

DISORDERS IN BANANA

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A variety of abnormalities in banana have been reported from mid country wet zone of Sri Lanka. The diseased plants showed complexity of symptoms. The most prominent symptoms were leaf withering and drooping. The top most leaf often stands greenish and erect at the top of the plant whilst all the others form a brown withered cluster around the pseudostem. The bunch shows various abnormal developments such as small fingers. Internal symptoms include discoloration of vascular strands with red, purple or brown patches in the pith.

The disorder symptoms were observed in ambul, ambon, kolikuttu, and in seeni kehel.

In sites where there is a deficiency of water the symptoms are more pronounced.

Suckers and clumps from infected plants were grown under observation at Getambe where they were given adequate attention and not subjected to water stress. At Gannoruwa these were grown in concrete containers. Into them were introduced plant parts and soils collected from plantations affected by the disorders. None of the plants showed any disease symptoms in both these experiments.

The association of fungal pathogens with banana disorder was studied. The fungi isolated from unhealthy plants included, Fusarium oxysporum, Fusarium moniliforme, Fusarium semitectum, Fusarium dimerum, Curvularia senegalensis, Postalotia sp., Leptosphaerella, Drechslera (Cochilobolus bicolor) and Botrydiplodia theobromae.

The identification of all these cultures was confirmed by CMI.

Most of these are not regarded as pathogens associated with serious diseases in banana. In artificial inoculation studies, none of the fungi isolated failed to reproduce disease symptoms in banana.

The observations made in the field confirm that the problem could be related to water availability rather than to a pathogenic course.