Progress Report

On

Image Processing for Plant Health Monitoring and Classification

B.TECH IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

2021-25

University School of Information and Communication Technology

Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University

Guided By:

Dr. Anuradha Chug
Associate Professor

SUBMITTED BY:

Ujjwal Gupta
00516401521
BTECH IT(7th Sem)

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INTRODUCTION

Agriculture plays a crucial role in feeding the world's population, and the health of crops directly impacts agricultural productivity. Plant diseases can significantly reduce production and quality, which can have a disastrous effect on agricultural output.

Traditional methods for detecting plant diseases often involve manual inspection by experts, which can be time-consuming, expensive, and prone to human error.

Image processing techniques enable the analysis of plant images to detect diseases, assess growth, identify nutrient deficiencies, and provide insights for optimized agricultural practices.

This project aims to develop an image processing system that classifies plant health and identifies specific problems such as diseases, pests, or nutrient deficiencies, contributing to enhanced agricultural productivity.

PROBLEM AND CHALLENGES

The key challenges in detecting plant diseases include:

- **Manual inspection:** Traditional methods are labour -intensive and require expertise, which is not always accessible in remote or large-scale farms.
- **Variability in images:** Factors such as lighting, angle, and background noise in images can affect the accuracy of disease classification.
- **Noise in Captured Images**: Shadows, lighting variations, and background distractions degrade image quality.
- **Segmentation of Plant Structures**: Complex plant morphology and overlapping parts make segmentation difficult.
- **Data scarcity:** In some cases, there is a lack of sufficient labeled images for certain diseases, making model training more difficult.
- **Feature Extraction**: Identifying meaningful visual features to classify diseases and deficiencies is complex.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this project are:

1. **Develop an Automated Image-Based Plant Disease Detection System:** Create a deep learning-based system that utilizes plant images to automatically detect and classify plant diseases, thereby reducing the need for manual inspection.
2. **Enhance Accuracy through Image Preprocessing and Hyperparameter Tuning:** Implement image preprocessing techniques like normalization, histogram equalization, data augmentation, noise reduction filters etc to improve the quality of input images, and utilize hyperparameter tuning to optimize model performance.
3. **Handle Variability in Image Data:** Design the system to effectively manage variability in plant images, including differences in lighting conditions, viewing angles, and noise, ensuring robust disease detection across diverse imaging scenarios.

SCOPE OF WORK

This project focuses on designing and implementing a deep learning-based system for **plant disease classification** with an emphasis on **image processing techniques**. The system will handle and analyze a large dataset of plant images containing both healthy and diseased samples.

Image Preprocessing:

- The preprocessing step in image analysis aims to enhance the quality of image data by eliminating background clutter, noise, and any unwanted distortions. This process improves the visibility of important features, making the images more suitable for further processing and analysis. [3]
- Image preprocessing will involve techniques like **bilateral smooth, contrast correction, Gaussian Sharpen, Histogram Equalize etc.**

Image Segmentation

- Image segmentation is the most crucial stage in image analysis. It involves dividing an image into uniform regions based on specific criteria, ideally corresponding to real objects within the scene [1].
- Image segmentation is carried out to differentiate between the affected and unaffected areas of leaf when applied on an image.
- Image Segmentation will involve techniques like **Bradley Local Thresholding, K-means Clustering, Blob Transform.**

Image Augmentation:

- To manage the variability in plant diseases, data augmentation techniques will be applied, such as **rotation**, **scaling**, **flipping**. These techniques will help simulate different lighting conditions, orientations, and shapes, ensuring the model is robust to real-world variations.

CURRENT PROGRESS

Exploring, understanding and implementing various image preprocessing, image segmentation and image augmentation techniques.

Image Preprocessing techniques explored and implemented are:

Bilateral Smoothing: Bilateral smoothing is an advanced non-linear image preprocessing technique that reduces noise while preserving important edge details. It works by applying a bilateral filter, which combines a spatial Gaussian blur and a range Gaussian blur[2]. It calculates the spatial kernel based on the defined diameter and adjusts this kernel based on the neighborhood of each individual pixel then, it identifies the region of interest and computes the range kernel based on the intensity differences between the pixel in the region of interest and its surrounding pixels; these two kernels are then multiplied to obtain a combined kernel that reflects both spatial and intensity considerations, followed by normalizing the result to ensure the final pixel value maintains the image's brightness In the context of plant leaves disease detection, bilateral smoothing effectively cleans up leaf images by reducing irrelevant noise from the images.

Contrast Correction: Contrast correction is an image preprocessing technique used to adjust the contrast and brightness of an image. It works by applying a simple formula: $corrected\_pixel = \alpha \times original\_pixel + \beta$, where α controls the contrast and β adjusts the brightness. This technique helps enhance important features in the image by making dark regions darker and bright regions brighter, thereby improving the visual distinction between different parts of the image. In the context of plant leaf disease detection, contrast correction is useful for highlighting subtle variations in leaf texture, color, making it easier to detect disease symptoms such as spots, discolorations, and other anomalies.

Gaussian Sharpening: Gaussian Sharpening is an image preprocessing technique that enhances the edges and details of an image by applying a Gaussian filter to blur the image and then subtracting this blurred version from the original image. This process works by reducing the low-frequency components of the image while preserving high-frequency details, which results in sharper edges and more pronounced features. In the context of plant leaves disease detection, Gaussian Sharpen is particularly useful for improving the visibility of subtle leaf features

Histogram Equalisation: Histogram equalization is an image preprocessing technique that enhances the contrast of an image by redistributing the intensity levels. It works by calculating the cumulative distribution function (CDF) from histogram of the pixel intensities, normalising it, mapping the original pixel values to new values based on the CDF, which spreads out the most frequent intensity values and effectively enhances the overall contrast of the image. In the context of plant leaves disease detection, histogram equalization is particularly useful for improving the visibility of subtle leaf features.

Image Segmentation techniques explored and implemented are:

Bradley Local Thresholding: Bradley Local Thresholding is an adaptive thresholding technique used for image segmentation that calculates a local threshold for each pixel based on the average intensity of its neighboring pixels within a defined window. The method involves scanning the image in small regions, computing the mean intensity of each local neighbourhood, and then determining the threshold by applying a fraction of this mean to create a binary image that distinguishes foreground from background. In the context of plant leaves disease detection, Bradley Local Thresholding effectively isolates diseased areas or anomalies in leaf images from the background, allowing for more accurate analysis of leaf health and facilitating subsequent feature extraction and classification processes.

K-means Clustering: K-means clustering is an unsupervised learning algorithm used for image segmentation that partitions an image into distinct regions based on pixel intensity values. The process begins by selecting a predetermined number of clusters (K) and randomly initializing K centroids, after which each pixel is assigned to the nearest centroid based on its intensity, forming clusters of similar pixels. In plant leaves disease detection, K-means clustering helps isolate different regions of a leaf image, such as healthy and diseased areas, by grouping similar color or intensity values, making it easier to identify patterns or anomalies indicative of disease and facilitating further analysis and classification.

Blob transform: Blob transform is a technique used in image segmentation to detect and identify regions or "blobs" that stand out from the rest of the image, such as areas that differ in intensity, color, or texture. It works by analyzing the image to find connected regions that match certain criteria (like size or intensity), helping to isolate important areas. In the context of plant leaf disease detection, blob transform is useful for identifying diseased spots, lesions, or discoloration on leaves, which may appear as distinct blobs. By segmenting these affected areas from healthy parts of the leaf, it aids in diagnosing plant diseases more accurately.

Image Augmentation techniques explored and implemented are:

Rotation: Rotation is an image augmentation technique that involves rotating an image by a certain angle, either clockwise or counterclockwise, to create new variations of the original image. This technique is beneficial in plant leaves disease detection as it helps to generate a diverse dataset by providing multiple perspectives of the same leaf, regardless of its orientation in the original image. By augmenting the dataset with rotated images, machine learning models can become more robust and better at recognizing disease symptoms, as they learn to identify features and patterns from different angles, ultimately improving the accuracy and reliability of the disease detection process.

Horizontal And Vertical Flips: Horizontal and vertical flips are image augmentation techniques that involve mirroring an image along the horizontal or vertical axis, respectively, to create new versions of the original image. Horizontal flipping involves flipping the image left to right, while vertical flipping involves flipping it top to bottom. In the context of plant leaves disease detection, these techniques are valuable as they increase the diversity of the training dataset by providing multiple orientations of the same leaf, allowing machine learning models to learn to recognize disease symptoms regardless of the leaf's position or orientation. This augmentation enhances the model's robustness and improves its ability to accurately identify various diseases by ensuring that it is trained on a comprehensive representation of the data.

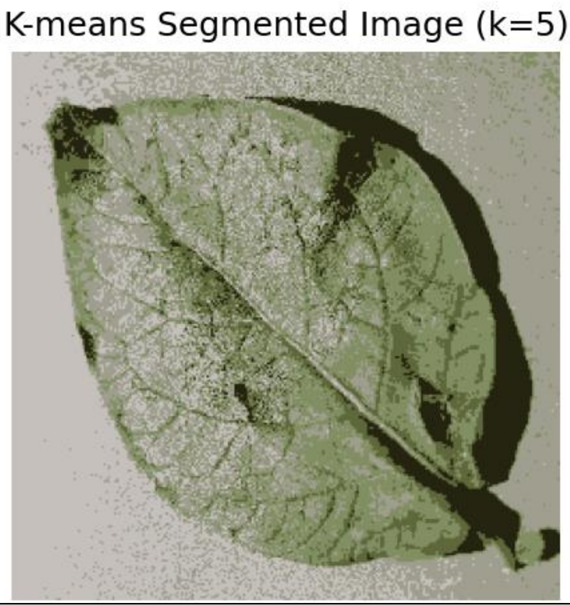
RESULT AND OUTPUT

Image Preprocessing

Input Image	
Bilateral Smoothing	
Contrast Correction	

Gaussian Sharpening	
Histogram Equalize	

Image Segmentation

Input Image	
Bradley Local Thresholding	
K-means Clustering	

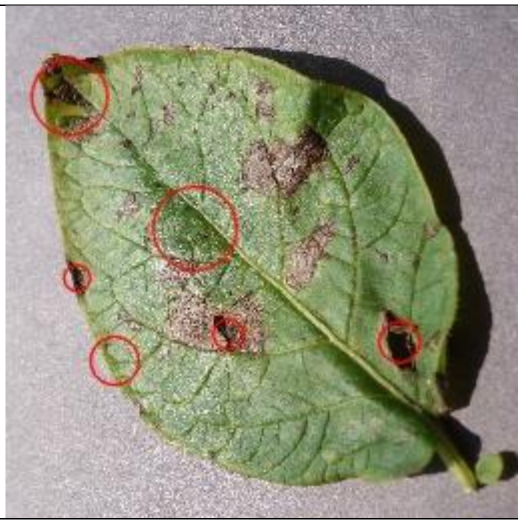
	
Blob transform	

Image Augmentation

Input Image	

Image Rotation	
Horizontal Flips	
Vertical Flips	

FUTURE SCOPE

Currently worked on limited potato plant leaves dataset. Aim to work on larger dataset on different plant species.

ADVANTAGES

1. **Efficiency:** The system automates the disease detection process, reducing the time and effort required by human experts.
2. **Accuracy:** Deep learning models, especially CNNs, can achieve high accuracy in classifying plant diseases, even with subtle visual differences.
3. **Scalability:** The system can be scaled to handle multiple plant species and diseases, improving its applicability in diverse agricultural settings.
4. **Early Detection:** Identifying and classifying plant diseases can offer wider environmental and social benefits, while also improving crop quality and productivity.
5. **Better Food Security:** Better disease management strategies can help enhance food security and promote economic growth, particularly in regions where agriculture plays a key role in the economy.

DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT

The Standards below are the ones which will be used while developing and thus are not the minimum requirements.

- **Hardware Environments:**

OS	Windows 11
Processor	Intel i5
RAM	16GB
SSD	500GB

- **Software Environments:**

IDE	Jupyter Notebook or VS Code
Programming Language	Python (3.10 version 64-bit)
	TensorFlow

Libraries	Open-CV
	Scikit-Learn
	Pandas/Numpy

CONCLUSION

This project seeks to enhance the ability of farmers and agricultural experts to monitor and assess plant health using image processing techniques. By leveraging modern machine learning and deep learning models, the system will be able to detect diseases, nutrient deficiencies, and other plant stresses more accurately and efficiently than traditional methods. With improvements in accuracy, accessibility, and real-time monitoring, this system has the potential to significantly improve agricultural productivity, reduce losses due to plant diseases, and empower farmers with better decision-making tools.

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[3] Oo, Y.M. and Htun, N.C., 2018. Plant leaf disease detection and classification using image processing. *International Journal of Research and Engineering*, *5*(9), pp.516-523.