

B.Sc. Botany – 3rd SEM

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Little Leaf of Brinjal

The main symptom of the disease is the production of very short leaves by affected plant. The petioles are so much reduced in size that leaves appear sticking to the stem. Such leaves are narrow, soft, smooth and yellowish in colour.

Newly formed leaves are further reduced in size. The internodes are shortened and at the same time large number of axillary buds are stimulated to grow into short branches with small leaves. This gives whole plant a bushy appearance. Usually such plant unable to form flowers. Fruiting is very rare.



Causal Organism:

Mycoplasma like organism (MLO).

Disease Cycle:

The disease is transmitted through by the vector *Cestius phycitis*. Artificially the disease has been transmitted successfully to tomato, potato and tobacco. Probably during the season of Brinjal crop, the causal agent survives on weed hosts and from there it is transmitted to main crop by its insect vector.

Control Measures of Little Leaf Disease:

Since no effective control measure is found it is better to eradicate the weed host and remove the diseased Brinjal plants. Tetracycline has been reported to control the disease.

Adopting sanitary measures including the eradication of susceptible volunteer crop plants from a previous planting can reduce the damage. Use of barriers of trap crops and early removal and destruction of infected plants is also recommended. The sowing time can be adjusted to avoid the main flights of the beet leafhopper. Spraying Malathion (2ml/litre of water) starting with the appearance of the leaf hoppers controls their population.