

## PHYTOPHAGOUS MITES — LITTLE KNOWN HOSTS OF ENTOMOPATHOGENIC FUNGI

### S u m m a r y

Little is known about parasitic fungi associated with mites, but interest in them is growing because of their potential as agents for biological control of many pests and diseases vectors among these arthropods. An overview is given of studies on fungal diseases of phytophagous mites. Most of these studies concern on fungal pathogens of eriophyoids and spider mites. The most frequently encountered pathogens of mites belong to the genera *Neozygites* of the order Entomophthorales and *Hirsutella* of the hyphomycetous anamorphs. These two fungal genera differ not only taxonomically but they also have different biology and pathogenic abilities. *Neozygites floridana* is a common species causing epizootics in spider mite popula-

tions, while fungi from the genus *Hirsutella* seem to be more specific to eriophyoid mites. They are of special interest because most of their strains can be grown on artificial media and multiplied by this means for application against pest mites. Fungus *H. thompsonii* commercial mycoacaricide Mycar was produced for the control of eriophyoid mites on citrus. The state of the knowledge about the mycoses of mites should be estimated as initial and further research is required to clarify the taxonomic anamorph — teleomorph alliances of fungal pathogens of mites especially from the genus *Hirsutella*, and to study their ecology in order to develop their efficient biotechnological utilization for pest control.