

“A review on biological management of diseases of cotton (*Gossypium sp.*) L.”

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Abstract

Cotton is an economically and commercially important crop in India and principally used over world with attention. It is also called as “The White Gold” as it tops among all the cash crops in the country and is the leading raw material for the blooming textile industries. Cotton crop suffers from a variety of fungal, bacterial and viral diseases accounting for heavy crop losses. Heavy crop losses due to diseases such as alternaria leaf spot, grey mildew, and bacterial blight have been reported. Increasing negative impact on environment due to excessive use of chemical pesticides draw the attention of researcher towards biological control of the disease. Use of disease-free seed inoculum, crop rotation, plant extracts, disease resistance varieties and fertilizer are some non-hazardous remedies to control incidence of these disease. Present review summarises significant application of biological control measures to attain a sustainable and eco-friendly management of cotton (*Gossypium spp.*) diseases.

Keywords: Eco-friendly, biological control, cotton, *Gossypium*, diseases.

1. Introduction:

The cotton plant is an important cash crop of the Malvaceae family. *Gossypium* genus consist of about fifty species but *G. arboreum* L., *Gossypium hirsutum* L., *G. barbadense* L., and *G. herbaceum*, are cultivated and more economically important. These four species are commercially grown for the production of lint which is used for spun into yarn (Applequist *et al.*, 2001). In the recent decade enemies of this crop like many fungal, viral, bacterial and nematode diseases have continued to ravage the cotton crop and emerged as a serious threat to its sustainable and enhanced production (Tanweer, 2013). In India also, many major and minor diseases have been reported for this crop. Out of these, major diseases caused by pathogens of fungal, bacterial and viral origin (Sekhon *et al.*,

2008). Bacterial leaf blight, boll rots, wilts and leaf spots are the most destructive cotton diseases and are also known to cause considerable losses in the yield (Chopra, 1977 and Bashi *et al.*, 1983). Different kind of strategies have been employed as remedy to control these pathogens from attacking the crop in the field.

2. Major Diseases of Cotton and Their Management

Several diseases are well recognised and their management strategies have been established in cotton.

Use of disease resistant lines/hybrids is the main strategy to manage any of these diseases. Conversely, eco-friendly measurements are also being employed successfully.

2.1 Bacterial diseases:

Bacterial blight: It is caused by *Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *malvacearum* (Smith) Dye (synonyms *Xanthomonas malvacearum* (E.F.Sm) Dowson. It has been reported from Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka states of India. Among the all diseases, Bacterial blight caused by *Xanthomonas malvacearum* and boll rot complex is of major concern. This bacterium infests almost all crop stages and causes significant losses in the yield (Meshram and Raj, 1988 and Shelke *et al.*, 2012.). It is the most wide spread and devastating disease reported to cause heavy yield losses of about 10 to 30 per cent in indian states (Innes, 1983, Kalpana *et al.*, 2004 and Sandipan *et al.*, 2015). It is also reported to negatively affect the quality of lint (Sharma and Chauhan, 1985). The disease starts developing as angular leaf spots with red to brown with lesions bordered by fine veins of the leaf. These spots further progress along the major leaf veins. On progression, leaf petioles and stems also become infected and premature defoliation occurs. In severe cases it causes distortion and withering of cotyledons and death of

seedlings (Mishra and Krishna, 2001). Bacterial blight causes significant premature defoliation and in the worst cases necrosis of parenchymatous tissue in the initial phase and blockage of xylem vessels in its systemic infection. (Casson *et al.*, 1977). For biological control of this disease many plant extracts as well as antagonist microorganisms have been employed. Plant extracts of *Nicotiana tabacum*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Moringa oleifera*, *Datura alba* and *Curcuma longa* have been reported to exhibit antimicrobial effect on the pathogen (Sheoraj and Verma, 1988). Amongst the antagonist microbes, *Trichoderma hamatum* has been found significantly superior in reduction of pathogen in *in vitro* assay. Similarly, *Trichoderma harzianum* and *Pseudomonas fluorescens* are also reported to inhibit growth of *Xanthomonas* (Jagtap *et al.*, 2012). F.R. Spago *et al.* (2014) reported that *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* produces secondary metabolites that have biological activity against plant pathogenic *Xanthomonas* species. Raghavendra, *et al.* (2007) soaked seeds and made three foliar sprayings of Dravya (seaweed *Sargassum wightii* extract) to manage bacterial blight of cotton at 10 days consecutive intervals and noticed significant results in reduction of blight incidence. It has been observed that antagonistic rhizobacteria such as *Pseudomonas fluorescens* and *Bacillus subtilis* were effective to manage colony development of the pathogen (Salaheddin *et al.*, 2010). In a similar study, the endophytic *Bacillus* strains have been found to decrease incidence of this phytopathogen and increased cotton yield under greenhouse conditions (Rajendaran *et al.*, 2006). Rashid and Khan (2000) reported that treatment with *Verticillium chlamydosporium* and *Paecilomyces lilacinus* is effective in controlling bacterial blight development on cotton.

2.2 Viral diseases

Cotton leaf curl: The disease characterized by leaf curling, thickening of veins, leafy enations under leaf and stunted growth (Padidam *et al.*, 1995; Nawaz-ul-Rehman *et al.*, 2009). The causal agent is *Cotton leaf curl virus*; a typical begomovirus which is transmitted by insect vector whitefly (*Bemisia tabaci*) (Bedford *et al.*, 1994; Gilbertson *et al.*, 2015). In severe cases, stunting is found in association with reduced flowering/fruitletting is observed (Anonymous c, 2018). To prevent the spread of disease many biological based components along with chemical have also been employed. The best control measure is to control spread and infestation of the insect vector in fields of cotton. It was found that application of farm yard manure, composted leaves

and kitchen waste promotes the ability of plants to survive against the viral attack. Similarly, the applications of organic oils (canola, sunflower and cotton seed) were observed to effectively suppress the viral load in cotton plants by stopping insect vector infestation (*Bemisia tabaci* Genn.) (Humza *et al.*, 2016). *Datura stramonium* has also been reported to be more effective in control of pathogen. In a study it was found that extracts of plants like *Azadirachta indica*, *Caleotropsis procera*, *Eucalyptus globulus*, *Allium sativum*, *Datura stramonium*, *Aloe barbadensis* have antagonistic potential against *Bemisia tabaci* and cotton leaf curl virus disease under field conditions (Ali *et al.*, 2010). It is also reported that *Azadirachta indica* extract, mustard oil and Salicylic acid are very effective against *Bacillus tabaci* and spread of CLCuV disease (Arif *et al.*, 2004). The treatment of cotton plants with *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Burkholderia cepacia* and *Bacillus spp.* has been found to reduce viral load percentage and the disease incidence. Similarly, application of microbes *Paecilomyces lilacinus*, *Verticillium chlamydosporium*, and bio-products Nimbokil 60 EC (a neem product) and Larvo BTK (a bio-insecticide) have been reported to possess antagonistic effect against this virus in cotton crop (Rashid and Khan, 2000).

Cotton streak disease: Cotton streak disease was recognized in India in past decades and identified to be caused by the *Tobacco streak virus* (TSV) (Jagtap and Dey, 2013). It is known to cause necrosis in developing cotton plants. This disease has been recognized as an emerging threat to “white gold” in India. In India, the natural hosts of TSV were sunflower and peanut and caused necrosis disease in these plants only. Transmission is also reported through mechanical means and infected seeds. (Jagtap *et al.* 2013). It has been also reported that disease can be spreaded by thrips species. In cotton, tobacco streak virus has been reported to cause a maximum of 62.7% yield loss. There is no direct biological control measures are available to control of this disease.

2.3 Fungal diseases:

Alternaria leaf spot: Causal agent of this disease is *Alternaria macrospora* Zimm.. In India, it is prevalent in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka states. Rane and Patel (1956) reported first time cotton *Alternaria* leaf spot in transitional belt. The pathogen infects all the four cultivated species of *Gossypium*. It is primarily a seed-borne disease though it can be transmitted through soil borne and air borne conidia and also by collateral hosts (Mohan *et al.*, 2017). Most common symptoms of this disease are wilting of seedlings, boll spotting and lesions on primary leaves. The lesions are

circular, slightly sunken, reddish brown and finally lead to rotting (Bhattiprolu and Prasada Rao, 2009). The disease is notoriously known to account for heavy yield losses in the field (Chattannavar *et al.*, 2010). Watkins (1981) observed conidial chain on the spots. Veins of leaf get affected and spots occur on the cotyledons. In India, circular lesions develop on the bolls and leaves. The seeds may get infected and carry the infection. Though chemical control measures have been found to be very effective, biocontrol measure are also attracting researchers as they are safer and eco-friendly. As biocontrol agents bacteria *Pseudomonas fluorescens* strains and *Bacillus subtilis* and botanicals viz. *Azadirachata indica*, *Lantana camera*, *Calotropis procera*, *Ocimum sanctum*, *Allium cepa*, and *Allium sativum* have been reported to significantly reduce mycelial growth of the pathogenic fungus (Mohan Venkata Siva Prasad *et al.*, 2017). Ramegouda (2007) also reported that garlic bulb (*Allium sativum*) extract has significant antifungal activity against *A. macrospora* under *in vitro* condition. Similar results have been observed for *Ashoka* and *Calatropis* treatment on mycelial growth of this phytopathogenic fungus. As fungal biocontrol agent *Trichoderma viride* and *Trichoderma harzianum* has been found to control growth of fungal mycelia on host plant. In the same study it was concluded that *Pseudomonas fluorescens* can be used as biocontrol agents for their bio-efficacy against Alternaria leaf spot (Gholve *et al.*, 2012; Prashant *et al.*, 2017). It was recorded in a study that *Trichoderma viride* exhibited highest protection of cotton from alternaria leaf spot. Chattannavar *et al.* (2004) screened 20 Bt cotton genotypes and observed eleven genotypes exhibited resistant activity to Alternaria leaf spot.

Grey mildew: The causal agent of this disease is *Ramularia areola* (Atk.). The disease appear on older leaves first as the plants reach maturity later, irregular angular, pale and translucent spots with a definite and irregular margin formed by the veins of the leaf (called areolate) are observed. The growth of the fungus mainly develops on the under layer of leaves but occasionally also on the upper surface. Gokhale and Moghe (1967b) reported that heavily infected cotyledonary leaves fall and blackish spots observed during the process of withering. It is mainly transmitted by airborne conidia (Chidambaram and Johnson, 2002). For biocontrol measures antagonist microbes have been used. In an experiment, it was concluded that *Pseudomonas fluorescens* can be used as biocontrol agents against grey mildew disease of cotton (Chattannavar, 2004; Hosagoudar, 2007; Gholve *et al.*, 2012).

Root rot (*Rhizoctonia solani* Kuhn and *R. bataticola* (Taub) Butler): The root rot caused by *Rhizoctonia bataticola* (Taub) Butler and *Rhizoctonia solani* Kuhn are among most disastrous diseases of cotton. It is prevalent in the states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, western Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. The disease affects economically important species of cotton. Wilting of the complete plants is the first visible symptom of this disease. This wilting later on, converts into circular diseased patches and finally reddening of leaves (Monga and Sheo Raj, 2018; Raj *et al.*, 1998). The antifungal potentialities of *Stenotrophomonas maltophilia*, *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* and *Bacillus subtilis* have been also reported (Selim *et al.*, 2017).

Verticillium wilt: This disease is caused by *Verticillium dahliae* (Khleb). It is more prevalent in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka. Mottling of leaves with yellowish patches, brownish necrosis of leaves, drying of leaves finally resulting in shedding of the leaves are the symptoms (Anonymous 2018a). Herbs along with microbes have been proved as an effective control measure for the disease. Hanson (2000) obtained significant results with seaweed and herbs extracts as control measure on this pathogen on cotton in greenhouse experiments. Also biological control of *V. dahliae* in cotton with a mixture of lignin and *Trichoderma viride* (Prashant *et al.*, 2017) has been reported. Bioagents such as strains of *Bacillus subtilis* and *Trichoderma viridae* are also reported to be utilized as a component of Integrated Disease Management in cotton (Johnson *et al.*, 2013).

Anthraco-nose of cotton: The anthracnose was first detected and described by Southworth (1891) from USA and causal agent was named as *Colletotrichum gossypii* (South). In India it was first reported from Bihar (Butlar, 1918) and since then has been found wide spread in Maharashtra, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh (Dastur, 1934; Ramakrishnana, 1946; Sunderaraman, 1927 and 1928). Anthracnose affect length and strength of fibre lint, lint become slightly yellow and seed from boll germinate poorly. Streptomyces strain have been reported for effective potential to control of anthracnose.

Ascochyta blight of cotton: Ascochyta blight is caused by *Ascochyta gossypii* and caused stunted growth and loss of cotton stands. Plants in early weeks (three weeks to five weeks old) are most susceptible to Ascochyta blight (Birds, 1960). Brown *et al.* (1958) reported Ascochyta blight as wet weather blight due to appearance of symptoms during prolong wet and cool weather. It infects leaves, stem and bolls of cotton, lint destroyed and discoloured grey with pycnidia in half open bolls

although flowers are not attacked (Holliday, 1980). Resistant varieties and crop rotation can minimize its incidence.

3. Conclusions: Cotton is known as an important fibre crop playing a dominant role in the economy of many countries. It suffers from a variety of diseases worldwide which affects its quality as well as economy of the dependent stake holders. As a requirement of human and environment health, application of biocontrol measures are being implemented. In cotton crop also, these management strategies have performed well with the application botanical extracts such as *Nicotiana tabacum*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Moringo oleifera*, *Datura alba*, *Curcuma longa*, *Caleotropis procera*, *Eucalyptus globulus* L., *Allium sativum* L., *Datura stramonium* L and *Aloe barbadensis*. Similarly microbes such as *Bacillus subtilis* and *Trichoderma viridae*, *Verticillium chlamydosporium*, *Paecilomyces lilacinus*, *Pseudomonas fluorescens* have been reported to effectively control cotton plant pathogens. Present study reviewed the potential bioagents and plant parts to control various disease of cotton.

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