

Cabbage Rhizoctonia web blight (126)

Summary

- Worldwide distribution. Temperate as well as tropical countries. A fungus causes the head rot; it attacks many vegetables and also causes seedling 'damping-off'. An important disease.
- It survives in soil either living on dying and dead plants or as dormant balls of fungal growth (called 'sclerotia') which are splashed onto plants to germinate, infect, and rot the leaves, binding them together with cottony fungal growth.
- Cultural control: Grow seedlings in either soil-less potting mix, or in pasteurised soil, and clean trays or pots; avoid wounds to plants during cultivation; allow crop remains to decompose completely before replanting; grow root crops in rotation with cabbages.
- Chemical control: not recommended.

Common Name

Leaf blight, seedling blight, stem canker, sheath blight, web blight. Usually, the common name is followed by the host, e.g., web blight (of beans), sheath blight (of rice).

Scientific Name

Thanatephorus cucumeris and *Ceratobasidium cornigerum* are the name of the sexual states, whereas the asexual states are placed in the genera *Rhizoctonia* and *Ceratorhiza*, respectively. In this fact sheet, the pathogen is called *Rhizoctonia*.



Photo 1. Sclerotia of *Rhizoctonia* on stem and leaves of carrot.



Photo 2. Sclerotia of *Rhizoctonia* on potato.



Photo 3. Collar rot of tomato caused by *Rhizoctonia*, showing the cottony growth of the fungus on the stem.



Photo 4. Head rot of cabbage caused by *Rhizoctonia*.

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Information from CABI (2014) *Thanatephorus cucumeris* (many names, depending on host). Crop Protection Compendium. (<https://www.cabi.org/cpc/datasheet/47203>); EPPO (undated) *Rhizoctonia solani* (RHIZSO). EPPO Global Database. (<https://gd.eppo.int/taxon/RHIZSO/photos>). Photos 1,2&3 Gerlach WWP (1988) *Plant Diseases of Western Samoa*. Samoan German Crop Protection Project, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH, Germany, Photo 4 Kohler F, et al (1997) *Diseases of cultivated crops in Pacific Island countries*. South Pacific Commission, Pirie Printers Pty Limited, Canberra, Australia.

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