

LEAF AND SHEATH BLIGHT DISEASE OF CANNA

Canna belonging to Cannaceae family is a hardy and beautiful plant bearing flowers in different colours such as white, cream, yellow, orange, pink, scarlet, deep red and various shades of these colours. During the peak season of south west monsoon (July-August), a new leaf blight and sheath blight disease was noticed on *canna* (*Canna indica*) grown in homestead gardens of Trichur district, Kerala.

The symptoms first appeared as brown coloured spots on the leaf and sheath measuring 0.3 to 0.5 cm. In severe cases of incidence, the spots coalesced causing blighting of the leaf sheath and leaves. The lesions on the leaf sheath **appeared** near the soil and later spread to other parts of the plant.

Isolation were made on potato dextrose agar medium and the fungus produced **mycelium** very floccose, not ropy, producing numerous

sclerotia. Sclerotia were pinkish buff to olive-brown to clove-brown, and globose nearly 0.8 to 2.5 mm in diameter. The fungus was identified as *Sclerotium rolfsii* Sacc. based on its morphological and cultural characters.

Pathogenicity of the fungus was proved by artificial inoculation. The fungus produced ashy brown mycelium at first, later turning to a shy black.

A perusal of the literature revealed that there is no report of the leaf and sheath blight of *canna* caused by *Sclerotium rolfsii*.

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