

7. Diseases of Turmeric

Rhizome Rot - *Pythium graminicolum*

Symptoms

Starting from the margins the leaves get dried up, collar region of pseudo stem becomes soft and water-soaked and plants collapse. The rhizomes decay as a result of the attack of the fungus.



Symptoms

Disease cycle

Pathogen is soil-borne, therefore primary inoculum comes from soil. Infected rhizomes used for seed purpose may also transmit the disease. Irrigation water from diseased field helps in the spread of the disease.

Management

- Seed material should be selected from disease free areas.
- Avoid water stagnation in the field. Light soil may be preferred and drainage facility to be ensured.
- Grow tolerant varieties like Suguna and Sudarshan.
- Crop rotation to be followed.
- Deep plough in summer. Planting is to be done in ridge and furrow method.
- Remove diseased plants and the soil around plants to be drenched with Mancozeb (3gm/lit) or 3gm Ridomil M.Z.
- Spray the crop with Mancozeb (2.5g/lit) or Carbendazim (1g/lit) +1ml sandovit.

- Keep rhizomes in 3g Metalaxyl or 3g Mancozeb mixed in one litre of water for one hour and shade dry before planting.

Leaf Spot - [Colletotrichum capsici](#)

Symptoms

Oblong brown spots with grey centres are found on leaves. The spots are about 4-5 cm in length and 2-3 cm in width. In advanced stages of disease black dots representing fungal [acervuli](#) occur in concentric rings on spot. The grey centers become thin and gets teared. Severely effected leaves dry and wilt. They are surrounded by yellow halos. Indefinite number of spots may be found on a single leaf and as the disease advances; spots enlarge and cover a major portion of leaf blade.



Symptoms

Favorable condition

- The disease is usually appears in October and November
- Relative humidity of 80% and temperatures of 21 – 23°C favours the primary infection

Disease cycle

The fungus is carried on the scales of rhizomes which are the source of primary infection during sowing. The secondary spread is by wind, water and other physical and biological agents. The same pathogen is also reported to cause leaf-spot and fruit rot of chilli where it is transmitted through seed borne infections. If chilli is grown in nearby fields or used in crop rotation with turmeric, the pathogen perpetuates easily, building up inoculum potential for [epiphytotic](#) outbreaks.

Management

- Select seed material from disease free areas.
- Treat seed material with mancozeb @ 3g/litre of water or carbendazim @ 1 g/litre of water, for 30 minutes and shade dry before sowing.
- Spray mancozeb @ 2.5 g/litre of water or carbendazim @ 1g/litre; 2-3 sprays at fortnightly intervals.
- The infected and dried leaves should be collected and burnt in order to reduce the inoculum source in the field.
- Spraying Blitox or Blue copper at 3 g/l of water was found effective against leaf spot.
- Crop rotations should be followed whenever possible.
- Cultivate tolerant varieties like Suguna and Sudarshan.

Leaf Blotch - [Taphrina maculans](#)

Symptoms

This disease usually appears on lower leaves in October and November. The individual spots are small 1-2 mm in width and are mostly rectangular in shape. The disease is characterized by the appearance of several spots on both the surfaces of leaves, being generally numerous on the upper surface. They are arranged in rows along the veins. The spots coalesce freely and form irregular lesions. They first appear as pale yellow discolorations and then become dirty yellow in colour. The infected leaves distort and have reddish brown appearance.



Symptoms

Disease cycle

The fungus is mainly air borne and primary infection occurs on lower leaves with the inoculum surviving in dried leaves of host, left over in the field. The [ascospores](#) discharged from

successively maturing [asci](#) infect fresh leaves without dormancy, thus causing secondary infection. Secondary infection is most dangerous than primary one causing profuse sprouting all over the leaves. The pathogen persists in summer by means of ascogenous cells on leaf debris, and dessicated ascospores and blastospores in soil and among fallen leaves.

Management

- Select seed material from disease free areas.
- Treat the seed material with Mancozeb @ 3g/litre of water or Carbendazim @ 1 g/litre of water for 30 minutes and shade dry before sowing.
- Spray mancozeb @ 2.5 g/litre of water or Carbendazim @ 1g/litre; 2-3 sprays at fortnightly intervals.
- The infected and dried leaves should be collected and burnt in order to reduce the inoculum source in the field.
- Spraying Copper oxy chloride at 3 g/l of water was found effective against leaf blotch.
- Crop rotations should be followed whenever possible.

Minor diseases

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| a. Dry rot | - | Rhizoctonia bataticola |
| b. Leaf spot | - | <i>Cercospora curcuma</i> |
| c. Leaf Blight | - | Rhizoctonia solani |
| d. Brown rot | - | It is a complex disease caused by the nematode Pratylenchus sp. associated with Fusarium sp. |