PREVALENCE OF FALSE SMUT OF DATE PALM IN SOUTHERN DISTRICTS OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA PAKISTAN

Tariq Zaman, Nadia Taimur, Baharullah Khattak, Abdul Momin and Abdul Riaz Khan

Kohat University of Science and Technology, Kohat, Pakistan

(tzmarwat@gmail.com)

Date Palm (*Phoenix dactylifera.*L) is locally known as Khajoor is a flowering plant species belongs to the family *Arecaceae.* Dates have high nutritive value containing sugar, proteins, fibers, potassium, Iron and thiamine. They have high medicinal value and are used as a carminative, general tonic, aphrodisiac, antacid and for treating backache. Pakistan is the fifth largest producer of dates with 680107 tons in 2016/17. The production of Dates is adversely effected by climatic factors and diseases like Fruit rot, Omphalia root rot, Brown leaf spot, Bending Head, Sudden decline etc, among these graphiola leaf spot disease which is caused by *Graphiola phoenicis* is also effect production and growth of date palm. The aim of the present study was to find out the prevalence of false smut of date palm in study area. 3-5 sights were selected in each district and 50 plants were randomly selected, the incidence was determined by the formula, no of infected plants/ total no of plants×100, and prevalence was determined by formula, no of infected sights/ total no of sights×100. Morphological and molecular identification were also done in order to confirm the pathogen (*Graphiola phoenicis*) of the concern disease. It was observed that that *Graphiola phoenicis* was the causative organism for the false smut of date palm observed in southern districts of Khyber Pakhthunkwa and false smut disease is adversely affect growth and production of date palm in southern districts of Khyber Pakhthunkhwa Pakistan.

Key words: *Phoenix dactylifera*, *Arecaceae*, Smut, Southern districts, Prevalence, *Graphiola phoenicis,*