Pacific Pests, Pathogens & Weeds - Mini Fact Sheet Edition

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# **Coconut Aspergillus mould (233)**



Photo 1. Aspergillus flavus sporulating on copra.



Photo 3. Maize cob with infected kernels of *Aspergillus flavus*.



Photo 2. Aspergillus flavus sporulating on seed of peanut inside damaged pods.



Photo 4. Close up of maize kernels to show sporulating colonies of Aspergillus flavus.

### Summary

- Worldwide distribution. In warm temperate and tropical countries. On many hosts, growing on dead organic matter, both plant and animal. Important as a post-harvest mould of maize, peanut and copra. An important disease, because of its aflatoxin causing severe diseases in livestock and humans.
- Worse: (i) moisture stress >20 days before harvest; (ii) crop is over-mature; (iii) there is insect damage; (iv) moisture content >10%, and stored at high humidity.
- Cultural control: spacing (30 plants/m<sup>2</sup>); adequate nutrition; avoid end-of-season drought (if possible irrigate); for peanut before or at harvest: (i) remove dead plants; (ii) check pod colours for correct time (they should have turned pink); (iii) invert plants after harvest and dry for 3-5 days; dry to 8%; for maize dry to 13-15%; for copra dry to 5-7% (until it is brittle and breaks easily); for all crops new bags, and airy, dry, insect-proof store. Rotate crops, leaving a 3-4-year interval between crops of maize or peanuts planted on the same land.
- Chemical control: seed mancozeb; control insects during growth of the crop, and during storage.

#### **Common Name**

Copra mould, Aspergillus ear rot (of maize), yellow mould of peanut, storage rot of groundnut

## Scientific Name

#### Aspergillus flavus

#### AUTHOR Grahame Jackson

Information from CABI (2015) Aspergillus flavus (Aspergillus ear rot) Crop Protection Compendium. (http://www.cabi.org.cpc/). Photo 1 Kohler F, Pellegrin F, Jackson G, McKenzie E (1997) Diseases of cultivated crops in Pacific Island countries. South Pacific Commission. Prive Printers Pty Limited, Canberra, Australia; Photo 2 Aflatoxin in peanuts. Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Queensland Government. Photo 3 Department of Plant Pathology Archive, NCSU, Bugwood.org; Photo 4 Harry Duncan, NCSU, Bugwood.org.

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