

»Managing false smut of rice«

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As a major crop grown widely on a large scale, rice growing and production is highly affected by diseases and pests and other related factors which are biotic and abiotic.

Rice being a staple food around world, extensive use of fertilizers and intensive mono cropping make crops susceptible to diseases hence reduction in seed germination. Grow crops that are taller than rice as boarder around field to prevent disease spread.

Disease management

As false smut reduce grain weight and negatively affect milling, cooking and eating of rice, it is seen during panicle formation when rice begin to ripen during foggy weather. Orange balls of 1 cm cover individual grains in panic which later turn into black color however, fungus has tiny seeds called spores which survive in soils from one season to another spread by wind and diseased dry seeds.

To prevent false smut, always use healthy seeds resistant to false smut obtained from good seed sources recommended by extension agent. Also soak seeds in water of 50 degrees centigrade for 10 minutes to kill fungus from seeds and treat seeds with beneficial fungicides using gloves and face mask.

Similarly when treating using cow urine, mix a half liter of cow urine with 2.5 L of water and soak 1 kg of seed for 13 minutes and dry seeds in shade before sowing and as false rice smut grow best in warm, moist and rainy periods, early planting prevents flowering during foggy season to prevent the disease.

Dry the field completely after irrigation of up to 2 cm and irrigate it again after 4-7 days when soil is dry enough. Use moderate amount of nitrogen in field and during grain formation, spread organic growth promoter on plants and prepare a solution from bitter leaves.

Furthermore, always keep irrigation canals and field bands clean and remove all infected panicles. One digging after harvest is enough to kill most os spores and finally avoid

ploughing with heavy machines to prevent soil compaction.