LOUISIANA PLANT PATHOLOGY
DISEASE IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT SERIES
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Crown Rot of Rice

Erwinia chrysanthemi Burkholder et al.

Crown rot of rice is believed to be caused by a bacterial infection (possibly *Erwinia chrysanthemi*) – although this disease is rarely observed.

Symptoms first appear during tillering. The crown area is decayed with soft rotting that becomes black or dark brown with discolored streaks extending into the lower internodes of culms (Figure 1). There is a fetid or putrid odor characteristic of bacterial soft rots, and tillers start dying one at a time. The roots also die and turn black, and adventitious roots are produced at the node above the crown area. Under severe conditions, plants will die and lodge (Figure 2).

A similar discoloration of the crown can be caused by misapplied herbicides. The only control method suggested is draining the field to encourage root and shoot development.

Figure 1. Crown rot symptoms

Figure 2. Dead plants from crown rot damage

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Pub. 3109 (online only) 12/10