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Q99

Consider the following: 1. Birds 2. Dust blowing 3. Rain 4. Wind blowing Which of the above spread plant diseases? (a) 1 and 3 only (b) 3 and 4 only (c) 1, 2 and 4 only (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4 Official key: D.

UPSC Civil Services Prelims 2018 · General Studies · 2 marks · Science and Technology

Science, technology, space, defence, IT - Prelims GS Paper I.

Explanation**(a)**

(a) 1 and 3 only. Birds and rain do spread pathogens and spores, but dust and wind are equally classic dispersal agents. This option is not the key.

(b)

(b) 3 and 4 only. **Rain splash** and wind are true vectors/carriers, yet they are not the only ones on the list. This option is not the key.

(c)

(c) 1, 2 and 4 only. Birds, dust and wind spread disease, but rain (splash dispersal) is a textbook mechanism too. Omitting 3 is therefore wrong. This option is not the key.

(d) Official key

(d) 1, 2, 3 and 4. Birds carry seeds, insects and viruses; dust storms move spores and bacteria; rain splashes inoculum; wind is the main long-distance carrier of many fungal spores. All four spread plant diseases. This option is the official key.

Summary

Official key is (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4. Plant pathogens travel by living carriers and by abiotic media. Birds, blowing dust, rain and wind are all established dispersal routes. No item on the list can be excluded on plant-pathology grounds. Partial combinations that drop rain or dust therefore fail. The Set A key is all four.

Related possible facts

These can be asked in a future Prelims paper.

Anemochory of spores

Wind dispersal of rusts, mildews, smuts

Rain splash

Short-range spread of bacteria and fungi from lesions

Aeroplankton / dust

Spores and bacteria on soil particles

Birds as vectors

Can carry mites, insects, seeds and viruliferous sap

Epidemiology

Study of disease spread in plant populations

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