INTRODUCTION

Tomatoes are considered to be one of the most important vegetable crops grown in Trinidad. Some estimates from the economic point of view give the following data: 900 - 1,000 acres produce yearly in Trinidad more or less 6 to 7 million pounds of fresh fruit, valued at over 1 million dollars (B.W.I.) (Campbell and Bharath, 1960).

Tomatoes are cultivated under field conditions by small farmers in different parts of Trinidad. They are mainly planted during the dry season (December to May). Also it is possible to see them during the wet season (May to December)but on a smaller scale (Campbell, 1958; Campbell, 1961; Campbell and Gooding, 1962).

The principal diseases which reduce tomato yields in Trinidad are: Foliage diseases, wilts and eel worms, (Campbell and Bharath, 1960). In this work we are interested in the last one, the importance of which was also mentioned by early workers like Briant, 1932; Topper, 1942; Baker, 1943; and Robertson, 1951.

Therefore in this work it has been decided to do some preliminary investigations on root-knot nematodes, (Meloidogyne spp). The principal aims are:-

1. Root-knot nematodes (Meloidogyne spp) distribution in the principal places in which tomatoes are grown.
2. To observe levels of infestation in tomato plants grown under field conditions.
3. Determination of host ranges in the greenhouse with inoculum coming from each place under study.

This last point is important because in most places where tomatoes are grown other food crops also can grow.

This work was carried out in the Faculty of Agriculture of the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad during 1965-66 in part fulfilment of the Certificate of Advanced Studies.