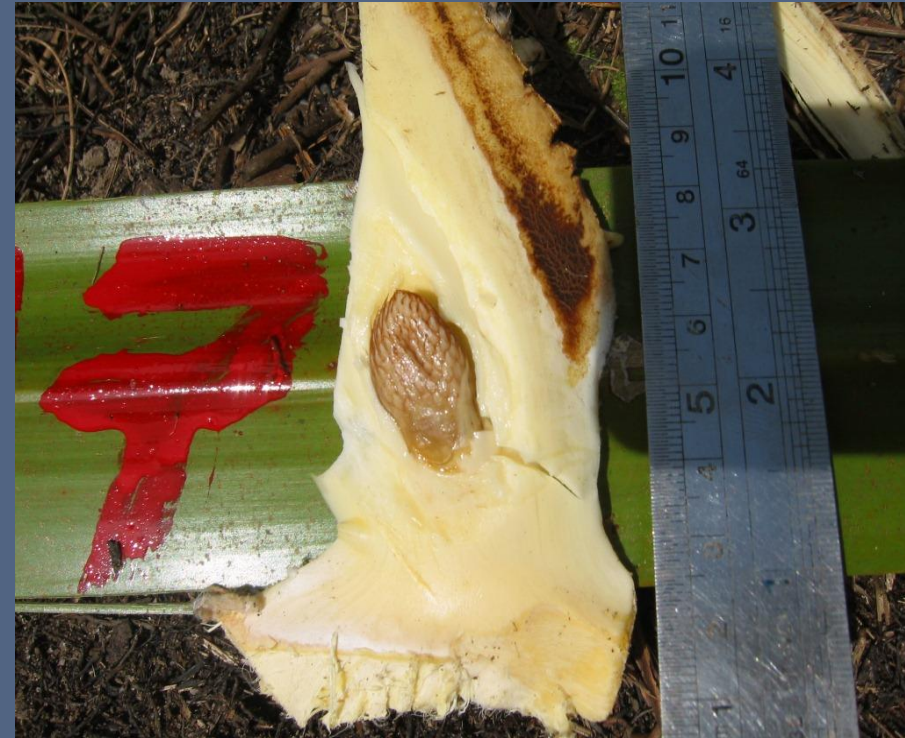


FLORAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE FRONDS

Very Young Inflorescence in the Development Stage



Signs of Self Abortion due to Unfavourable Conditions



INFLORESCENCE



Figure 1.2 A matured male inflorescence

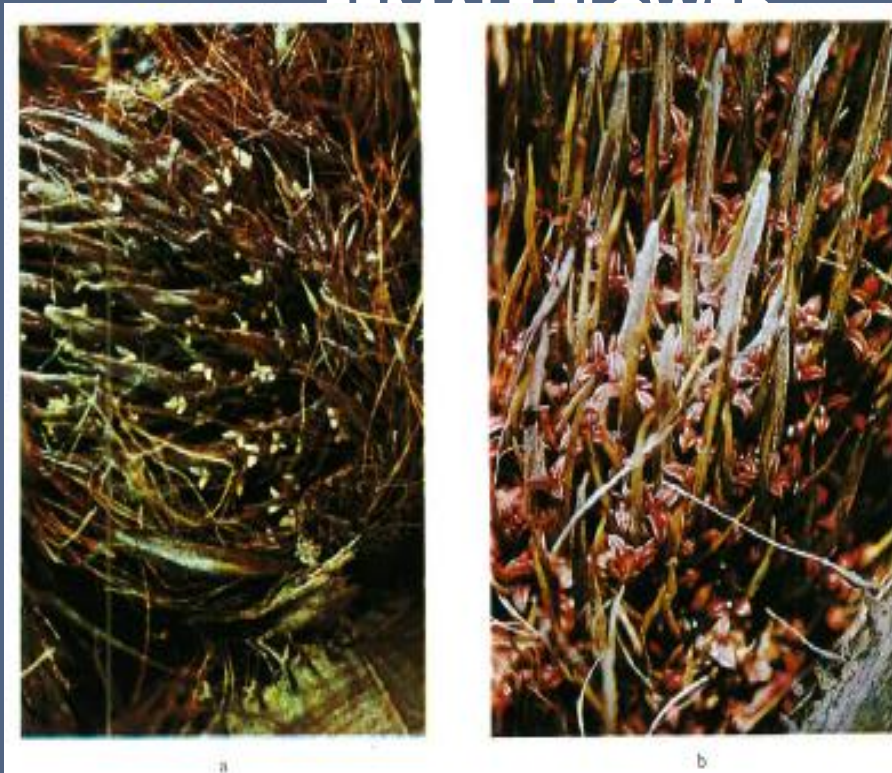


Figure 1.3 Female inflorescences: (a) receptive, (b) no longer receptive

Pollination by *Elaiedobius kamerunicus* (Weevil)

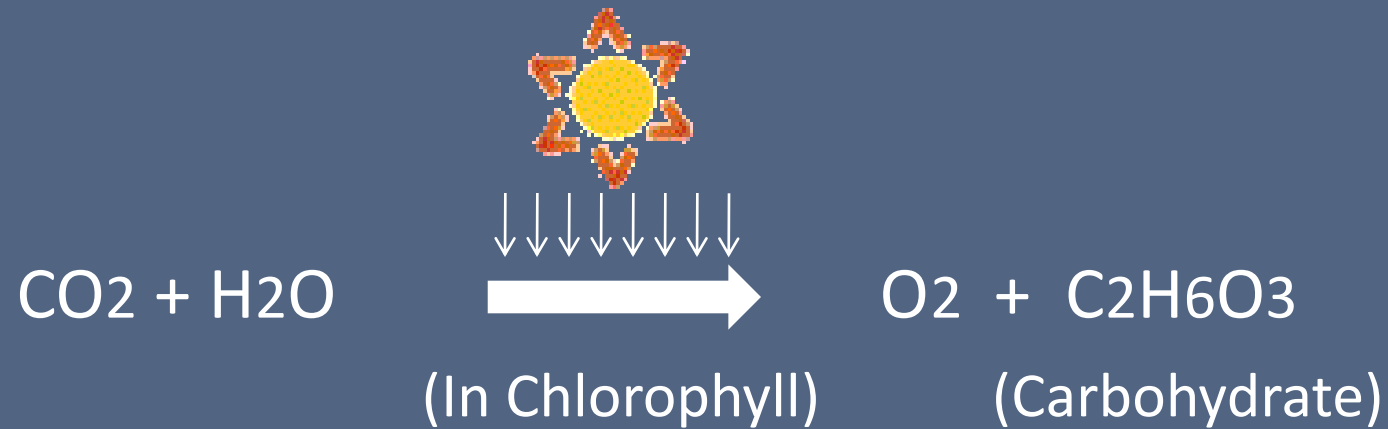
Weevil feeding on pollen



CROWN - FRONDS

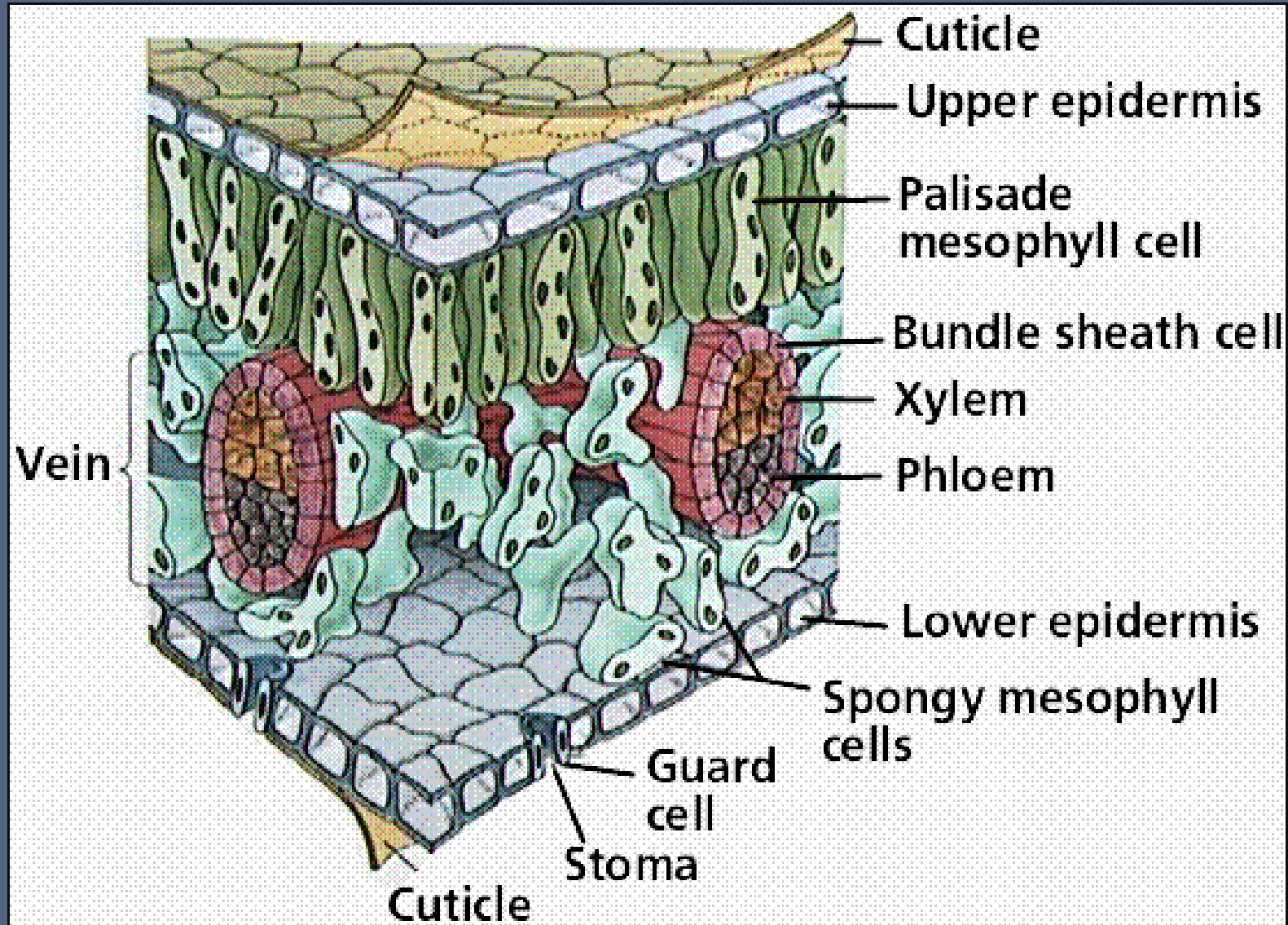


Photosynthesis Process



Carbohydrates in the fruits will later change to fatty acids (palm oil) during the ripening process

Frond X-Section



Planters Needs These Basic Courses to Succeed

- A) Basic Botany and Palm Physiology
- B) Manuring Complete
- C) Harvesting Complete
- D) Field Upkeep Complete
- E) Pests & Diseases – Major and Minor
- F) Quality Assurance / Control
- E) OSHA and Other Labour Laws
- F) Others

Contribution of Ideas

- To the workplace i.e. to all levels of personnel through training as described earlier
- To the Company – ideas disseminated to the other Plantations in the Group
- To the Industry i.e. at the National or International if you can

Compliance to All Laws, Rules and Regulations

- Needless to say that the various laws, rules and regulations must be adhered as far as possible.
- Only the immigration laws on employing illegals is extremely difficult for plantations to survive without labour. The Government should assist Plantations to overcome this acute shortage.
- Wherever they come from, Planters should take real good care of their workers, you can consider being successful if the foreign workers can serve you 3 years. Better if it can extend for more than 5 years, there are known cases of 10 years
- To me, workers leaving prematurely or absconded is a setback to our system. We should get frustrated and feel dejected

Willingness to Change with the Times

- Such as mechanisation due to impending or unavoidable shortage of labour and increase in wages. Labour wages has also climbed to a new high level and will move further upwards in the near future. Thus Planters must be creative to improve their labour productivity
- Study the practices well, look seriously at ratios:

Total labour Ratios – normally 8-10 Ha : worker. Need to increase it to say 1 to 12 Ha : Worker in order to be less labour dependent

- Introduce contract weeding as an example
- Total harvester ratio – normally 16 to 30 depending on situation (e.g. 16 for very tall palms and 30 for new areas coming to maturity)



AWARDS

Landscape Award - Ladang Terbaik National Level 1997



LADANG BAHAGIA (BEST OVERALL) AWARD by PRIME MINISTER DR. MAHATHIR MUHAMAD 1998



Competency Assessment System First in Kumpulan Guthrie - 2003





Ladang Kelapa Sawit Pertama Di Dunia

EUREPgap

RECOGNITION From EUREPGAP



Pencapaian OER tertinggi KKSTM



22.25 %

Conclusion

- As Planters, they must be flexible with their working hours and they must be task driven rather than time driven workers.
- Work both ways - hard and smart
- Ruggedness is compulsory
- For young Planters, don't worry when making mistakes, we learn from them. But don't repeat these mistakes as it may be costly by then.
- Sacrifice your time and perhaps part of your small income to the workers in need. There should be more rewards in the offing ...
- Be willing to listen to feedbacks from even the linesite sweepers or sanitation cleaners
- Reward will await you sooner or later

Wishing You All The Very Success



Never loose sight on what you are working for.....

THANK YOU