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Original Research Article

**Antagonistic Agents and Hydrothermal Treatment
in the Control of Anthracnose in Banana cv.
'Pacovan'**

ABSTRACT

The objective of this work was to evaluate the thermal and biological treatment efficiency of anthracnose (*Colletotrichum musae*) in banana cv.'Pacovan'. Three experiments were set up in the laboratory, the first "in vitro" to select the isolate of *Trichoderma spp.* which had greater mycelial inhibition on plaque, the 2nd "in vivo" was biological control using 2 races of *Trichoderma spp.* and the 3rd in vivo varying temperatures and exposure times of banana fruits contaminated with *Colletotrichum musae*. Positive treatments (using fungicide) and negative treatments were done with the application of distilled water only for experiment 2 and 3. The antagonistic biological control agents T2 and T9 were efficient in inhibiting the growth of *Colletotrichum musae* "in vitro", when analyzed "in vivo" did not have efficiency in the inhibition of the growth of the pathogen. Thermotherapy is a promising technique for the treatment of postharvest rot in banana fruits of 'Pacovan' cultivar, with the best efficiencies observed at 47°C for 3 and 9 min, and 51° for 3 and 9 min.

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Keywords: Colletotrichum musae, hydrothermal treatment, biological treatment.

1. INTRODUCTION

The banana crop (*Musa sp.*) Originates in Southeast Asia, grown in most tropical countries, and stands out as the most consumed fruit in the world due to its characteristics as a flavor, aroma and high nutritional value. Brazil is considered the fourth largest banana producer in the world, with an average of 7 million tons and a planted area of 487 thousand hectares [1]. The population of South America is the largest consumer, with 21.13 kg per capita per year, followed by Central America, with 13.9 kg and Oceania, with 11.26 kg [2]. In spite of its importance, the culture can be affected by several pathogens, with negative repercussions in the production, damaging the development of the banana, being worth highlighting in the post-harvest the fungus *Colletotricum musae*, causal agent of the anthracnose, postharvest disease more important in the banana producing regions of the world, which hinders the commercialization of the product in natura, with losses of up to 40% of production [3]. The anthracnose is caused by different physiological races of the fungus *Colletotrichum musae* (Berk and Curtis) [4], whose symptoms are dark and depressed lesions, which with the disease progress and favorable environmental conditions, such as high humidity, cover rose fruit.

38 The most used disease control is chemical control (pre and post harvest) and cultural
39 practices to try to reduce the amount of inoculum in the field. Finally, to try to minimize the
40 effects on chemicals and to increase production and good quality in the product, prolonging
41 the post-harvest period, new alternative methods have been pursued in the control of the
42 disease, including thermal treatment and biological treatment which have shown to be
43 promising in the practice of control against several pathogens. Control of this disease in
44 banana is an essential component of fruit quality after harvest [5].

45 Biological control with the use of *Trichoderma* spp. has been identified as a viable alternative
46 for ecologically and economically sustainable agricultural production systems [6]. The genus
47 *Trichoderma* is considered non-toxic and rapidly biodegradable, thus becoming a good
48 strategy as a biocontrol agent for plant diseases.

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50 In addition to the production of cell wall degrading enzymes and the production and release
51 of toxins, *Trichoderma* spp. competes for sites of infection and nutrients available with other
52 microorganisms. This action has an important role in inhibiting the development of different
53 pathogens, preventing the germination of propagules or the infection itself [7].

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55 Heat treatment is a control method that has been used for several years to control post-
56 harvest fungal diseases [8]. Thermotherapy is able to eradicate or weaken the pathogen.
57 The immersion of fruits in heated water of 50 to 55 °C for 10 min is considered standard
58 method for post-harvest control of several fungal diseases [9]. Short exposure times at
59 higher temperatures are more effective in altering the surface temperature of the fruits; thus,
60 they can eradicate the pathogen present inside the fruit peel [10].

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62 In view of the above, the objective of this work is to evaluate the efficiency of the thermal and
63 biological treatment in the control of anthracnose (*Colletotrichum musae*) in the banana crop.

64 65 **2. MATERIAL AND METHODS**

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67 The present work was developed in the Laboratory of Phytopathology (CECA / UFAL), BR
68 104N, Km 87, Municipality of Rio Largo-AL, from October to November 2018.

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70 The *C. musae* was obtained from the banana fruit of the 'pacovan' cultivar with anthracnose
71 symptom in the city of Maceió - AL, at the stage of green maturation. The pathogen was
72 maintained on successive replication in potato-Dextrose-Agar-BDA culture medium. The
73 isolates of *Trichoderma* spp. were obtained from monosporic cultures of the Phytopathology
74 Laboratory (CECA-UFAL). The isolates were preserved by successive replication method in
75 potato-Dextrose-Agar-BDA culture medium.

76 77 **Experiment 1 - Effect of *Trichoderma* spp. on the in vitro growth of *Colletotrichum*** 78 ***musae***

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80 Paired culture was performed on petri dishes containing BDA culture medium. For this
81 purpose, 5 mm diameter mycelium discs were taken from pure culture of *Colletotrichum*
82 *musae* and *Trichoderma* spp. and placed one disc of each fungus per plate, which were
83 deposited diametrically on opposite sides, both 1 cm away from the edge of the plate for the
84 direct confrontation of organisms, treatments were done at room temperature.

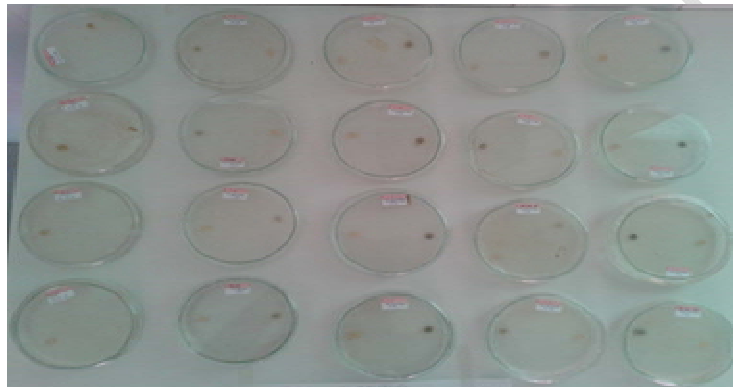
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86 Four different breeds of *Trichoderma* spp. (Races: 2, 5, 9 and 15). The control potential of
87 *Trichoderma* spp. on *Colletotrichum musae* was determined at 7 days of cultivation. The
88 evaluation of the test was done by the measurement of the colonies diameters, which were
89 calculated the mean values of percentage of inhibition, in relation to the control, also were

90 assigned notes based on the scale of [11] adapted by [12]. For the calculation of the
91 percentage of inhibition of mycelial growth was used the formula of Abbot (1925).
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$$\text{PIC (\%)} = \frac{(T - t)}{T} \times 100$$

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95 In what: PIC - percent inhibition of mycelial growth,%; T - control treatment, mm; t -
96 treatment evaluated, mm.

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98 The design was completely randomized, with 5 treatments and 4 replicates (Figure 1). The
99 statistical analyzes of the variables established in the pairings were done by the Tukey test
100 at 5%, with the assistance of ASSISTAT Version 7.7 beta.
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115 **Figure 1. Demonstration of the installation to evaluate the effect of *Trichoderma* spp.**
116 **on the in vitro growth of *Colletotrichum musae* by culture pairing method. Source:**
117 **Authors.**

118 119 **Experiment 2 - Biological control of anthracnose in bananas of 'pacovan'**

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121 For this experiment, two breeds of *Trichoderma* spp. with greater inhibitory potential of the
122 development of mycelium of *C. musae* evaluated in experiment 1, which were races 2 and 9.
123 First, the bananas were inoculated with *C. musae* at a concentration of 107, 24 hours after
124 the spraying of the races of *Trichoderma* spp. At concentration 106. In addition, two control
125 treatments were done, one positive where the bananas were sprayed in suspension of the
126 fungicide (Q) from the dithiocarbamate @Mancozeb chemical family at 0.09 g. / 100 mL⁻¹ of
127 distilled water (Fungicide not indicated for control of anthracnose in banana in the post-
128 harvest) and a negative control without the use of any type of treatment, sprayed only with
129 distilled water (T) the same one used for the others treatments.

130 131 **Experiment 3 - Hydrothermal treatment for control of anthracnose in banana of** 132 **'pacovan'**

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134 For this experiment, 11 treatments with 5 replicates were used in a completely randomized
135 design, each replicate corresponding to a banana fruit. The bananas were inoculated 24
136 hours before the application of the treatments, aiming at the fixation and the greater
137 possibility of the presence of the fungus *Colletotrichum musae* in the fruits that would be
138 treated, the concentration of 107 was used for spraying in the bananas. The spores were
139 counted using a Neubauer chamber under a stereoscopic microscope.

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141 The treatments used consisted of 3 different temperatures in 3 different times: T1T1 (47 °C
142 for 3 min); T1T2 (47 °C for 9 min); T1T3 (47 °C for 9 min); T2T1 (51 °C for 3 min); T2T2
143 (51 °C for 6 min); T2T3 (51 °C for 9 min); T3T1 (55 °C for 3 min); T3T2 (55 °C for 6 min);
144 T3T3 (55 °C for 9 min). And two control treatments, the same ones used for experiment 2.

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146 Evaluations of data from experiments 2 and 3

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148 The treatments were evaluated at 3 days after application (DAA), 7 DAA and 10 DAA,
149 regarding the incidence and severity of the disease. Regarding incidence, the following
150 formula was used:

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$$152 \quad \% I = \frac{NFL}{NTF} \times 100$$

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Being: NFL = number of injured fruits; NTF = number of total fruits

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158 The severity of rot was determined using a diagrammatic scale proposed by [13], with
159 variations ranging from 0 to 64% of the area damaged by fruit and the incidence rate (% I)
160 (Figure 2).

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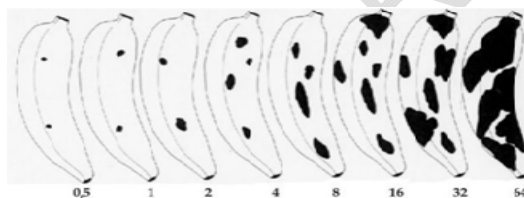
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168 **Figure 2. Diagrammatic scale to evaluate the severity of rot in banana fruits, whose**
169 **values correspond to the percentage of injured area / fruit. Source: Moraes et al.,**
170 **2008.**

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172 The data were submitted to analysis of variance and the means were compared by Tukey
173 test, at the 5% probability level, using the statistical program Sisvar version 5.6.

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176 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

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179 Experiment 1 - Effect of *Trichoderma* spp. on the in vitro growth of *Colletotrichum musae*

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However, the evaluation done by the scale of [11] adapted by [12], showed that the isolates
of *Trichoderma* spp. T2 and T9 showed Note 1, with growth throughout the petri dish and on
the pathogen disc, T5 and T15 Note 2, with growth throughout the petri dish, but not on the

190 pathogen (Table 1). All isolates of *Trichoderma* spp. evaluated are antagonistic to *C. musae*,
 191 but the T2 and T9 isolates were the most efficient in competition and parasitism.

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Table 1. Antagonistic potential of *Trichoderma* spp on *Colletotrichum musae* in culture paired by the [11] scale adapted by [12] to the 7th day of paired cultivation.

Treatments	Bell scale notes	(PIC) % Inhibition
<i>C. musae</i> x Isolated T2	1	39,11%
<i>C. musae</i> x Isolated T5	2	28,8%
<i>C. musae</i> x Isolated T9	1	60,06%
<i>C. musae</i> x Isolated T15	2	26,02%
Attestant	5	-----

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In paired cultivation, the efficiency of *Trichoderma* sp. (TF1) and *B. subtilis* in the alternative control of *C. musae* in banana fruits, found inhibition indices of 84% and 74% respectively [13].

There are also reports of the use of culture filtrates from four isolates of *T. asperellum* in the biological control of *Colletotrichum musae*, *Fusarium oxysporum* [14].

Table 2. Effect of *Trichoderma* spp. on the in vitro mycelial growth of *Colletotrichum musae* on the 7th day of matched cultivation.

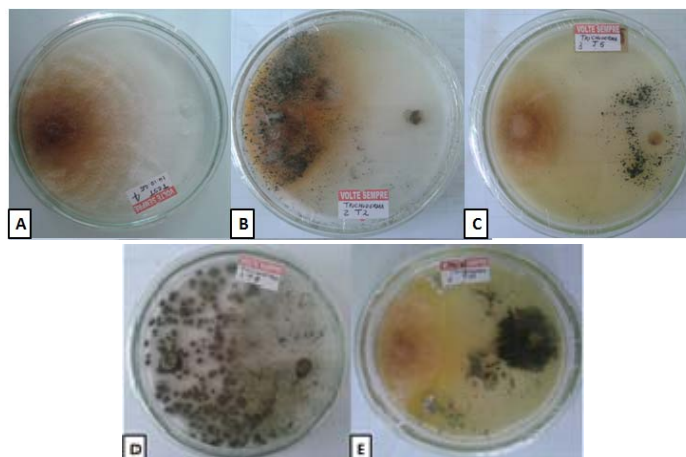
Treatments	Diameter of the colony (mm)
<i>C. musae</i> x Isolated T2	3.72 ab
<i>C. musae</i> x Isolated T5	4.52 ab
<i>C. musae</i> x Isolated T9	2.44 b
<i>C. musae</i> x Isolated T15	4.35 ab
attestant	a

207 Means followed by the same lowercase letter in the column do not differ statistically from
 208 each other by the Tukey test at 5% probability. Coefficient of Variation (CV%) = 27.76.

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The T2 and T9 isolates showed greater inhibition in the development of *C. musae*. The reduction in mycelial growth of *C. musae* can be attributed to the release of metabolites by the antagonists, competition of nutrients in the culture medium or by mycoparasitism.

In the present study, the hyphae of the hyphae were isolated from the hyphae of the host hyphae [15]. According to [11], in vitro antagonism is a form used only for mass selection of candidates for biocontrol agents, since not all those with in vitro inhibitory effects can exert the mechanism of antagonism "in vivo".



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Figure 3. Effect of *Trichoderma* spp. (B - E) on the mycelial growth of *Colletotrichum musae*, in the test of crop pairing in BDA medium. The witness; B: Isolated T2; C: Isolated T5; D: Isolated T9; E: Isolated T15. Source: Authors.

This study suggests that the isolates of *Trichoderma* spp., especially of the T9 and T2 races, can be exploited as biological control of anthracnose in banana plants. However, it is suggested to carry out tests to evaluate the antagonistic potential "in vivo".

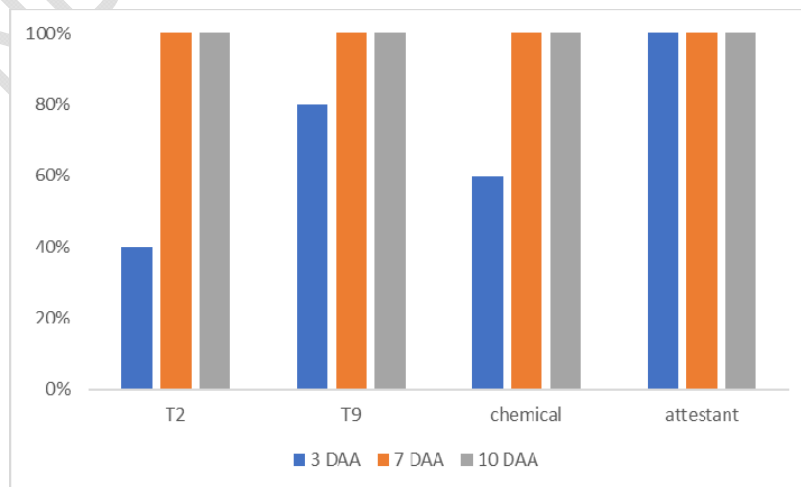
Experiment 2 - Biological control of anthracnose in bananas of 'pacovan'

Analyzing the incidence data of the disease in bananas of the 'pacovan' cultivar according to the evaluated days, it was observed that at 3 days after the application of the control types, the treatment with *Trichoderma* spp. of the T2 race was less incident than the other treatments. And the positive control with which it had the use of fungicide had an incidence increased gradually according to the evaluated days after the application. Most treatments had a total incidence at 7 and 10 days of evaluation.

With the data observed for incidence it can be inferred that the pathogen that caused the anthracnose could develop in the bananas even after the treatments.

For the severity data observed according to the visual scale of notes developed by [14] for the growth of the symptoms of the pathogen *Colletotrichum musae* in banana it can be inferred that the 3 DAA T2 and T9 had low severity compared to the chemical treatment (Q) and the control (T). At 7 and 10 DAA, all treatments presented severity greater than 50% (Table 3).

With this experiment "in vivo" we observed that the use of *Trichoderma* spp. of the T2 and T9 races are not viable for use with the purpose of inhibiting the development of the fungus *Colletotrichum musae* in bananas of the 'pacovan' cultivar. It was noted that after the first days of spraying the biological agents it was possible to note that there was a decrease in symptoms soon after the biological agents did not inhibit the growth of the fruits, including these treatments had their cycle of maturation.



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Figure 4. Incidence of anthracnose at 3, 7 and 10 days after application of *Trichoderma* spp. of the T2 and T9 races for control of *Colletotrichum musae* in 'pacovan' bananas.

Table 3. Severity (%) of *Colletotrichum musae* in bananas of the 'pacovan' cultivar at 3, 7 and 10 days after application of *Trichoderma* spp. of the T2 and T9 races.

Treatments	3 DAA	7 DAA	10 DAA
T2	2,9 c	62,4 a	64 a
T9	4,6 c	56,8 ab	64 a
Q	14,8 b	50,6 b	64 a
T	30,0 a	64,0 a	64 a
C.V. (%)	12,42	9,82	0,00

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Means followed by the same lowercase letter in the column do not differ statistically from each other by the Tukey test at 5% probability.

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In research using strains of *Trichoderma* spp. for the inhibition of growth of *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* in papaya fruits [16] observed that in the in vitro experiments all the strains used characterized antagonistic activity and that in the in vivo experiments it was not possible to decrease growth of the pathogen when inoculated after the pathogen is installed and that there was a decrease when *Trichoderma* spp. was inoculated 24 hours before contact with the pathogen. Based on this research we can relate that a preventive and non-curative application as used in this research could be that there was greater antagonistic action.

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[17] observing the antagonistic effect of *Trichoderma* spp. against phytopathogens *Sclerotium rolsfii* and *Verticullium dahliae* in ornamental aster and strawberry observed an inhibitory effect on the mycelial growth of the pathogens and also an antagonistic effect by the production of secondary metabolites of *Trichoderma* spp. *Trichoderma* is able to synthesize different compounds, such as proteins, enzymes, and antibiotics, which increase its ability to control phytopathogenic fungi [18].

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According to [17] *Trichoderma* species can act in direct biocontrol, infecting a series of phytopathogenic fungi through the secretion of lysing enzymes, such as cellulases, chitinases, glycanases and proteases, during the microparasitism process [19]

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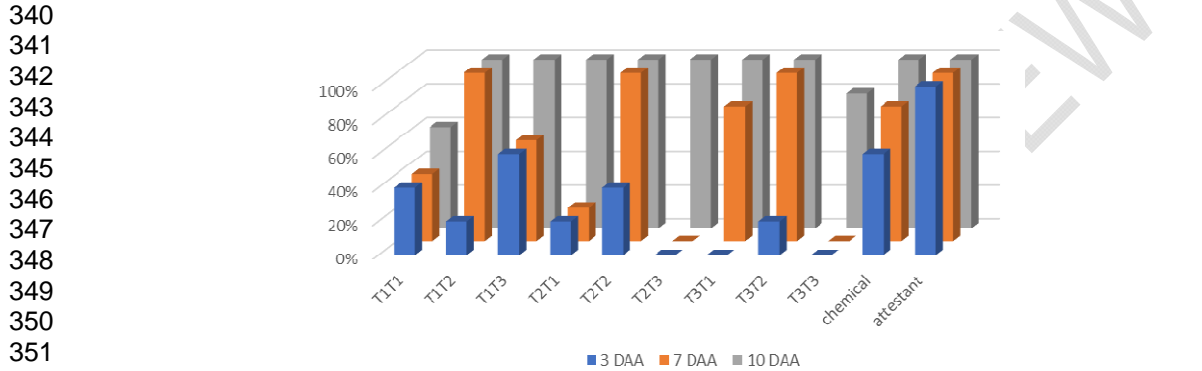
Experiment 3 - Hydrothermal treatment for control of anthracnose in banana of 'pacovan'

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At 3 DAA, it was observed that the majority of treatments had a low incidence, with only treatments T1T3 (47 ° for 9 min), chemical (Q) and control (T) presented values above 60% of incidence. At 7 DAA, four treatments remained with incidences below 50%, which were T1T1 (47° by 3min), T2T1 (51° by 3min), T2T3 (51° by 9min) and T3T3 (55° by 9min) above 60%. At 10 DAA, treatments T1T1 (47 ° for 3 min) and T3T3 (55 ° for 9 min) presented respectively 60 and 80% incidence, with the other treatments values of 100% (Figure 5).

328 The T3T3 treatment was observed to have the lowest incidence of *Colletotrichum musae*
 329 inoculum among the evaluated treatments, but it is important to infer that this treatment
 330 made the banana commercialization impossible to burn the fruit, the fruits after this
 331 treatment showed black coloration resulting from dry tissue by using a high temperature for a
 332 longer time. These aspects were also observed by [20] in 'silver-ana' bananas, treated at
 333 56°C for 9 minutes.

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 335 For [21], injuries caused by thermotherapy include increased weight loss, peeling of the peel,
 336 increased susceptibility to fungi and reduced post-harvest life, and are characterized by a
 337 lack of normal development of pigmentation, abnormal softening and decline in ethylene
 338 production. Thus, respiration rate and ethylene synthesis are affected by exposure to high
 339 temperatures.



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 353 **Figure 5. Incidence of anthracnose at 3, 7 and 10 days after application of**
 354 **hydrothermal treatments for control of *Colletotrichum musae* in bananas of 'pacovan'**
 355 **cultivar.**

356
 357 According to the observed for incidence we can indicate the treatments T1T1 and T2T3
 358 as being promising for diminishing the growth of anthracnose symptoms in banana fruits of
 359 'Pacovan' cultivar.

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 361 The severity for the hydrothermal treatments, which varied in 3 temperatures and 3 times,
 362 can be expressed that for 3 DAA all the hydrothermal treatments obtained a low percentage
 363 of severity in relation to the positive and negative controls. At 7 DAA it was also observed for
 364 most hydrothermal treatments average severity below 20% and at 10 DAA it was observed
 365 that 3 hydrothermal treatments were efficient in decreasing the severity of *Colletotrichum*
 366 *musae* in bananas of the 'pacovan' cultivar that were T1T1, T1T3 and T2T1 (Table 4).

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 368 **Table 4. Severity (%) of anthracnose at 3, 7 and 10 days after application of**
 369 **hydrothermal treatments for control of *Colletotrichum musae* in 'pacovan'**
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Treatments	3 DAA	7 DAA	10 DAA
T1T1	0,79 c	1,27 e	1,19 c
T1T2	0,95 c	18,20 b	64,0 a
T1T3	1,50 c	1,37 e	3,50 c
T2T1	0,85 c	0,99 e	8,20 b
T2T2	1,35 c	50,0 b	64,0 a
T2T3	0,77 c	0,69 e	8,0 b
T3T1	0,80 c	15,60 b	64,0 a
T3T2	1,04 c	13,40 de	64,0 a

T3T3	0,52 c	32,50 c	64,0 a
Q	14,80 b	50,60 b	64,0 a
T	30,0 a	64,0 a	64,0 a
C. V. (%)	19,90	26,90	4,25

Means followed by the same lowercase letter in the column do not differ statistically from each other by the Tukey test at 5% probability.

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374 The heat treatment is based on the effect of elevated temperatures on the cellular activity of
375 the pathogen. Most phytopathogenic organisms present a lethal thermal point at
376 temperatures between 45 and 60 °C.

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378 [22] observed that from the 53 °C combinations for 9 mi and 56 °C for 3 min the spore
379 germination was reduced to 4% and 0%, respectively and the combination 56 °C for 12 min
380 reduced but did not paralyze mycelial growth, treatment 56 °C for 6 min delayed but did not
381 paralyze mycelial growth "in vitro", but was effective in complete control of in vivo rot. These
382 results observed by the authors are similar to those observed in this study, but in the
383 temperature of 55° for 9 min there were problems related to fruit quality.

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385 [23] performing work using hydrotherapy for the control of anthracnose in bananas of the
386 cultivar 'Prata' observed that at 50° for 20 min and 53° for 15 and 20 min it reduced the
387 injured area in 85 and 97% respectively.

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389 With this work and relating it to the works that involve hydrothermal research to control
390 anthracnose in bananas we can observe that there is a range of 47° by up to 9 minutes and
391 51° to 55° by up to 9 to 3 minutes, respectively, that can be explored to decrease lesions
392 caused by *Colletotrichum musae* on banana.

393

394 4. CONCLUSION

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396 The antagonistic biological control agents T2 and T9 were efficient in inhibiting the mycelial
397 growth of *Colletotrichum musae* "in vitro", when analyzed "in vivo" did not have efficiency in
398 the inhibition of the growth of the pathogen. And thermotherapy is a promising technique for
399 the treatment of postharvest rot in banana fruits of 'Pacovan' cultivar.

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