Pacific Pests, Pathogens, Weeds & Pesticides - Online edition

Coconut seedling blight (075)

Summary

- Widespread distribution. Southeast Asia, Caribbean, Oceania. On coconuts. An important disease of seedlings.
- The fungus attacks well-maintained seedlings, but is worse on those in crowded nurseries with poor nutrition and dense shade.
- Spots merge causing a serious blight and leaves dry up and die early. Spread of spores occurs in wind and rain. It is unimportant after transfer of seedlings to the field.
- Cultural control: ensure correct nutrition: the balance between N (too much increases blight) and K is important; space plants allowing good air circulation so wet leaves dry rapidly; shade should be low or absent.
- Chemical control: Unlikely to be needed; if required use copper, mancozeb or chlorothalonil.

Photo 1. Small oval brown leaf spots of coconut seedling blight, *Bipolaris incurvata*.

Photo 2. Spots of coconut seedling blight, *Bipolaris incurvata*, joining together and causing a blight.

Common Name

Coconut seedling blight

Scientific Name

Bipolaris incurvata (previously known as *Drechslera incurvata*, *Helminthosporium incurvatum*). Another species, *Bipolaris setariae* (*Cochliobolus setariae*) was identified causing a leaf spot in nursery gardens in Hainan Province, China, in 2012.

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Information from CABI (2019) Bipolaris incurvata (coconut leaf spot). Crop Protection Compendium. (https://www.cabi.org/cpc/datasheet/19827); and McKenzie, E. (2013) *Bipolaris incurvata*: PaDIL - http://www.padil.gov.au; and from Uchida JY (undated) *Bipolaris incurvata*. Crop Knowledge Master. University of Hawai'i at Manoa. (http://www.extento.hawaii.edu/kbase/default.htm). Photo 1&2 Kohler F, *et al*. (1997) *Diseases of cultivated crops in Pacific Island countries*. South Pacific Commission. Pirie Printers Pty Limited, Canberra, Australia.

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