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First Report of Phomopsis Blight of Eggplants in Egypt

W. M. Haggag
Department of Plant Pathology,
National Research Center, Dokki, Cairo, Egypt
Fax: +20.2.3371391; E-mail:Wafaa_haggag@yahoo.com

***Abstract* – In summer 2010, extensive fruit blight was observed on eggplant plants (*Solanum melongena)* Cv. 'Black Magic', Classic', in a commercial farm in Tahreer province, Bohara Governorate (Egypt).**

***Keywords* – Phomopsis Blight, Eggplant, Fungus.**

SYMPTOMS

The disease affected about 30% of the plants. Blight affects all above-ground plant parts at all stages of development. Spots generally appear first on seedling stems or leaves.

Spots may girdle seedling stems and kill the seedlings. Leaf spots are circular, up to about 1 inch in diameter, and brown to gray with a narrow dark brown margin. In time the center of the spot becomes gray, and black pycnidia (fungus reproductive structures that appear as small specks) develop in this area. Affected leaves may turn yellow and die. Fruit spots are similar to those on leaves but are much larger; affected fruit are first soft and watery but later may become black and mummified.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A fungus, isolated consistently from blighted tissue was identified as *Phomopsis sp.* Pathogenicity tests were performed on plants grown in 18-cm diameter pots. Ten healthy plants were sprayed with a conidial suspension containing 10^4 conidia /ml. Controls were treated with sterile water. Inoculated leaves and controls were left in bags for 48 h.

RESULTS

After 5 to 14 days, symptoms were similar to those described for field samples. Spores germinate rapidly when free moisture is present on leaves, stems, or leaves. A fungus identical to that used as inoculum was re-isolated from foliar lesions. On potato dextrose agar, the fungus had white floccose mycelium and produced numerous black, globose to irregular pycnidia (up to 300 µm). Alpha- conidia were one-celled, hyaline, and ellipsoidal (4.5 to 10.3 µm long × 1.8 to 2.1 µm wide); beta-conidia were one-celled, hyaline, filiform, and straight or curved (16.8 to 27.5 µm long × 1.0 µm wide).

A pure culture was identified as *Phomopsis vexans* (Sacc. & Syd.) Harter based on morphology (Luo *et al.*, 2004).

To my knowledge this is the first report of *Phomopsis vexans* causing leaf blight of eggplants in Egypt.

REFERENCES

[1] Luo L, Xi P, Jiang Z, Qi P-K, 2004. Taxonomic significance of conidial formation of *Phomopsis* in pure culture. Mycosystema, 23:375-380.