

Rice blast

What is it?

Rice blast is one of the most feared diseases of rice, and south-eastern Australia is the only rice-growing area in the world free of this disease. It can devastate rice crop yield, cause loss of markets and would require fungicide sprays to control.

What do I look for?

Rice blast (*Magnaporthe grisea*) is a fungal disease of rice that causes lesions on the following parts of the rice plant: leaf, leaf collar, culm, culm nodes, panicle neck node and panicle. The fungus can infect rice plants at any growth stage.

How does it spread?

Rice blast spreads by windborne spores, by water and on infected plant material.

Where is it found?

Rice blast is found all over the world, in all rice growing regions except south-eastern Australia.

Control options?

Ultimately, the best method for control is to prevent rice blast from ever getting into Australia's south-eastern rice growing area. If rice blast did get into this growing area it would require fungicide sprays to control. The best way to prevent the devastating impact this disease on the rice industry is to report any suspicious looking disease symptoms immediately. Early detection will improve the chances of eradication from the region.



Leaf blast symptoms caused by rice blast (Photo - E Cother)



Collar rot symptoms caused by rice blast. Arrows show affected collars.

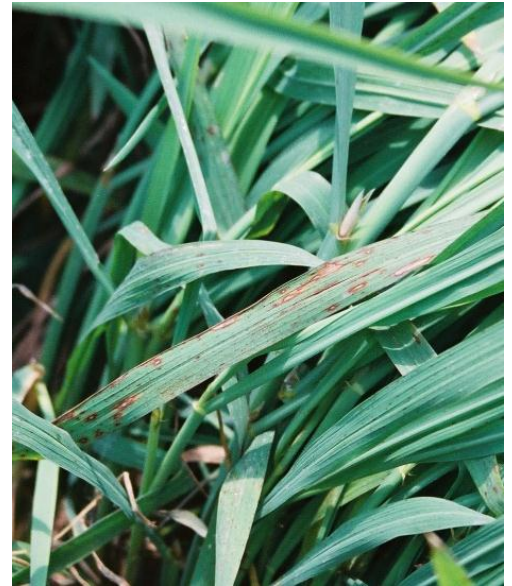
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Reporting

Any unusual plant pest should be reported immediately to the relevant state/territory agriculture agency through the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline (1800 084 881). To minimise the risk of disease spread, samples should not be moved until they have been checked by an expert.

This fact sheet was produced as part of the Industry Biosecurity Plan for the Rice Industry.



Leaf blast symptoms caused by rice blast.

Photo – E Cother



Panicle blast symptoms caused by rice blast. Photo – E Cother

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