Trends in Commerce, Economics & Life Sciencess



कला वाणिज्य व विज्ञान कनिष्ठ व वरिष्ठ महाविद्यालय

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ISBN No. 978-93-83995-60-9

Published by:

Anuradha Publications

Cidco-Nanded

Publication Year: 2021-22

Price- Rs. 190/-

Copyright © ACS College, Gangakhed

Printed by

Gurukrupa Offset,

Near Police Station, Gangakhed

Typesetting by:

Simran Computers

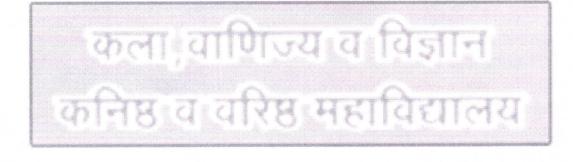
Gangakhed Dist.Parbhani

Cover Designby:

Mr. Imran K. Mohammad

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Studies on root rot of *Rauwolfia serpentina* L. Benth ex Kurz caused by *Macrophomina Phaseolina* (Tassi) Goid

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Introduction:

Rauwolfia serpentina Benth.ex Kurz is most important medicinal plant belongs to family Apocynaceae. It is commonly known as Indian snakeroot (serpagandha). Rauwolfia root is one of the important crude drugs used in modern medicine. Its leaves are simple, 7.5 -10 cm long and 3.5 -5 cm broad. The roots are prominent, tuberous, usually branched, 0.5 to 2.6 cm in diameter and up to 40 to 60 cm deep into soil. The root bark constitutes 40-60% of the whole root is rich in alkaloids known for their efficacy in reducing high blood pressure and as a sedative or tranquilizing agent. The fresh roots emit a characteristic acrid aroma and are very bitter in taste. The roots possess high alkaloid concentration. Reserpine is the compound i.e. active principle used for hypertension as a life saving drug in allopathic system of medicine. Roots are mainly collected from forests and various agriculture university gardens (Dey and De, 2010).

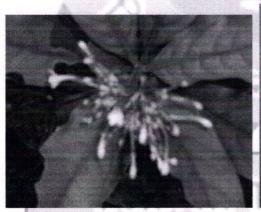




Fig1. Rauwolfia serpentina plants
Materials and Method:

Collection of Infected Plant material:

The collection of infected roots of *Rauwolfia serpentina* L. Benth ex Kurz was carried out from different medicinal plant gardens viz. Nagarjun medicinal plant garden, PDKV Akola and MPKV Rahuri (MS). Roots were stored at research laboratory for further study.



Fig2. Infected roots of Rauwolfia serpentina Isolation of the pathogen:

The infected roots were collected from two medicinal plant gardens i.e., Nagarjun medicinal plant garden, PDKV Akola and MPKV Rahuri. The fungal pathogen *Macrophomina phaseolina* (Tassi) Goid was isolated from the infected roots of sarpagandha showing typical root rot symptoms. The healthy and infected roots were brought to laboratory and preserved for further study. The infected roots were sterilized with 1% sodium hypo chloride solution. The sterilized root were used for isolation of fungal pathogen i.e. *Macrophomina phaseolina*. The isolation of pathogen was made by taking small portion of the infected root and inoculated aseptically on Potato Dextrose Agar medium (PDA). The plates were incubated for 7 days at room temperature (Cloud, and Rupe, 1991 and Dhingra et ai.,1977).

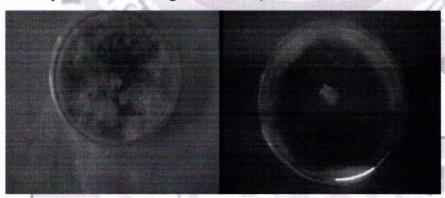


Fig3. Isolation of Macrophomina phaseolina Purification:

Purification was carried out by single spore isolations technique. Isolated fungal spores were transferred for three times on fresh PDA media to obtain pure culture (Bowers, 1999).

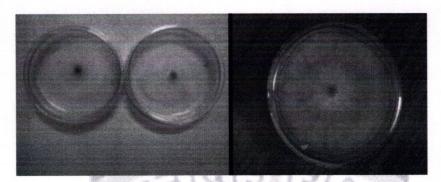


Fig4. Pure culture of Macrophomina phaseolina

Identification:

The *Macrophomina phaseolina* was identified on the basis of growth of vegetative and reproductive characters of fungal culture. The mycelium and reproductive structures are described as (White, 1999 and Mukadam et al, 2006). The pure culture of Macrophomina phaseolina was sent to Agharkar Research Institute, Pune for identification. They also confirmed that the pure culture was *Macrophomina phaseolina*.

The mycelium is septet and black colored. The conidiophores were formed singly or in groups, straight or flexuous brown to olivaceous brown. The conidia were solitary straight or slightly flexuous oblong or muriform or ellipsoidal tapering to beak, pale or olivaceous brown, length 300 µm and 15µm thick in the broadest part with 8 transverse and 4 longitudinal septa. The beaks were flexuous, pale and branched. Thus, the pathogen causing root rot of *Rauwolfia serpentina* has been **identified as** *Macrophomina phaseolina*.

It was observed that the fungal infection shows black conducting tissues of sarpagandha roots. The isolated fungal pathogen from infected roots showed similar fungal growth on potato dextrose agar (PDA) media.

Pathogenicity test:

Pathogenicity test was carried out by inoculating with spore suspension and homogenized mycelial bits of *Macrophomina phaseolina* (Tassi) Goid on dried roots of *Rauwolfia serpentina*. Five days after inoculation the symptoms appeared on inoculated roots as black spots. Reisolated and purified culture from these artificially infected roots was similar to that of original culture and symptoms were similar to that of infected root. The plants which were not inoculated with the fungal spore suspension did not show any symptoms of the disease.

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Acknowledgements:

The authors are very thankful to Principal, D.S.M.College, Parbhani (MS) for providing research facilities at Botany and Biotechnology Dept.

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