

ABSTRACT

Root-knot nematodes (RKNs) (*Meloidogyne* spp.) is a major constraint to tomato (*Solanum lycopersicum* L.) production in sub-Saharan Africa; yet there is low adoption of recommended nematode control measures in regions like east Africa due to inadequate farmer knowledge about the pest and associated diseases. The objective of this study was to assess farmers' knowledge status, and intensity of damage of root-knot nematodes and their management practices in Kenya. A survey was conducted in Kenya, during February to August 2021; using a semi-structured questionnaire administered to 282 randomly selected household heads of actively growing tomato farmers, at two elevations in three counties. Most farmers (98.9%) could not identify the disease precisely. They mostly attributed its symptoms to moisture stress and nutrient deficiencies. Most farmers (63%) practiced mono-cropping; while only 4.3% of farmers amended soils with manure. Respondents preferred growing RKN susceptible tomato varieties, mainly Rio-Grande, Cal J, Onyx and Kilele FI. A total of 92% expressed willingness to shift to RKNs resistant varieties, if recommended varieties match their desirable characteristics. Majority of the respondents lacked knowledge on nematode characteristics and its associated disease control. A total of 37.9% of the respondents did not use control measures against the RKNs. There was high disease incidence, severity and galling index in the surveyed areas.