

A NEW LEAF BLIGHT OF *GARCINIA CAMBOGIA* DESR.

Garcinia cambogia Desr. commonly called as kodampuli belonging to Guttiferae is a perennial dioecious plant, the fruits of which have medicinal value also. The plants grown at the main campus of the Kerala Agricultural University at Vellanikkara, Trichur exhibited severe leaf blight symptoms during the south west monsoon season of 1995. The typical leaf blight disease was also noticed in plants available at the Information-cum-Sales Centre of the Kerala Agricultural University, Mannuthy. On further enquiry, this disease could be noticed in many homesteads of Ernakulam and Trichur districts.

The infected plants showed spots measuring 2-2.5 cm and 0.4-0.8 cm on the leaves. The initial symptoms appeared as small circular brown spots with concentric rings surrounded by an yellow halo. These spots later coalesced involving larger area of the leaves causing blighting of the leaves with dark brown centre leading to destruction of the tissues. In some cases, these blighted portion detached from the leaves exhibiting shot hole symptom. These lesions on the leaf spread to the other parts of the leaves just by contact of the affected leaves. The causal agent was isolated from the freshly infected leaves and brought into pure culture on potato dextrose agar. The fungus produced fluffy white mycelium at first, later becoming brown coloured with dark brown, sclerotia. The fungus was identified as *Rhizoctonia solani* Kuhn. based on its morphological and cultural characters.

Pathogenicity tests were conducted by placing culture bits and sclerotia on the leaves of healthy plants. After five to seven days of inoculation, typical symptoms were produced.

By cross inoculation with the isolate under study and that from leaf blight affected colocasia and ornamental plants, the causal fungus was identified as *Rhizoctonia solani* Kuhn. There is no previous report of leaf blight of *garcinia* caused by *Rhizoctonia*

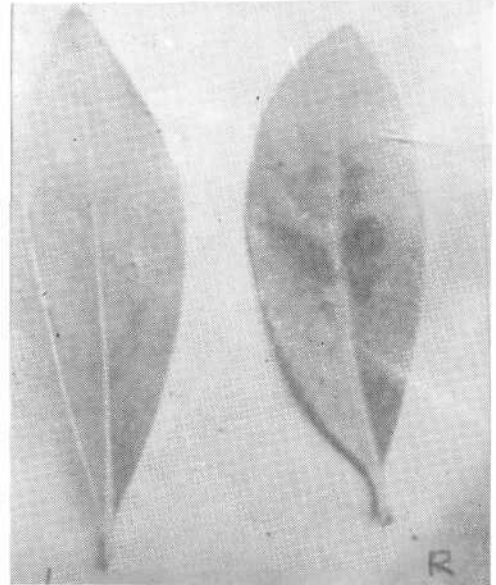


Plate 1. *Garcinia* leaf showing blight symptom (L = Healthy leaf ; R = Artificially inoculated leaf)

solani Kuhn. There is no previous report of leaf blight of *garcinia* caused by *Rhizoctonia solani* Kuhn. and this constitutes the first record.

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