

BLIGHT OF CASSIA CAUSED BY *RHIZOCTONIA SOLANI* Kuhn

Cassia biflora Lin. is an ornamental shrub and recently a severe blight was noticed on this plant in a garden at Trivandrum. The symptoms of the disease on the leaves were as small brown spots with an yellow halo. Adjacent spots joined together and caused severe leaf blight symptoms. As the disease advanced, the infection spread to the twigs and caused drying up of the twigs. The disease was found to spread rapidly and caused complete drying of the branches.

The causal organism of the disease was isolated from infected leaves and twigs on potato dextrose agar medium. The fungus was identified as *Rhizoctonia solani* Kuhn. The hyphae were hyaline, septate and branched with a thickness of

5.24 μ m to 9.95 μ m. Sclerotia produced were at first white, later turning to brown. The culture has been deposited in the culture collection of the Department of Plant Pathology, College of Agriculture, Vellayani, Kerala (Accession No. 13).

Pathogenicity tests were conducted under pot culture conditions by inoculating healthy rooted cuttings with sclerotia taken from 7 to 10 days old culture. Cross inoculation studies were made on rice plants (var. Jyothi). Typical sheath blight symptoms were developed within a period of seven days.

This is the first report of the disease on *Cassia biflora*.

College of Agriculture
Vellayani 695 522, Trivandrum, India

A. Naseema
K.S. Meena Kumari