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BIOCONTROL OF EARLY BLIGHT OF CAPSICUM CAUSED DUE TO *ALTERNARIA TENUISSIMA* BY USING PLANT LATEX

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ABSTRACT

Genus Alternaria belong to deuteromycetes having number of species and destructive plant pathogen to the families such as Solanceae, Cucurbitaceae, Brasicaceae. Capsicum belong to family Solanaceae. The capsicum crop grown in rabbi and kharip season having nutritional and economical value. Alternaria species cause early blight disease of capsicum and lose the quality and quantity of crop. The disease is control by spraying synthetic chemicals but it creates environmental, ecological problems. Now a day's biological methods are uses to control the diseases. Biological methods are safer, biodegradable and ecofriendly, so this method is adopted by farmer rather than chemical control method. Biological agents like fungi, herbal extract and natural products are used to control diseases. In present study *Alternaria tenuissima* isolated from infected parts of capsicum plants on PDA medium. The different concentrations of some plant latex are prepared and used to control the infection of Alternaria.

Key words: Biocontrol, Early blight of Capsicum, *Alternaria tenuissima*, plant latex.

Introduction

Alternaria species are infects the various crops belonging to the several families and reduce the quality and quantity of yield of crop plants. The genus Alternaria was first recognized by Nees in 1817. Alternaria belongs to the subdivision Deuteromycotina, class Hyphomycetes, family Dematiaceae. Species of the genus are cosmopolitan, surviving both as Saprophytes as well as weak parasites. Among the different diseases caused by the genus Alternaria, blight disease is one of the most dominant and that causes average yield loss in the range of 32-57% (Conn and Tewari,1990). In several cases, small dark coloured spots are also formed on pods and tender twigs (Valkonen and Koponen,1990). A comprehensive, comparative account of morphological differentiation of different Alternaria species occurring on Cucurbitaceous, Brassicaceous and Solanaceous crops are described by Khalid et al. (2004) and Deshwal (2004).

There are several methods which are being employed for management of Alternaria disease like application of chemical fungicide, herbal extract and natural product, by seed treatment, use of resistant varieties, biological control agents and other methods (Prasad and Naik,2003). Use of chemical fungicide is an important tool in the prevention and control of crop diseases but it creates environmental, ecological and health problems so biocontrol plays important role to eco-friendly control the infection. To biological control of the diseases various plant latex and natural products are used to control the diseases because plant latex is no harmful effect on biodiversity and cheaper than a chemical fungicide.

The antifungal potency of *C. gigantea* latex extract on the *C. albicans* showed a larger diameter of clearance than that of other fungal strains (Venkatesan and Subramanian, 2010). The latex extract was screened in vitro against human pathogenic strains such as Gram positive;

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Staphylococcus aureus, *Bacillus subtilis*, Gram negative**;** *Salmonella typhi*, *Klebsiella phenonemia* and two fungal strains; *Aspergillus niger* and *Candida albicans*. The result agrees with that there is a need to employ broad range of extractive solvents in the extractions of possible photochemical from medicinal plants (Takazawa et al., 1982). The growth of four test fungi was inhibited by ethanol and chloroform extracts while the aqueous extract was the least effective on the test fungi. The mycelial growth, percentage spores germination and germ tube extension in *Fusarium oxysporum* and *Aspergillus carbonar* is decreased when *Calotropis procera* extract concentration increases, whereas growth of *Humicola brevis* and *Penicillium lanosum* were not affected (Rizk, 2008).

The water-soluble fraction of papaya latex can completely digest the conidia of many fungi including important post-harvest pathogens (Indrakeerthiand Adikaram, 1996). Other latex extracted from several plants showed a strong antifungal activity against Botryti cinerea, Fusarium sp. (Barkai-Golan, 2001). The best antifungal activity was recorded in ethanol extract of *C. procera* latex against *Candida albicans* (Kareem et al., 2008). Leaf extracts, chopped leaves and latex of *C. procera* have shown great promise as a nematicide in vitro and in vivo (Khirstova and Tissot, 1995).

Material and methods

Samples of fungal infected parts of capsicum were collected from the different tehsils of Nashik district of Maharashtra. Fungal infected part samples are collected randomly and fresh infected plant materials were used for the isolation of fungus.

Isolation:

Isolation of fungus was done on PDA medium because PDA plate method was most suitable for isolation of fungus. PDA was preparing by adding peeled potato (200 gm/lit.), dextrose (20 gm/lit.), agar (15 gm/lit.), pH was adjusted by pH meter. PDA medium and required glassware's are sterilized by the autoclave and are transfer in the laminar air flow cabinet. Sample are inoculating on growth medium and maintain pure culture of fungal species. Fungi are identified by microscopic characters with the help of identification key (Mukadam et al.,2002). After identification of fungi pure cultures are maintain for further procedure.

Plant material and latex collection:

The fresh latex of *J. curcus, C. gigentea, F. bengalensis* and *F. glomerata* were aseptically collected from the aerial parts of the healthy plants as described by Aworh et al. (1994) in clean glass tubes containing distilled water to yield a dilution rate of 5:5 (v/v). The latex mixture was gently handled to maintain homogeneity during transport to the laboratory where it was stored at (4◦C) until further use.

Preparation of latex extract:

The fresh latex was selectively decanted and centrifuged at 5000 rpm for 5min. The precipitated material showing rubber aspect was pooled apart and the supernatant was decanted carefully. Finally, the samples were centrifuged as previously described and the clear soluble supernatant was collected. The stock solutions of latex extract were diluted suitably as required from stock solution (Juncker et al., 2009).

Determination of antifungal activity:

Plant latex aqueous extracts of each prepared with distilled water and condensed to serve as stock extract was determined by food poisoning technique (Mishra & Tiwari, 1992) against

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tested pathogens in four different concentrations. Petriplates containing PDA medium, supplemented with different plant latex extracts at four concentrations (25, 50, 75 and 100%) with three replicates were inoculated with fresh 7 days old culture of test fungi in 8 mm discs and kept upside down. The plates were incubated in BOD incubator at 28 ± 2°C. Plates without plant latex extracts served as control. Starting two days after inoculation (DAI) radial growth was recorded daily for 8 days or until the plates were overgrown.

Results and discussion

In present study different concentrations of some plant latex was tested against *A. tenuissima* to determine their antifungal activity. Minimum inhibitory concentration (MIC) was measured to determine the antifungal activity. *Calatropis gigantia* latex extract showed 100% reduction of radial growth of *Alternaria tenuissima* at 100% conc. *Jatropha curcus* (91.11%) also showed significant reduction of *Alternaria tenuissima* at 100% conc. However, there was significant reduction of radial growth in case of *F. bengalensis* and *F.glomerata* was also observed.

There was significant reduction in the growth of *A. tenuissima* under the influence of various plant latex. However, the variation among the concentrations was also significant.

Table : Antifungal activity of Plant latex extracts against *A. tenuissima*

Plant Name	Conc (%)	Radial growth of *A.tenuissima* (mm)	Inhibition (%)
Jatropa curcas	**25**	14	84.44
	50	12	86.67
	75	10	88.89
	100	8	91.11
Calotropis gigantea	**25**	36	60.00
	50	30	66.67
	75	18	80.00
	100	0	100.00
Ficus bengalensis	**25**	17	81.11
	50	15	83.33
	75	12	86.67
	100	10	88.89
Ficus glomerata	**25**	34	62.22
	50	28	68.89
	75	24	73.33
	100	20	77.78
Control		90	

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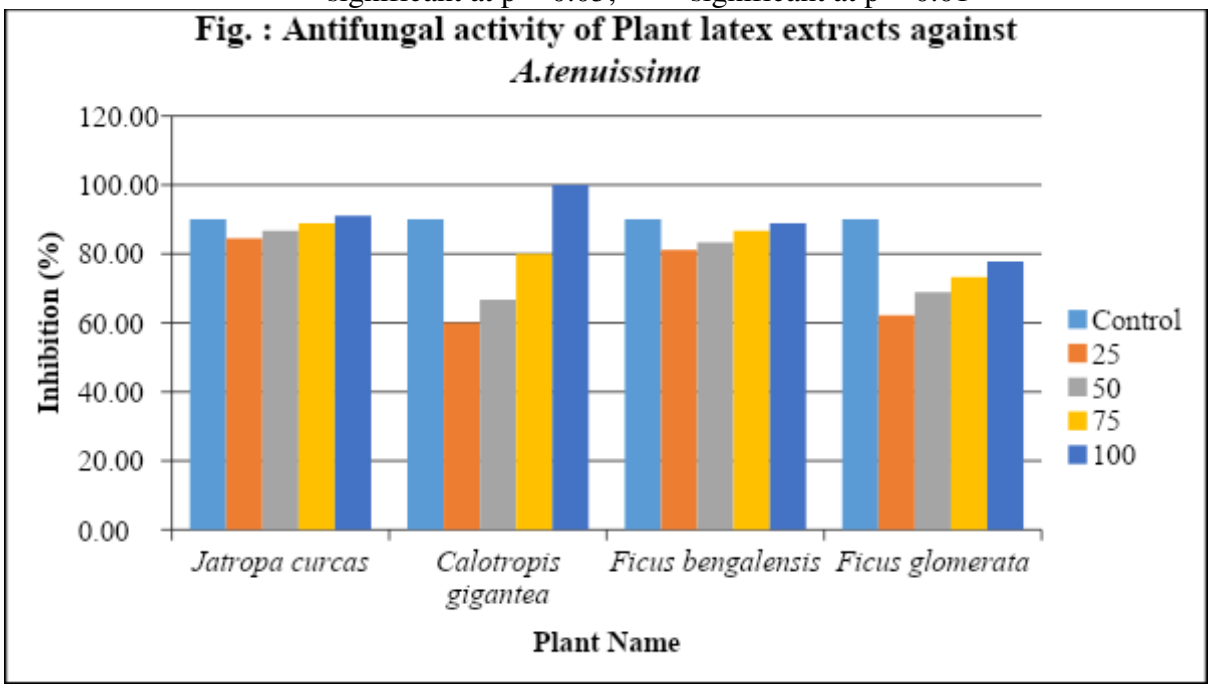
ANOVA

Source	df	SS	MSS	F	
Plants	3	481.60	160.53	4.06	*
Conc.	4	17146.30	4286.58	108.32	**
Error	12	474.90	39.58		
Total	19	18102.80			

* = significant at p = 0.05; ** = significant at p = 0.01



Conclusion

Biocontrol agents like plant latex of *Calatropis gigantia* more effective against *A. tenuissima*. To avoid harmful effect of chemical fungicides to nature plant latex can used to ecofriendly management of diseases.

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