

## A NEW LEAF BLIGHT OF PINEAPPLE

**P**ineapple (*Ananas comosus*) is one of the most delicious fruits cultivated in South India. Of the few diseases reported, leaf and fruit rot caused by *Ceratocystis paradoxa*, heart rot and stem rot caused by *Phytophthora parasitica* and wilt of viral etiology are important.

During the south west monsoon season (April-May 1989) leaf specimens of pineapple were obtained from farmers fields of Adoor, Quilon District, Kerala.

The symptom of the disease was breaking of leaves at different distances from the basal portion. This was soon followed by production of irregular spots measuring 0.5 to 0.75 cm. In course of time

the colour of the spots became dark and adjacent spots began coalescing. Isolations yielded a fungus which in culture produced dark coloured two-celled conidia measuring  $21.85 \times 13.65$   $\mu\text{m}$ . Pathogenicity tests were positive indicating that the isolate was pathogenic. The fungus was identified as *Botryodiplodia theobromae* Pat. This disease is being reported for the first time from Kerala. A visit to the infected area has given the idea that the disease is quite rampant and is likely to influence the yield of the crop. Therefore, a suitable management strategy has to be developed. Further research in this line is in progress.

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