Rice Damping off

Recognize the problem
This is a soil borne fungal disease and can be recognized by the presence of a cottony or fine thread-like growth on the surface of the seed before or after its emergence at early stages. In severe cases the entire seed is covered by a cottony mass and no germination takes place.

Background
The disease is caused by either a single fungus or a complex of fungi. The temperature and moisture play an important role in the development of the disease. The cool weather supports the development of the disease as seedlings lack vigour so growth is retarded. In pre-emergence damping off, seedlings die even before they emerge from the soil due to the rotting of the seeds. In post-emergence damping off, seedlings germinate poorly, wilt, break off and finally die after emerging from the soil due to fungal attack or root rot.

Management
• Use disease free healthy seeds
• Keep plants healthy by using balanced fertilizers
• Avoid overcrowding of the seedlings
• Avoid overwatering throughout the growing season. Carefully water in the first two weeks to reduce the chances of damping off
• Treat the seed before sowing with fungicide

Scientific name(s) > Rhizoctonia solani

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.

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