

A NEW LEAF BLIGHT DISEASE OF *CATHARANTHUS ROSEUS* (L) G. DON (L)

Catharanthus roseus (L) G. Don (*Vincetoxicum rosea* L) is an important medicinal plant grown in India. A severe leaf blight disease was observed during October-November on the crop grown in the Instructional Farm attached to the College of Agriculture, Vellayani. The incidence was noticed on this crops, 3-4 weeks after transplanting.

The disease initiated as black discolouration from the tip of the leaves and extends downwards and towards leaf margin. Finally the affected parts of the leaves become completely blighted and resulted in defoliation. The young leaves were found to be more susceptible to the disease than the older leaves.

The causal organism was isolated into pure culture on potato dextrose agar and further purified by single spore isolation. On potato dextrose agar the organism produced creamy white mycelium on the surface and a tinged light red discolouration on the reverse. The organism produced micro-conidia 3-4 days after sub culturing. They are oval to oblong and one septate, measuring 8-15 x 3-4/um. The macro-conidia are almost straight slightly sickle shaped, and narrow at both ends. They are 4-6 septate measuring,

- 4 septate 25—55 x 4.5—5/um
- 6 septate 45—75 x 5.5/um

The fungus was indentified as *Fusarium oxysporum* Schlecht. by C. M. I. (No. 249683)

The pathogenicity of this isolate from the hosts was examined by spraying the spore suspension from 15 days old culture of the isolate, on wounded and unwounded surface of leaves of one month old seedlings! Typical blight symptoms appeared after 7 days inoculation in both wounded and unwounded leaves.

Reisolation yielded the same fungus and thus established the pathogenicity. From the available literature it seems that this is the first report of the disease from India,

സംഗ്രഹം

കാത്താനന്തസ് രോഗിയ എന്ന ഒരപ്ഷയ ഗുണമുള്ള ചെടികളുടെ ഇലകൾക്കുണ്ടാകുന്ന ചീയൽ രോഗത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചു് ഇലപ്രദമായി റിപ്പോർട്ടു ചെയ്തിരിക്കുന്നു. ഫ്യൂസേറിയം ഓക്സിസ്പോറം എന്ന കുമിളുകളാണു് ഈ രോഗത്തിനു കാരണമായി കണ്ടതു്.

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