

**Other Pepper Varieties Cultivated in Sarawak**  
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In the second article on pepper, we were looking at the three currently recommended varieties in Sarawak. In this article, we look at the other pepper varieties that have been planted by farmers in the State. These varieties are not recommended by the Department of Agriculture.

**Uthirancotta**

This variety was introduced from India in 1957. The farmers call it *Lada India*. It has long and narrow leaves and bears abundant fruit spikes. However, the fruit setting is not as good as that of *Kuching* due to the lower percentage of hermaphrodite flowers. The berries are smaller than those of *Kuching* and are not very suitable for processing into white pepper. *Uthirancotta* is highly susceptible to weevil infestation and root-knot nematodes. It is, however, more tolerant to black berry disease and is planted in pure or mixed stands in a number of holdings in Sarawak.

**Semongok perak**

This variety was derived from clonal selection of an introduced variety. Its leaves and fruit spikes are darker green than those of *Kuching* and *Semongok emas*. It was selected and released in 1988 as an additional variety due to its precocity and impressive yield in the first year. Its yield in the second and third year was quite similar to those of *Kuching* and *Semongok emas*, but declined in subsequent years.

*Semongok perak* is very susceptible to infestation by pepper weevil that causes the fruiting branches as well as the terminal shoot to break off and hence the decline in berry yield. This variety is still being planted by farmers as it is an early yielder and is not as susceptible as *Kuching* to *Phytophthora* foot rot and black berry diseases.

**Semongok 1**

This variety is a selection of *Panniyur 1* that was originally introduced from India under the International Pepper Community Intervarietal Exchange Programme in 1993. It has longer spikes and bigger and broader leaves with longer internodes when compared to those of *Kuching*, *Semongok emas* and *Semongok perak*. However, the number of spikes produced per vine is much lower than those of these three varieties and so the yield per vine is the lowest. *Semongok 1* is extremely susceptible to pepper weevil infestation.

**Lada Nyerigai**

*Nyerigai* pepper is a local selection planted by farmers, mainly in the Samarahan, Sri Aman and Betong Divisions. No one is sure where it originates from; it could have arisen from seedling material or is a mutant of *Kuching*. The plant has a good architecture in which the lateral branches are at 80-90° with respect to the main stem. These branches do not droop down in contrast to those of other varieties, thus allowing more sunlight to

pass through the canopy. The yield of *Nyerigai* pepper is similar to that of *Kuching*. This variety is also very susceptible to black berry disease.



**(See photos on separate file)**

***Crop Research Corner:*** This corner carries a fortnightly series of articles mainly on crop research contributed by research officers based at the Agriculture Research Centre (ARC) Semongok, located at Km 21, Jalan Puncak Borneo, near Kuching. The focus of the articles is on crop research and technology carried out and their contribution to agriculture in Sarawak. The above is the third of a series of articles on pepper. The article was contributed by Senior Research Officer Paulus Amin Det (e-mail: [Paulusad@sarawaknet.gov.my](mailto:Paulusad@sarawaknet.gov.my)).