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## SEARCHING FOR ENTOMOPATHOGENIC FUNGI OF THRIPS (THYSANOPTERA) AFFECTING AVOCADO UNDER ORGANIC MANAGEMENT IN MEXICO.

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Thrips feeding on tender avocado fruits, induce scars which deform the fruits decreasing their quality and impeding the use of these fruits for export at the Uruapan region, Michoacan, México. Biological control of pests through the use of entomopathogenic fungi is an ecologically feasible and not well known alternative for the control of thrips in this region. This study was carried out at 'Las Piedras' orchard, with an extension of 20 has approximately 4 years-old trees and completely organic management. Foliar samples were collected from different avocado trees from January to May, 2003, and thrips were obtained from them; the thrips were placed in Petri dishes with sterile and humid filter paper. All individuals were analyzed under a stereoscopic microscope daily until their death or appearance of mycelium and spores. Fungi were cultured in PDA, characterized and identified morphologically at genus level. Three fungi were found and identified as *Aspergillus* sp.1, *Aspergillus* sp.2. and *Cladosporium* sp. Species characterization is being carried out through sequencing of the 5.8s ribosomal region.