

**Preference of the south Indian palm squirrel, *Funambulus palmarum* for dry baits** CP1333

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The south Indian palm squirrel (*Funambulus palmarum* Linnaeus) is a predominant rodent pest of cacao (*Theobroma cacao* L.) in south India. Studies have been carried out in laboratory, using locally available

cereals (paddy, jowar, wheat, barley and finger millet) and pulses (cowpea and Bengal gram), to find out the best bait base for the control of this pest. The additive effects of oils, sugar and salt were also worked out.

The baits were exposed simultaneously and the amount of each bait consumed was taken as the criterion in giving ranks.

The south Indian palm squirrels consumed cereals in preference to pulses and finger millet was most

preferred, both as whole grain and as powder. Addition of oils, sugar and salt had no significant influence. The order of intake of different forms of the bait was : whole grain > whole grain + 2% sugar > flour > whole grain + 2% oil.