**Red Rot of Sugarcane:**

**Description:**

* One of the oldest & widely distributed in Punjab & Sindh

**History and Importance:**

* First reported from Java in 1883
* In sub-continent in 1906

**Etiology:**

Causal organism: *Colletotrichum falcatum*

Order: Melanconiales

Family: Melanconiaceae

**Symptoms:**

* Yellowing and dropping of 3rd or 4th leaf from the top
* Midrib of leaves is also affected producing red patches with ash colored center having abundant fungal growth.
* Infected canes are lighter in weight and are easily broken.
* If split open longitudinally especially when withering of leaves starts, pith is found reddened.

**Disease cycle:**

* Fungus survive in soil & on planting material
* Ratoon\*( cutting most of the above-ground portion but leaving the roots and the growing shoot apices\*(growing points) intact so as to allow the plants to recover and produce a fresh crop in the next season) crop may also help in disease development
* Rain, irrigation water, wind & insects also spread the disease

**Epidemiology:**

* 27-30°C & High RH
* Humid and warm weather, water logged conditions, lack of proper cultural operations resulting in weeds, continuous cultivation of same variety in a particular locality and presence of susceptible varieties in the vicinity are the main factors determining the epidemic development of the disease.

**Management:**

* Crop rotation for two years
* Seed setts should be free from disease or treated with solution of Benelat for 1 hr
* Residues should be burn after harvest
* Ratoon crop discouraged if first crop infected
* Resistant thick canes varieties, particularly e.g. CP-77-400, SPF-24O, 237, CPF 72-2O86 etc.
* Treat sets with Formaline solution (1:20), or Benomyl, for10-15 minutes and cover them with wet gunny bags for 3 hours.