

METHOD AND DEVICE FOR PROTECTING EXTRACTS
OBTAINED BY TAPPING TREES

The present invention concerns a method and a device for protecting extracts obtained by tapping trees, e.g. the product of a hevea.

5 It is known that the possibility of rain water becoming mixed with the latex during the operation of tapping a hevea must be avoided because the pure rubber content is thereby lessened to the point of rendering the latex unfit for profitable processing.

A way of lessening this drawback has been sought for a long time but, until now, no cheap and effective solution to this problem
10 has been found.

The object of the present invention is to provide a method and a device which gives a solution that is effective, inexpensive and easily implemented.

15 According to the invention, there is provided a method for protecting the extracts obtained by tapping trees from rain water, wherein a strip of aluminium foil or a similar material is secured to the trunk of the tree above the tapped slit so as to form a gutter which, in use, collects rain water running down the trunk and discharges it clear of the tapped slit, thereby protecting
20 tapping.

It will be appreciated that the invention is applicable not only to heveas but to other trees which can be tapped to produce a useful product, such as maple trees.

Aluminium foil constitutes an ideal material for this application.
25 In fact, it can by its very nature match all the rough parts of the trunk of the tree.

The expression, "similar material", here designates any material presenting similar characteristics of mouldability and foldability.

The other qualities of aluminium foil of substance are its softness and impermeability.

The product is also easy to store in a small space and finally it is cheap.

5 In a typical implementation of the method and device of the invention, the following operations are carried out:

1. Preparation of the apparatus

10 (a) A strip of aluminium foil is used or this strip is cut from a sheet of aluminium foil, the length of the strip being dependent on the length of the slit tapped.

(b) each end of the strip is folded back on itself several times so as to make the device stiffer.

2. Preparation of the tree

15 (a) The virgin bark of the part of the trunk to which one wishes to apply the strip of the device is cleaned with a brush or in another way. This part of the trunk forms, for example, an angle of the order of 40° with the horizontal, if this is the slope one wishes to give the gutter.

20 (b) An adhesive is applied to the part of the trunk which has been thus cleaned. This adhesive can advantageously be constituted by some of the centrifuged latex with which the part of the trunk is painted and which is then left to dry.

25 (c) The strip which has been prepared as indicated above is fixed to the part of the trunk prepared as indicated above, with the aid, for example, of several drawing pins or other fixing means which are preferably put in the folder-back ends of the strip.

If necessary, one or several drawing pins are also put in the middle of the strip.

30 Care is taken to leave slack in the strip on putting it in place.

(d) The lower edge of the strip, for example the lower half of the strip, is stuck onto the trunk of the tree.

35 The slack left on placing allows the lower part of the strip to match perfectly with all the hollows and swellings of

the trunk. The centrifuged latex previously applied allows effective adhesion and ensures sealing between the strip and the trunk.

5 (e) The upper part of the strip is pushed back from the trunk to form the gutter.

(f) An additional sealing of the bottom of the gutter is effected, for example by pouring into the gutter a spoonful of centrifuged latex.

10 This operation is repeated as needed, when sealing of the gutter is seen to have become insufficient.

The invention ensures very effective protection: it eliminates delays in tapping, allows collection of a latex which can be processed, in rain, and even allows tapping to continue in drizzle.

15 The strip is changed when necessary and especially when tapping is completed on a half-circumference of the tree and the other half-circumference is to be tapped.

A priori, it is thought that the strip can stay in place throughout the five-year period during which the half-circumference of the tree is exploited.

20 The figures of the attached drawing illustrate the invention diagrammatically and by way of example only

In the figures:

25 Figure 1 is a view of the sheet of aluminium foil after its ends have been folded back;

Figure 2 is a diagrammatic perspective of a hevea provided with a device embodying the invention;

Figure 3 is a diagrammatic view of the hevea as if it were laid out flat, and

30 Figure 4 is a vertical section of the device in position.

The device is essentially constituted by a strip of aluminium foil 1, for example 6 cm wide, whose ends 2 and 3 have been folded back on themselves, so that, for example, the thickness of the ends is six times that of the foil and so that the width of the fold is 5 mm.

35 This strip is applied at an inclination to the horizontal

for example, of the order of 40° , on the bark of the hevea above a tapping place 8. The length of the strip is selected so that the strip extends some centimetres beyond the tapping place.

5 As is known, the hevea is first tapped on one half-circumference for a certain time and subsequently on the other half-circumference.

In Figures 2 and 3, the half-circumference being exploited is designated by A and the other half-circumference to be exploited afterwards by B.

10 The bark of the hevea 10 is brushed and coated with centrifuged latex 4 above the tapping place 8 at the position selected for the gutter. After the latex has dried, the lower half 1a of the strip 1 is applied by fixing by means of three drawing pins 7 and by pressing it closely to the trunk so
15 that it adheres perfectly to the latex.

Then the upper half 1b of the strip is pushed back so as to constitute a channel 6 constituting the gutter between this half and the trunk 10. Centrifuged latex 5 is poured into the bottom of the channel to perfect sealing of the bottom of the
20 channel.

The gutter 3 thus constituted is able to collect the water 11 which runs down the trunk of the hevea and thus protect the region A.

25 The invention is not limited to the embodiment described and includes its variants.



CLAIMS

1. Method for protecting the extracts obtained by tapping trees from rain water. wherein a strip of aluminium foil or a similar material is secured to the trunk of the tree above the tapped slit so as to form a gutter which, in use, collects rain water running down the trunk and discharges it clear of the tapped slit, thereby protecting tapping.
2. Method according to claim 1, wherein each end of the strip is folded back on itself several times.
3. Method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the strip is applied to the virgin bark of the tree.
4. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the part of the trunk of the tree to which the strip is to be applied is painted with centrifuged latex or other adhesive.
5. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the strip is applied to the trunk of the tree at an inclination to the horizontal.
6. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein the lower edge of the strip is made to adhere to the trunk of the tree and the upper edge of the strip is disposed away from the trunk of the tree so that the gutter is constituted between the trunk and the strip.
7. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein centrifuged latex is poured into the gutter to ensure or renew sealing at the bottom of the gutter.
8. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein slack is allowed in the strip when applied to the trunk of the tree.



9. Method according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the strip is secured on the tree by drawing pins or other fixing means.

10. Gutter for protecting the product obtained by tapping a tree from rain water essentially constituted of aluminium foil or other similar material.

11. A gutter according to claim 10, wherein the aluminium foil is a strip whose lower part is applied to the trunk of the tree and whose upper part is pushed back from this trunk to constitute the gutter.

12. A method for protecting the extracts obtained by tapping trees from rain water, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

The text of the specification has been reproduced by photocopying the applicants original typescript. It may contain a few amendments which are difficult to read. The original typescript containing these amendments may be inspected on the premises of the Patent Office