



SDI Review Form 1.5

PART A:

Journal Name:	British Journal of Applied Science & Technology
Manuscript Number:	MS: 2012/BJAST/1704
Title of the Manuscript:	Screening Potentials Weed Species as Alternate Hosts of Insect Vectors of the Lethal Yellowing Disease (LYD) of Coconut Palms (<i>Cocos nucifera</i> L.) in Nigeria.

(Note: Title of different sections as proposed below may differ in case of review paper)



SDI Review Form 1.5

PART B: Review Comments

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part and write here 'Corrected'/ if not agreed, give suitable justifications)
General comment:	Overall this is an interesting paper on the presence of "potential" insect vectors on vegetation in areas of LYD infestation, looking at other plant species as alternative host reservoirs. The paper would be of interest for the general reader, but as it currently stand, major components need to be clarified, re-written and in sections more detail and quantification is needed.	Agreed and corrected.
Specific comments:	Overall the paper is very confusing and it is unclear what the study exactly did and how the authors came to their conclusion (unclear objectives, methodology & results) . More specific comments are indicated directly in the manuscript – please refer to them.	Agreed and corrected.
Title and abstract	Title is confusing and could be more specific; regarding abstract – see comments on script. Sentence structure in places confusing.	Agreed and corrected.
Introduction (Is the problem/objective of this study original, important and well defined?)	Objectives of the study need clearer specification: what was the main aim of this study?	Agreed and corrected.
Are all the references cited relevant, adequate? Are there any other suitable current references authors need to cite?	Format of referencing needs to be improved; otherwise reference list is good.	Agreed and corrected.
Materials & methods (Kindly comment on the suitability of the methods. Sufficient details of the methods should be provided to allow peers to evaluate and/or replicate the work)	This section needs major revision – quantification of data is unclear – location (what is the specific difference – coconut vs non-coconut site?); sampling regime, replications. What do the authors mean with weed screening – did the individual plants get tested for containing the LY-group phytoplasma– this needs more detailed clarification. Furthermore it is unclear how the potential insect vectors were sampled – quantification of insects, identification of insects etc. Statistical method is unclear – what was the t-test testing for? – see also comments on the manuscript.	Agreed and corrected.
Results & discussion (Kindly comment on: 1. Are the data well controlled and robust? 2. Authors should provide relevant references during discussion. 3. Discussion and conclusions should be based on actual facts and figures. Biased claims should be pointed out. 4. Are statistical analyses must for this paper? If yes, have sufficient and appropriate statistical analyses been carried out?)	Due to the unclear methodology the results in part are very difficult to follow. The quadrat survey provided evidence of which weed species hosted "potential" insect vectors. However the insects were not discussed. More empirical evidence is needed to support the different statements – i.e. influence of abiotic factors; whether the presence of insects indicate higher disease rate (were the weeds/insects screened for the presence of LY-group phytoplasma?) etc. Overall this section needs major revision – see also comments on manuscript for more details.	Agreed and corrected.
Are there any ethical or competing interest issues?	n/a	



SDI Review Form 1.5

Conclusion (Is the conclusion supported by the data, discussed inside the manuscript? Conclusions should not be biased and should be based on the data, presented inside the manuscript only)	Conclusion is not really supported by the data – needs to be revised.	Agreed and corrected.
References		

The manuscript needs major revisions – methodology needs to be more specific, indicating how the quantitative sampling procedure was conducted; results and discussions need to provide better empirical evidence.

One concern is the statistical methodology – it is unclear, what was compared and indeed what kind of quantitative data was collected. Screening of “potential insect vectors” is not quantified nor are the insects specified. Overall the major revision should include more detail on actual objectives and how they were achieved.