

PATENT SPECIFICATION

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(54) IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO THE TAPPING OF RUBBER TREES

(71) I, CHEE CHIN TONG, of Malaysian Nationality of c/o 8, Jalan Campbell, (First Floor), Seremban, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, do hereby declare the invention, for which I pray that a patent may be granted to me, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

This invention relates to the tapping of rubber trees.

As is well known, rubber latex is obtained from a rubber tree by making a downwardly inclined tapping cut in the bark of a tree. Latex exuded by the tree runs down the cut and is drained therefrom into a cup attached to the trunk of the tree beneath the lower end of the tapping cut. During a rain shower or thunder storm, much rain water flows down the trunk of the rubber tree and is liable to wash away most, if not all, of the rubber latex that is collected in the cup, and because of this no tapping is normally done in rubber estates on rainy mornings.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a method of preventing rain water from washing out the rubber latex from a tapping cut of a rubber tree.

The present invention provides a method of preventing rain water from flowing down the trunk of a rubber tree into a tapping cut and a collecting cup associated therewith, which comprises affixing to the tree above the line of the cut a rain guard comprising an elongate moulded rubber strip of triangular cross-section to form a gutter for collecting rain water flowing down the trunk and which slopes downwardly to a discharge region circumferentially offset from the drainage end of the tapping cut and from the cup.

It has been found in practice that the invention is extremely useful in helping to increase the production of latex in natural rubber estates.

A preferred embodiment of the invention will now be described in more detail, reference being made to the accompanying drawings in which:—

Figure 1 is a perspective view showing a portion of a rubber tree including a tapping

cut and a collecting cup, and a rain guard affixed to the tree;

Figure 2 is an enlarged fragmentary cross-sectional view on the line II—II in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of a moulded rubber rain guard strip; and

Figure 4 is a cross-section on the line IV—IV in Figure 3.

Figure 1 shows at 1 the trunk of a rubber tree having a downwardly inclined tapping cut 2 in the bark thereof at the base of a tapping area 1¹. Latex 3 drains from the lower end of the tapping cut 2 into a collecting cup 4 affixed to the tree beneath the lower end of the cut. To prevent rain water flowing down the trunk from washing latex out of the cut 2 and the cup 4, a rain guard 5 is affixed to the tree 1 above the tapping cut 2. The rain guard 5 is arranged to intercept rain water flowing down the trunk 1 and to prevent such water from washing out latex from the cut 2 and the cup 4.

The rain guard 5, see Figures 3 and 4, comprises an elongate strip of moulded rubber. The cross-section of the strip 5 is a triangle, preferably an obtuse angled isosceles triangle having two sides 6 of equal length and a third side 7.

The manner in which the rain guard strip 5 is affixed to the tree will now be further explained.

The strip 5 is normally supplied in a long roll, and a length is cut off for use. The length cut off is sufficient to allow for the strip 5, when affixed to the tree, to start at a point above and circumferentially offset from the higher end of the tapping cut, and to end at a point outside the tapped area 1¹ and circumferentially offset from both the lower, drainage end of the tapping cut 2 and the collecting cup 4. The length of strip required will, of course, depend on the size of the rubber tree, the tapped area and also the slope of the tapping cut. A coat of rubber latex is then brushed onto the region of the tree trunk to which it is desired to affix the strip 5; the strip 5 is normally affixed to the trunk approximately two to three inches above the tapping cut and preferably generally parallel thereto, so

that the strip 5 also slopes to a lower or discharge end 8. A coat of rubber latex is also applied to one of the faces 6 of the strip 5. Both coats are allowed to dry for about half an hour, after which the strip 5 is affixed to the tree by pressing it onto the latex-coated area of the trunk to which it adheres to form a gutter 9 with collects rain water flowing down the trunk and discharges the rain water at the lower end 8 so that the water falls clear of the collecting cup 4, as shown at 10 in Figure 1.

To ensure adhesion of the strip 5 to the trunk and to prevent any rain water seeping through and down into the tapped area beneath the strip, some latex is then poured down the length of the strip against the trunk and allowed to dry.

To test whether the gutter-forming rain guard strip 5 has been affixed effectively, some water may be poured down the gutter and any places where there is seepage between the gutter and the tree trunk noted. If there are any such places, more latex may be poured onto the gutter in these places and allowed to dry.

WHAT I CLAIM IS:—

1. A method of preventing rain water from flowing down the trunk of a rubber tree into a tapping cut and a collecting cup

associated therewith, which comprises affixing to the tree above the line of the cut a rain guard comprising an elongate moulded rubber strip of triangular cross-section to form a gutter for collecting rain water flowing down the trunk and which slopes downwardly to a discharge region circumferentially offset from the drainage end of the tapping cut and from the cup.

2. A method according to Claim 1, wherein the rubber rain guard strip is adhered to the tree.

3. A method according to Claim 2, wherein the rubber rain guard strip is adhered to the tree by rubber latex.

4. A method according to Claim 2 or Claim 3, wherein the cross-section of the strip is an obtuse angle isosceles triangle, one of the equal sides thereof being adhered to the tree.

5. A method of preventing rain water from flowing down the trunk of a rubber tree, substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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