

Management of Banana Leaf Diseases

Recognize the problem

With the popularization of intensive cultivation technologies, such as high density planting, Banana leaf diseases are emerging as important problems. Poor field sanitation conditions and unaware farmers aggravates the problem.

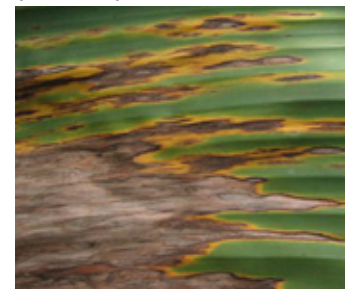
Background

There are two common leaf diseases.

1. Sigatoka Leaf spot
2. Cordana Leaf Spot

Symptoms may emerge in any growth stage of the plant. Initial symptoms appear in the bottom leaves as yellow spots. Later, these spots become brownish to black and form a yellow margin around. Then, the spots coalesce and the leaf tends to die. The diseases spread to healthy plants through wind and water.

Sigatoka symptoms- elongated brown lesions with yellow hallow and grey centre. (Photo by IITA (CC BY-NC))



Management

- Use field tolerant cultivars such as Seeni (Embul and Kolikuttu are susceptible so do not use these)
- Use proper spacing in order to avoid mutual shading and contact of leaves (8x8 to 12x12 ft²)
- Make sure that new plantations are an appropriate distance from existing disease affected plantations
- Avoid sprinkler irrigation to minimize the relative humidity of the microenvironment. Drip irrigation is preferred.
- Balanced fertilization (avoid excess N fertilizer)
- Avoid high density planting methods for highly susceptible cultivars and high risk areas such as some areas of Down South in Dry Zone.
- Remove infected leaves and burn them
- Practice field sanitation by removing old dried hanging leaves
- If the fourth leaf from the bottom is infected, chemical control measures should be applied. Alternate sprays of a contact fungicide, e.g. chlorothalonil 500g/l SC (30ml/ 10l) or mancozeb 75% WG (20g/ 10l) and a systemic fungicide, e.g. Tebuconazole 250g/l EW (3.5 ml/10l) or Propiconazole 250g/l EC (3.5 ml/ 10l). Make sure the spray reaches the top of the leaves

Cordana leaf spot. (Photo by Scot Nelson (CC BY-SA))



When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > *Cordana musae*, *Mycosphaerella musicola*

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Sri Lanka

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