

LOUISIANA PLANT PATHOLOGY

DISEASE IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT SERIES

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Sheath Rot of Rice

Sarocladium oryzae (Sawada) W. Gams and D. Hawksworth

Acrocyldrium oryzae Sawada

Sheath rot of rice is caused by the fungus *Sarocladium oryzae*, and symptoms are most severe on the uppermost leaf sheaths that enclose the young panicle during the boot stage.

Lesions are oblong or irregular oval spots with gray or light brown centers and a dark reddish-brown diffuse margin (Figure 1). Early or severe infections may affect the panicle so that it only partially emerges. The unemerged portion of the panicle rots, with florets turning red-brown to dark brown (Figure 2). A powdery white growth consisting of spores and hyphae of the pathogen usually is observed on the inside of affected leaves. Insect or mite damage to the boot or leaf sheaths increases the damage from this disease. Emerged panicles may be damaged, with florets discolored reddish-brown to dark brown and grain not filling.

Some varietal resistance is available. The disease usually is minor – affecting only scattered tillers in a field and plants along the levee. Occasionally, however, large areas of a field may have significant damage. No control measures are currently recommended, but fungicidal sprays used in a general disease control program may reduce sheath rot damage.



Figure 1. Typical sheath rot symptoms



Figure 2. Grain discoloration due to sheath rot

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