Sheath Rot on rice

Recognize the problem
Early symptoms are oblong to irregular spots, with gray centers and brown margins. Spots or rotting occurs on the leaf sheath that encloses the young panicles. There is discoloration in the sheath. In severe infection the entire or parts of young panicles does not emerge and remain within the sheath. Un-emerged panicles will soon rot and produce powdery fungus growth inside the leaf sheath. Sheath rot lesions are sometimes confused with sheath blight lesions. However, sheath rot occurs higher on the plant than sheath blight and normally does not interfere with the panicle exertion.

Background
Infection occurs on the uppermost leaf sheath at late booting stage. The disease is caused by a fungus and is found in rice plants usually injured by insects or other diseases. Hot and humid (wet) weather favor the growth of the disease. It is also associated with virus-infected plants. It can also occur in areas with high amounts of Nitrogen fertilizer application and high relative humidity and temperatures (20-28 C) at heading to mature crop stages.

Management
• Sheath rot is a seed-borne disease; use healthy seeds.
• Minimize insect infestation in rice field. Insects cause injuries to the plants that allow the fungi to enter the plant and cause infection.
• Use wider planting distance of 25cm x 25cm.
• Apply Potassium fertilizer at the tillering stage to strengthen the stem and leaf tissues.
• Foliar spray of Calcium sulphate and zinc on the leaf at the tillering stage.
• Remove infected stubbles and weeds from the field.
• In case of severe infestation, use fungicides (chemicals) such as carbendazim, mancozeb, Copper oxychloride, Propiconazole.

Scientific name(s) > Sarocladium oryzae

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Cambodia

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