

A. The Failure of Fruit Production in Phaseolus multifloris and Vicia faba.

1. Introduction.

Phaseolus multifloris Willd. and Vicia faba Linn. are important vegetable crops in many temperate countries. Attempts have been made to grow these crops in the tropics, but little success has been achieved, due to the failure of the flowers to set fruit.

Herklots (1947) reports that P. multifloris grows well and flowers in Hong Kong, but only sets an occasional pod. Seeds from America and England were grown, but little success was obtained with either. In Tanganyika, on Mount Meru, very near the Equator, it produces pods in abundance, but seeds brought back from there and planted in Hong Kong yielded little better results. It was therefore concluded that some factor is missing in Hong Kong for the suitable production of these beans,

In Malaya (Milsum and Grist, 1941) the crop is equally unsatisfactory and only forms an occasional pod. In Mauritius it is reported (Coombes and Julien, 1949) to form a few pods, but these were spoilt by Maruca testulalis (a Pod Borer) and work on the vegetable was discontinued after one year.

V. faba has been grown on occasions on hill stations in Malaya (Milsum and Grist, 1941) but with little success. J.J. Ochse reports the same in Java. As with P. multifloris the plants grow well, but will not produce beans or only occasionally. Herklots (1947) reports that many people have tried to grow the crop in Hong Kong, but without success - it sometimes happens that the first crop of flowers fails, but of the second crop, on the axillary branches, some develop pods.