

Two species of *Mentha* as new hosts of *Corticium rolfsii*

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Two species of *Mentha* were affected by collar rot and wilt in the Tarai region of Uttar Pradesh, India. The pathogen was isolated and identified as *Corticium rolfsii*, which is newly recorded on these hosts.

Mentha spp. are major essential oil-yielding plants. Species such as *Mentha arvensis*, *Mentha citrata*, *Mentha piperita* and *Mentha spicata* are grown over an area of 75 000 ha in India. The oil extracted from this harvest is ≈ 8000 tonnes, which is 80–85% of total world production (Ram *et al.*, 1999). During a survey conducted by the CIMAP Field Station, Pantnagar, on fungal diseases of *Mentha* spp. in and around the Tarai region of Uttar Pradesh, collar rot and wilt caused by *Corticium rolfsii* Curzi (anamorph *Sclerotium rolfsii* Saccardo) was found to be very prominent. The survey revealed two new hosts of the pathogen, *M. citrata* and *M. spicata*. The disease has already been reported on *M. arvensis* and *M. piperita* (Ganguly & Pandotra, 1962; Goto, 1933).

The first visible symptoms of the collar rot and wilt was observed as yellowing or wilting of the lower leaves, which progressed later to the upper leaves. The fungus first appeared at the base of the stem near the soil line, and then grew upwards covering the stem with a cottony white mass of mycelium. Later, water-soaked grey lesions appeared turning brown and finally rotting the whole stem. A large number of small, light brown, mustard seed-like sclerotia developed in the collar zone. Once the fungus was established in the crop, it advanced and produced mycelia and sclerotia very rapidly. The infected plants, which were usually 3- to 4-week-old seedlings, ultimately collapsed and died. The severity of the disease in the field ranged from traces to 10%.

Isolations from the sclerotia and infected lesions of the plants were performed on potato dextrose agar (PDA) and consistently yielded cultures typical of the anamorph *S. rolfsii*. Pathogenicity was confirmed by sowing runners of *M. citrata* and *M. spicata* in pots filled with sterilized soil and 20 g of the inoculum of the pathogen culture in sand–maize media. Symptoms of collar rot and wilt were observed in the pots, very similar to those seen in the field.

C. rolfsii has a wide host range, but no record exists of its occurrence on *M. citrata* and *M. spicata*. This is therefore the

first report of the occurrence of *C. rolfsii* on these two species of *Mentha*.

Deux nouveaux hôtes de *Corticium rolfsii* dans le genre *Mentha*

Deux espèces de *Mentha* étaient atteintes de pourriture du collet et de flétrissement dans la région de Tarai dans l'Uttar Pradesh (IN). Le pathogène a été isolé et identifié comme étant *Corticium rolfsii*. Il s'agit de signalements nouveaux sur ces hôtes.

Две разновидности *Mentha* в качестве новых хозяев *Corticium rolfsii*

На двух разновидностях *Mentha* была обнаружена гниль шейки и wilt в районе Тарай штата Уттар Прадеш (Бангладеш). Патоген, недавно впервые зарегистрированный на этих хозяевах, был изолирован и идентифицирован как *Corticium rolfsii*.

References

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