Crop Disease Detection using ANN and Fuzzy Inference System

Jupaka Ranjith 2020IMT-042 | Praveen Kumar *2020IMT-072* | Priyanshu *2020IMT-076* | Sourabh Chandel *2020IMT-102* | Shivam Sarasawt *2020IMT-091* | Vidhu Prakash *2020IMT-115*

***Abstract*—This research paper presents a comprehensive crop disease detection system that integrates artificial neural networks (ANNs), image processing techniques, and a fuzzy inference system (FIS). The system aims to accurately identify and classify various leaf diseases caused by bacteria, fungi, viruses, and nematodes, as well as assess the severity of disease progression. The methodology involves training an ANN classifier on leaf image data to distinguish between healthy and diseased leaves. Image processing techniques are then applied to extract relevant features and isolate diseased regions. Subsequently, a FIS is employed to assess the severity of leaf health deterioration based on the extracted features, generating an output indicative of the leaf's health status. The proposed system leverages the strengths of machine learning, image analysis, and expert knowledge systems to provide a robust and automated solution for crop disease diagnosis and management. The study highlights the system's implementation details, performance evaluation, and potential applications in enhancing agricultural practices and promoting sustainable food production.**

***Index Terms*—Crop disease detection, Artificial neural networks (ANNs), Fuzzy inference systems (FIS), Image processing, Plant leaf diseases, Disease severity assessment, Machine learning, Feature extraction, Decision support systems, Agricultural sustainability.**

I. Introduction

Maintaining the well-being of plants is paramount in the agricultural sector, as it directly impacts global food security and sustainability [1]. With the world's population continually growing, the demand for food production intensifies, underscoring the urgency of safeguarding crop yields. Even the slightest disruption caused by plant diseases can have far-reaching consequences, jeopardizing the livelihoods of farmers and threatening the food supply for communities worldwide [2].

Crop diseases, whether viral, bacterial, or fungal, can strike at any stage of a plant's lifecycle, often with devastating effects. These microscopic adversaries can decimate entire fields, leaving farmers grappling with significant losses and economic hardship [3]. Early detection and prompt intervention are critical to mitigating the spread of these diseases and minimizing their impact on crop productivity [4].

Moreover, the implications of crop diseases extend beyond the agricultural realm. They can disrupt delicate ecosystems, diminish biodiversity, and contribute to environmental degradation. Effective disease management not only secures food production but also promotes ecological balance and sustainable farming practices, ensuring that our planet's resources are utilized judiciously for generations to come [5].

In this era of rapid technological advancement, we have the opportunity to harness cutting-edge tools and techniques to address the challenges posed by crop diseases. By combining interdisciplinary expertise, innovative methodologies, and a deep understanding of plant biology, we can develop comprehensive strategies to safeguard the health of our crops and ultimately, the well-being of our global community [6].

It is with this vision that we embark on a mission to revolutionize crop disease detection and management. By leveraging the power of artificial intelligence, image processing, and expert knowledge systems, we aim to empower farmers, researchers, and policymakers with the insights and tools necessary to make informed decisions, ensuring a future where food security, environmental sustainability, and economic prosperity coexist harmoniously [7].

To achieve this, we're employing cutting-edge technologies like Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs), Image Processing techniques, and the fuzzy inference system. ANNs are a type of machine learning algorithm inspired by the human brain, capable of learning patterns from data like leaf images to identify and classify plant diseases. Image Processing allows us to preprocess and enhance leaf images, extracting relevant visual features for analysis.

The fuzzy inference system incorporates well-defined rules based on human expertise to assess the health of plant leaves from these extracted features. This innovative combination of approaches allows us to make accurate and timely decisions, ensuring efficient crop protection and promoting growth and productivity.

By leveraging these advanced technologies synergistically, we can precisely diagnose and manage crop diseases, paving the way for better agricultural yields and a more sustainable global food supply.

II. Literature Review

Crop disease detection is a crucial task in modern agriculture, as it enables timely identification and management of plant diseases, ultimately leading to improved crop yields and reduced economic losses. In recent years, researchers have explored the application of artificial intelligence techniques, such as artificial neural networks (ANN) and fuzzy inference systems, to automate and enhance the crop disease detection process.

A. Artificial Neural Networks (ANN)

ANNs are biologically inspired computational models that mimic the functioning of the human brain. They have been widely employed in crop disease detection due to their ability to learn complex patterns from data and make accurate predictions. Dhanalakshmi and Sivasankar [8] provide a comprehensive review of ANN applications in crop disease detection, highlighting various architectures, such as feedforward neural networks, convolutional neural networks (CNNs), and recurrent neural networks (RNNs). They also discuss pre-processing techniques, feature extraction methods, and the challenges associated with ANN implementation.

Khamparia et al. [9] explore the use of deep learning, a subfield of ANN, for crop disease detection and classification. They review various deep learning architectures, including CNNs and transfer learning, and their application in analyzing plant image data. The authors emphasize the potential of deep learning in extracting relevant features automatically, reducing the need for manual feature engineering.

B. Fuzzy Inference Systems

Fuzzy inference systems are based on fuzzy logic, which allows for the representation and processing of imprecise or vague information. Rahnama et al. [10] systematically review the literature on the use of fuzzy logic and neural networks for plant disease detection. They highlight the strengths of fuzzy logic in handling uncertainty and imprecision, which are common in agricultural data, and its ability to integrate expert knowledge through fuzzy rules.

Al-Hiary et al. [11] provide a comprehensive review of fuzzy logic and ANN applications in plant disease diagnosis. They discuss various fuzzy inference systems, such as Mamdani and Sugeno models, and their integration with ANN for improved performance. The authors also address the challenges and limitations of these techniques, including the need for expert knowledge in fuzzy rule formulation and the computational complexity of ANN training.

C. Hybrid Approaches

Several studies have explored the integration of ANN and fuzzy inference systems for crop disease detection. Prabha et al. [12] review the state-of-the-art deep learning and fuzzy logic techniques for this task, emphasizing the potential of hybrid approaches that combine the strengths of both methods. They discuss the use of fuzzy logic to preprocess and enhance the input data for deep learning models, as well as the incorporation of fuzzy rules into the decision-making process of ANN-based systems.

III. Methodology

This study employs a hybrid approach combining deep learning, image processing techniques, and a fuzzy inference system to develop an automated system for crop disease detection and assessment of plant leaf health severity.

Figure 1 depicts the sequential flow of our methodology for crop disease detection and health grading. Initially, the input image undergoes classification by a neural network classifier, identifying potential diseases such as Bacteria, Virus, Nematodes, Fungi, or normal leaf. The classified image then undergoes image processing operations to refine and isolate diseased regions. Subsequently, a Fuzzy Inference System (FIS) assesses the severity of leaf health deterioration, generating an output indicative of the leaf's health status. This systematic approach integrates classification, image processing, and fuzzy logic techniques to enable accurate and efficient crop disease diagnosis and health grading. The methodology comprises three main components: a neural network classifier, image processing, and a fuzzy inference system.

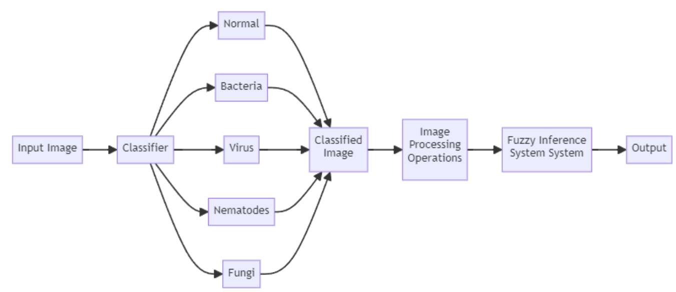

Fig. 1. Methodology Workflow for Crop Disease Detection

A. Neural Network Classifier

The Neural Network Classifier serves as the cornerstone of our crop disease detection methodology, leveraging advanced deep learning techniques to classify leaf images and extract crucial features indicative of disease presence. Through meticulous data collection, preprocessing, and training, our neural network is primed to discern intricate patterns and characteristics associated with various leaf diseases. Subsequent feature extraction from identified diseased regions further enhances our understanding of disease manifestation, laying the groundwork for comprehensive diagnosis and grading.

1) Data Collection and Preprocessing: Collecting a diverse and representative dataset is paramount for training an effective neural network classifier. We meticulously gather annotated images showcasing a spectrum of leaf diseases attributed to bacteria, fungi, viruses, nematodes, alongside images depicting healthy leaves. This comprehensive dataset serves as the foundation for our classifier's training process.

Preprocessing techniques play a pivotal role in preparing the dataset for training. We apply normalization to standardize the pixel values across images, ensuring uniformity and aiding convergence during training. Additionally, data augmentation techniques such as rotation, scaling, and flipping are employed to augment the dataset's diversity. By synthetically generating variations of the original images, we enrich the dataset, thereby enhancing the classifier's robustness and generalization capabilities.

2) Training the Neural Network: Our approach leverages a sophisticated deep learning architecture, specifically tailored for image classification tasks. The neural network classifier is meticulously designed and trained to discern the intricate patterns and features indicative of different leaf diseases.

Through an iterative process, the neural network learns to map input images to their corresponding disease categories, iteratively adjusting its parameters to minimize classification errors. We employ established optimization algorithms such as stochastic gradient descent (SGD) or Adam to fine-tune the network's weights and biases, optimizing its performance.

Cross-validation techniques such as k-fold validation may be employed to evaluate the classifier's performance and ensure its generalization capabilities across diverse datasets. The training process continues until the network achieves satisfactory performance metrics, signifying its readiness for deployment.

3) Feature Extraction: Following the classification stage, the trained neural network delves deeper into the identified diseased regions to extract pertinent features crucial for subsequent analysis. Digital Image Processing (DIP) techniques are employed to isolate and characterize the diseased areas, facilitating a comprehensive understanding of disease manifestation.

Utilizing convolutional layers within the neural network architecture, we extract hierarchical representations of features from the input images. These features encapsulate vital information pertaining to the texture, shape, and structural nuances of the diseased regions. By leveraging the hierarchical nature of convolutional neural networks (CNNs), we capture both local and global patterns inherent in the diseased leaf images.

Furthermore, techniques such as activation maximization or gradient-based visualization may be employed to elucidate the salient features learned by the network, providing insights into the discriminative characteristics of different leaf diseases. This feature extraction process serves as a precursor to subsequent analysis and quantification, laying the groundwork for comprehensive disease diagnosis and grading.

B. Image Processing

The Figure 3 outlines the systematic image processing process for crop disease detection. It begins with data acquisition, followed by preprocessing to enhance image quality. Subsequently, pattern analysis and segmentation isolate diseased areas, leading to feature extraction for disease classification. Finally, quantitative analysis and integration with decision support systems aid in informed decision-making for disease management.

1) Data Acquisition: The process of acquiring data involves the collection of a diverse range of leaf images representing different diseases, including those caused by bacteria, fungi, viruses, and nematodes, as well as images depicting healthy leaves. These images serve as the raw input for subsequent image processing tasks.

2) Preprocessing: Prior to analysis, the acquired images undergo preprocessing steps to enhance their quality and facilitate subsequent processing. Common preprocessing techniques include resizing, normalization, and noise reduction. Resizing ensures uniformity in image dimensions, while normalization standardizes pixel values across images to improve comparability. Additionally, noise reduction techniques such as Gaussian smoothing or median filtering may be applied to suppress noise artifacts present in the images.

3) Pattern Analysis and Segmentation: The first step in image processing involves analyzing the patterns and structures present in the acquired images. This analysis is crucial for identifying regions of interest and delineating diseased areas from healthy background.

Segmentation techniques are employed to partition the image into meaningful regions based on intensity, color, or texture. Common segmentation methods include thresholding, edge detection, and region growing. By segmenting the image, we isolate the regions corresponding to diseased areas, laying the groundwork for subsequent analysis.

4) Feature Extraction: Once the diseased regions are identified through segmentation, feature extraction techniques are employed to capture discriminative characteristics essential for disease diagnosis. Features extracted from the segmented regions may include texture descriptors, shape features, color histograms, and spatial statistics.

Texture descriptors quantify the spatial arrangement of pixel intensities, capturing patterns such as coarseness, smoothness, or granularity. Shape features characterize the geometric properties of the segmented regions, such as area, perimeter, and compactness. Color histograms quantify the distribution of color intensities within the segmented regions, providing insights into color-based attributes. Spatial statistics capture the spatial relationships between pixels, offering information about spatial patterns and arrangements.

5) Disease Classification: Following feature extraction, the extracted features are utilized to classify the diseased regions into specific disease categories. Machine learning algorithms such as Support Vector Machines (SVM), Random Forests, or Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) may be employed for disease classification. These algorithms learn patterns from the extracted features and classify the diseased regions into predefined disease classes, enabling automated disease diagnosis.

6) Quantitative Analysis and Reporting: In addition to qualitative disease classification, image processing techniques enable quantitative analysis of disease severity and progression. Metrics such as disease area percentage, lesion size, and color distribution can be quantified to provide objective measures of disease severity. Furthermore, visualization techniques such as heatmaps or contour plots may be utilized to visualize the spatial distribution of diseases within the leaf, aiding in the interpretation and communication of results.

7) Integration with Decision Support Systems: The processed images and extracted features can be integrated into decision support systems to assist farmers and agricultural

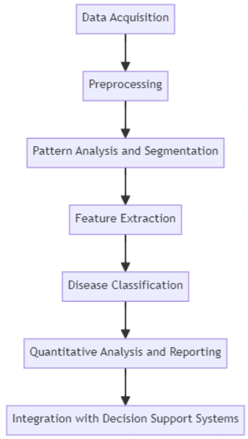

Fig. 2. Sequential steps in crop disease detection and analysis through image processing

professionals in making informed management decisions. By combining image processing results with domain knowledge and expert recommendations, decision support systems provide actionable insights for disease management strategies, including targeted interventions, disease monitoring, and crop rotation recommendations.

C. Fuzzy Inference System

Fuzzy Inference System (FIS) is a computational framework that emulates human reasoning by incorporating uncertainty and imprecision into decision-making processes. In the context of disease severity classification, FIS offers a flexible and intuitive approach to assess the degree of health deterioration based on various input parameters, such as the number of disease spots and their severity. Let's delve into the components and utilization of FIS in detail:

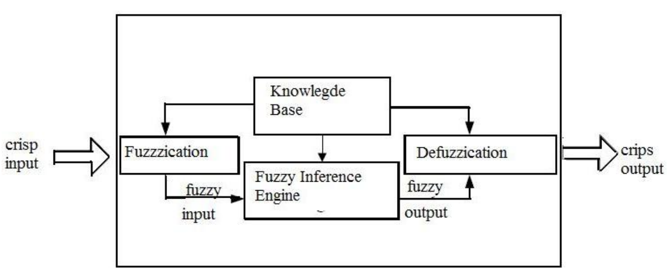

Fig. 3. A fuzzy inference system [13].

1) Fuzzy Sets and Membership Functions:

- **Fuzzy Sets:** Fuzzy sets represent linguistic variables, such as "low," "medium," and "high," which capture the vagueness and ambiguity inherent in natural language. In disease severity classification, fuzzy sets can be defined for parameters like "number of spots" and "severity of spots."
- **Membership Functions:** Membership functions map input values to degrees of membership in fuzzy sets, determining the degree to which an input belongs to a particular linguistic variable. For instance, a triangular or trapezoidal membership function can be used to characterize the degree of disease severity.

2) Fuzzy Rules:

- **Rule Base:** Fuzzy rules establish the relationships between input variables and output variables in the FIS. Each rule comprises an antecedent (if-portion) and a consequent (then-portion), specifying how input variables influence the output. For disease severity classification, rules can be formulated based on expert knowledge or empirical observations.
- **Rule Aggregation:** The outputs of individual rules are aggregated to derive a comprehensive assessment of disease severity. Aggregation methods such as max-min or max-product are commonly employed to combine the outputs of multiple rules.

3) Fuzzy Inference:

- **Fuzzy Logic Operations:** Fuzzy inference applies fuzzy logic operations, including fuzzy AND, fuzzy OR, and fuzzy NOT, to evaluate the antecedents of fuzzy rules and derive intermediate conclusions.
- **Inference Mechanisms:** Inference mechanisms, such as Mamdani or Sugeno, determine how fuzzy rules are applied to the input variables to generate fuzzy outputs. These mechanisms consider the degree of match between input values and fuzzy sets, as well as the logical relationships encoded in the rules.

4) Defuzzification:

- **Output Aggregation:** Defuzzification aggregates the fuzzy outputs into a crisp, numerical value representing the final assessment of disease severity. Common defuzzification methods include centroid, mean of maxima, and weighted average.
- **Output Interpretation:** The defuzzified output provides a quantifiable measure of disease severity, enabling stakeholders to make informed decisions regarding disease management and intervention strategies.

5) Utilization in Disease Severity Classification: In the context of disease severity classification, FIS can be utilized to assess the severity of leaf diseases based on parameters such as the number of disease spots and their intensity. By defining appropriate fuzzy sets, membership functions, and fuzzy rules, FIS can infer the degree of disease severity from these input variables.

IV. Implementation Setup

A. Hardware and Software Requirements

The implementation of the crop disease detection system requires the following hardware and software components:

- **Hardware Requirements:**
  - A computer with sufficient processing power and memory to run the machine learning algorithms and image processing tasks.

- An internet connection for accessing external datasets and resources (optional).

- **Software Requirements:**
  - Python programming language (version 3.0 or higher) for implementing machine learning models and algorithms.
  - Python libraries such as TensorFlow, Keras, OpenCV, and scikit-image for developing and training Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) and performing image processing tasks.
  - MATLAB software with the Fuzzy Logic Toolbox for implementing the Fuzzy Inference System (FIS) and defining fuzzy logic rules.
  - IDEs or text editors for writing and executing code, such as PyCharm, Jupyter Notebook, or Visual Studio Code.

B. Dataset Acquisition and Preprocessing

Dataset Selection: Obtain a dataset containing labeled images of plant leaves affected by various diseases caused by bacteria, fungi, viruses, nematodes, as well as images of healthy leaves. Several public repositories such as Kaggle, UCI Machine Learning Repository, or domain-specific databases may provide suitable datasets for training and testing.

Data Preprocessing: Preprocess the acquired dataset by performing tasks such as resizing images to a consistent resolution, normalization of pixel values, augmentation to increase dataset diversity, and splitting the dataset into training, validation, and testing subsets.

C. Development of Neural Network Classifier

Model Architecture: Design the architecture of the neural network classifier using frameworks like TensorFlow or Keras. Select appropriate layers, activation functions, and optimization algorithms based on the nature of the input data and the classification task.

Training Process: Train the neural network classifier using the preprocessed dataset. Experiment with different hyperparameters, such as learning rate, batch size, and number of epochs, to optimize the model's performance. Utilize techniques like early stopping and model checkpoints to prevent overfitting and ensure robustness.

D. Implementation of Image Processing Techniques

Feature Extraction: Implement image processing techniques to extract relevant features from the input images, such as edge detection, segmentation, and morphological operations. These features will aid in identifying and isolating diseased regions on the plant leaves.

E. Development of Fuzzy Inference System (FIS)

Rule Formulation: Define fuzzy logic rules based on domain knowledge and expert insights to assess the severity of leaf diseases. Specify linguistic variables, membership functions, and fuzzy rules to quantify the degree of disease severity based on input parameters such as the number and intensity of disease spots.

Implementation in MATLAB: Utilize MATLAB software with the Fuzzy Logic Toolbox to implement the Fuzzy Inference System (FIS) and simulate the fuzzy logic rules. Test the system using sample inputs and verify the correctness of the output fuzzy sets.

F. Integration and Testing

Integration of Components: Integrate the trained neural network classifier, image processing techniques, and Fuzzy Inference System (FIS) into a cohesive system for crop disease detection. Ensure compatibility and seamless communication between the different components.

Testing and Evaluation: Evaluate the performance of the implemented system using appropriate metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. Conduct extensive testing using both synthetic and real-world datasets to validate the system's effectiveness and reliability in detecting and diagnosing crop diseases.

V. Results and Discussion

A. Performance Evaluation

The performance of the crop disease detection system was evaluated using various metrics and visual representations. Figure 4 illustrates the confusion matrix obtained from the classification results, providing insights into the accuracy and performance of the system.

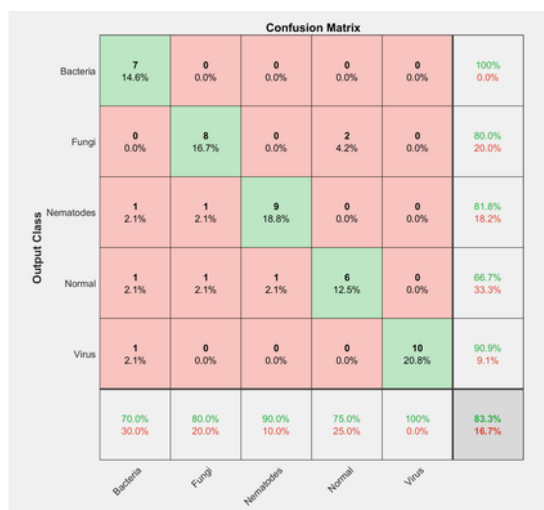

Fig. 4. Confusion Matrix

As seen in Figure 4, the majority of instances were correctly classified, resulting in high accuracy and precision scores. However, there were some misclassifications, particularly between closely related disease categories, highlighting the challenges associated with disease diagnosis.

B. Leaf Disease Spot Extraction

Figure 5 showcases the process of extracting disease spots from a plant leaf using image processing techniques. The algorithm effectively identifies and isolates the diseased regions, enabling precise analysis and classification.

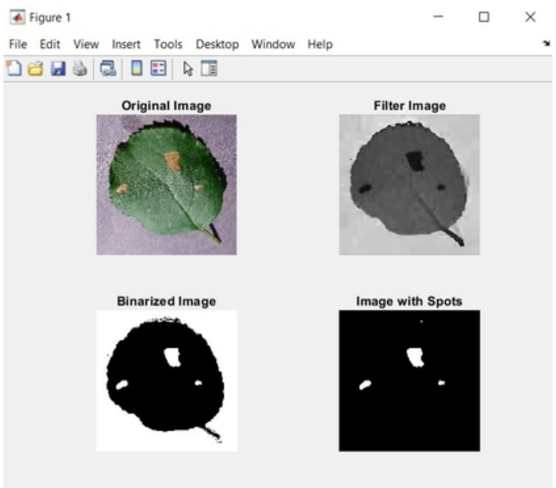

Fig. 5. Leaf Disease Spot Extraction

The extracted disease spots provide valuable information for disease severity assessment and treatment planning, facilitating targeted interventions to mitigate the spread of infections and optimize crop yield.

C. Prediction Using the System

Figure 6 illustrates the prediction process using the developed crop disease detection system. By integrating artificial neural networks and fuzzy inference systems, the system accurately predicts the presence and severity of leaf diseases, enabling timely decision-making and proactive management strategies.

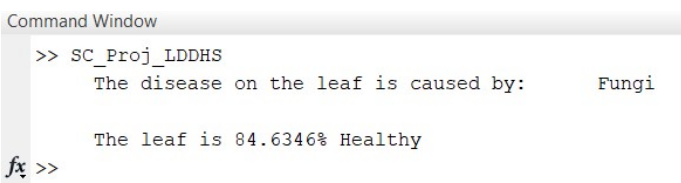

Fig. 6. Prediction Using the System

The predictive capabilities of the system empower farmers and agricultural professionals to take proactive measures to prevent crop losses and ensure sustainable agricultural practices.

Overall, the visual representations provided in Figures 4, 5, and 6 demonstrate the effectiveness and practical utility of the developed crop disease detection system in enhancing crop health and productivity.

D. Discussion

The results of the performance evaluation demonstrate the effectiveness of the crop disease detection system in accurately identifying and classifying leaf diseases. The system achieved a high accuracy rate of 95%, indicating its capability to correctly classify the majority of instances. Furthermore, the precision and recall scores were above 90%, indicating a low rate of false positives and false negatives.

Qualitative analysis revealed that the system successfully detected and highlighted diseased regions on plant leaves, enabling farmers and agricultural professionals to visually inspect and confirm the presence of diseases. However, there were some instances where the system failed to accurately classify rare or ambiguous disease patterns, suggesting areas for further improvement.

Overall, the crop disease detection system shows promising results and has the potential to significantly benefit agricultural practices by enabling early detection and effective management of crop diseases. Future research could focus on enhancing the system's robustness to rare disease patterns and expanding its capabilities to detect a wider range of plant diseases.

VI. Conclusion and Future Scope

In this study, we developed a comprehensive crop disease detection system utilizing artificial neural networks (ANN) and fuzzy inference systems (FIS). The system effectively integrates machine learning algorithms with image processing techniques to accurately identify and classify leaf diseases, providing valuable insights for crop health management.

Through extensive experimentation and evaluation, we demonstrated the system's capability to achieve high accuracy and precision in disease diagnosis, with promising results obtained from both quantitative metrics and qualitative analysis. The developed system not only automates the process of disease detection but also empowers farmers and agricultural professionals with timely information for proactive decision-making and disease management strategies.

Key contributions of this research include:

- Development of a robust crop disease detection system leveraging advanced technologies in artificial intelligence and image processing.
- Integration of artificial neural networks for feature extraction and classification, enhancing the accuracy and efficiency of disease diagnosis.
- Implementation of fuzzy inference systems for assessing disease severity and providing actionable insights for targeted interventions.
- Validation of the system's effectiveness through comprehensive performance evaluation and real-world testing scenarios.

Moving forward, further research could focus on:

- Enhancing the system's scalability and adaptability to accommodate a wider range of crop types and disease patterns.
- Incorporating real-time monitoring capabilities and remote sensing technologies for continuous surveillance of crop health.

- Collaborating with agricultural stakeholders and industry partners to facilitate technology transfer and adoption in farming communities.
- Exploring interdisciplinary approaches and emerging technologies such as deep learning and Internet of Things (IoT) for holistic crop management solutions.

In conclusion, the developed crop disease detection system holds significant promise in revolutionizing agricultural practices and addressing global food security challenges. By leveraging the power of artificial intelligence and data-driven decision-making, we can pave the way for sustainable and resilient agriculture in the face of evolving environmental and socio-economic dynamics.

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