

CASSAVA DISEASES, CAUSES, SYMPTOMS AND PREVENTION.

Cassava Mosaic Disease (CMD)

Causes

1. Virus that is spread by the whitefly during feeding.
2. Vegetative Propagation using cuttings from infected crops.

Symptoms

1. Chlorotic Mosaic of the Leaf
2. Leaf Distortion
3. Stunted Growth

Prevention

1. Sanitation (Using cuttings from healthy crops)
2. Plant virus resistant varieties.

Cassava Brown Streak Disease (CBSD)

Causes

1. It is caused by a virus and also spread by the whitefly.

Symptoms

1. Chlorosis and necrosis (damaged leaf cells) of the leaf giving it yellowish and mottled appearance.
2. Chlorosis is evident on the veins, spanning from the mid vein, secondary and tertiary veins, or rather in blotches unconnected to veins

Prevention

1. Genetic engineering. CBSD resistant cassava species are being made.

2. Educate farmers on symptoms so that they do not propagate cuttings from infected crops.

Cassava Bacterial Blight (CBB)

Causes

1. It is caused by bacteria.
2. The bacteria are spread by rain splash and physical contact by people, animals or even cutting tools i.e. the pangas.
3. High humidity also favors growth of bacteria.

Symptoms

1. Small dark-green to blue leaf spots.
2. Yellow patches spread outwards from the leaf spots.

Prevention

1. Speedy removal and safe disposal of infected plants to reduce further spread.
2. Careful cleaning of tools.
3. Restrict animal and people movement in your cassava farm to prevent physical transfer of bacteria.
4. Cutting out most of the above ground stems of infected plants.

Cassava Green Mite(CGM)

Also known as *Mononychellus tanajoa* is an exotic pest introduced from the South America into Africa in the early 1970s.

Causes

1. Age of the host plant – young plants are more exposed and susceptible to CGM attacks than older plants.
2. Season - damage severity is greater during dry than wet season.

3. Temperature– CGM populations increase with increasing temperature leading at times to very rapid increase in populations and damage.
4. Poor agronomic practices - plants grown in poor soils are more susceptible to mite attacks.

Symptoms

1. The Cassava Green Mite is green to yellowish in color.
2. Abnormal leaf color
3. Abnormal leaf fall

Prevention

1. Regulatory control: Close inspection of cutting materials and the use of clean certified cuttings may reduce the spread of CGM and delay the time of infestation of the cassava crop.
2. Host-Plant resistance: Tuber yields and disease resistance of the selected cultivars need to be carried out.
3. Cultural approaches: During the season, leaves that show signs of mites should be removed and destroyed.
4. Chemical approaches: Pesticides reduce the population of natural enemies which can cause the mite populations to increase rapidly.