

Re-emergence of the Abnormal Leaf Fall Disease Condition in Sri Lankan Rubber Plantations!!!!

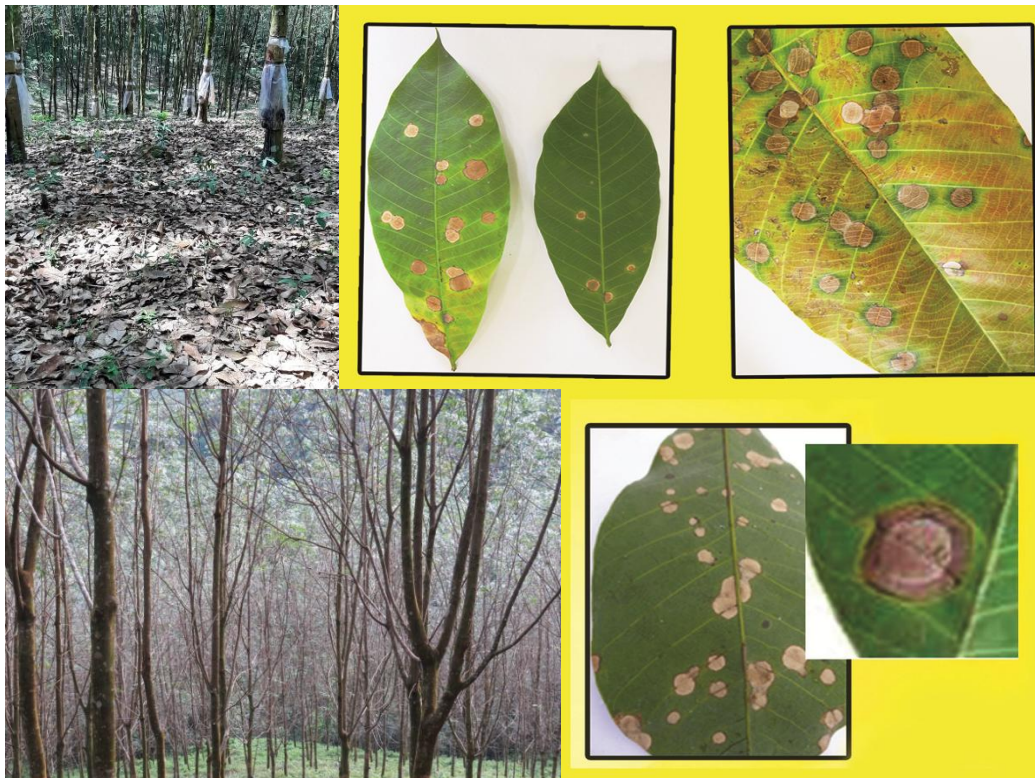
“Pestalotiopsis Leaf Fall Disease”

With the onset of the monsoon rains, this newly reported Leaf Fall disease is reported to be re-appearing in Rubber Plantations

The growers in Kalutara, Rathnapura, Kegalle and Galle districts should be vigilant of the incidence of the disease.

Diagnosis of the disease

Symptoms begin as very small, yellow, brown or black spots. Later, these spots may expand to form circular brown to silvery spots with a yellow halo. Moreover, a blight condition of the leaf is evident.



Disease distribution & Economic Impact

The first epidemic condition of this disease had been reported from Malaysia 2017 – 2018 and later, the disease spread to Indonesia devastating many rubber clones. Currently, the major natural rubber producers such as Thailand (52 000ha), Indonesia (380,000ha) & Malaysia (5000ha) have been seriously affected and the disease is reported from India and Papua New Guinea. The outbreak has been estimated to reduce 70% - 90% of productivity in the worst affected areas and about 30% - 50% in moderate affected regions (ITRC, Indonesia - December 2019).

Disease distribution in Sri Lanka

This leaf fall disease was first reported in Sri Lanka by the end of July 2019. Since then, immediate actions were made to educate the extension staff and the growers to identify the disease and to isolate the infected areas limiting further spread of the disease. Chemical spraying programmes conducted so far have contributed to control the spread of the disease to a considerable extent.

In 2019, the disease incidences were mostly reported in Kalutara & Ratnapura districts & then in Kegalle & Galle districts showing that the disease prevails mostly in the wet rubber- growing areas of the country.

By end December 2019, approximately 4,000 hectares had been affected with the disease both in Regional Plantation Companies (2,000ha) and small holder sector (2,000ha). In the affected fields 30-70% of defoliation was observed and branch die-back was also reported in some rubber clearings especially under favorable weather conditions to the pathogen.

Why the stake holder should protect the rubber cultivations?

- This is a newly reported leaf fall disease spreading in many other rubber growing countries.
- With the repeated defoliation due to the disease there will be a yield reduction.
- Chemical Controlling of the disease is recommended to manage the spread of the disease to the surrounding rubber cultivations and to stop the spread of the disease to other crops

Chemical Controlling Protocol

Fungicide	Machine	Rate	Fungicide per tank	Requirement for 1ha/ 1 Application
Carbendazim (50% WP)	ASPEE Mist Blower (12l capacity)	3g/1L	36g/12 l of water	6 – 8 tanks 216 – 288g
	Cifarelli Mist Blower (15l capacity)	3g/1L	45g/15 l of water	6 – 8 tanks 270 – 360g
Hexaconazole (50 g/l SC)	ASPEE Mist Blower (12l capacity)	3ml/1L	36ml /12 l of water	6 – 8 tanks 216 – 288ml
	Cifarelli Mist Blower (15l capacity)	3ml/ 1L	45ml/15 l of water	6 – 8 tanks 270 – 360ml

Contacts for further information

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