

Focus

Wheat yellow mosaic virus is a strain of wheat spindle streak mosaic virus, according to T. Usugi and Y. Saito at the Institute for Plant Virus Research in Japan. Morphology, particle length distribution, buoyant density, and stability were almost identical in the two viruses. They had both common and different antigens, and cross protection was observed between them. (Ann. Phytopathol. Soc. Jpn. Vol. 45, No. 3, 1979)

Hoplolaimus columbus, known to cause extensive damage to soybeans, was reported for the first time to be parasitic on sugarcane. According to G. E. Astudillo and W. Birchfield at Louisiana State University, all of eight soybean cultivars planted in sugarcane soil naturally infected with the nematode were invaded. (APS Southern Division Meeting, February 1980)

The first report in Texas of white rot of peach caused by Poria letemarginata was made by D. H. Smith and colleagues. The fungus has been reported in at least eight counties, but its importance as a peach tree pathogen has not been determined. (APS Southern Division Meeting, February 1980)

Brown blotch, caused by Cercospora oryzae, is a new disease of rice in Texas and Louisiana, reports N. G. Whitney of Beaumont, Texas. The disease causes a small, irregularly shaped brown blotch on the leaf sheath resulting in premature desiccation of leaves and reduced yield. Two applications of benomyl (0.56-1.12 kg/ha) control the disease. (APS Southern Division Meeting, February 1980)

Seed treatment with Ridomil, a systemic fungicide, prevented infection in germinated sunflower seeds that had been soaked in a zoosporangial suspension of downy mildew fungus (Plasmopara halstedii) before being sown, reports W. E. Sackston of McGill University, Montreal. Seed treatment also prevented infection from inoculum added to soil as a drench at intervals after sowing. The fungicide is effective at 2 g a.i./1,000 g of seed. Protection during the critical short infection period of this soilborne mildew may reduce the danger of introducing the pathogen on seed and of building up the inoculum concentration in soil.

The possible control of fire blight of apples by application of nonpathogenic strains of Erwinia herbicola was investigated by S. V. Beer and associates at Cornell University. The infection rate of blossom clusters was 36% with introduction of E. herbicola, compared with 76% in the controls. Inhibitory substances were bacteriocinlike.

Corn may serve as an inoculum reservoir for Fusarium moniliforme var. subglutinans pathogenic to asparagus, according to V. P. Damicone and W. J. Manning of the University of Massachusetts. Seedling stands were reduced and typical symptoms were observed when plants were inoculated with the same isolate--after 7 days for corn and after 14 days for asparagus.

Phytophthora species other than P. cactorum were implicated in crown rot of apple trees in New York, according to S. N. Jeffers and colleagues at Cornell University and the New York Agricultural Experiment Station. This is the first report of a Phytophthora other than P. cactorum on apple in New York.

The American wheat striate mosaic virus was found for the first time in the United States on corn in fields in South Dakota, in September 1979, by V. L. Jons and W. S. Gardner. The disease has occurred sporadically on winter wheat, barley, oats, and corn near central United States and along the Canadian border since 1953. (Coop. Plant Pest Rep. Vol. 5, No. 3, 1980)