
SCREENING OF ASPARAGUS SPECIES FOR RESISTANCE TO STEMPHYLIUM LEAF SPOT

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ABSTRACT

Fourteen taxa of the genus *Asparagus* were screened for their resistance to *Stemphylium* leaf spot under controlled conditions in growth chambers. The plants were inoculated with a conidial suspension of two isolates of *Stemphylium* sp. from asparagus. Disease assessment was made 13-17 days after inoculation. Assessment was based on percentage stem area necrotic, which took into account the two components, lesion number and lesion size. *A. officinalis* L. var. *pseudoscaber* (Grec.) Asch. & Graebn. and the two cultivars of *A. officinalis* L., Rutgers Beacon and Mary Washington, showed high levels of infection. Most other taxa showed low levels of infection. Seven of these were classed as highly resistant: *A. asparagoides* (L.) W.F. Wight; *A. compactus* Salter; *A. densiflorus* (Kunth) Jessop cv. Myers; *A. densiflorus* (Kunth) Jessop cv. Sprengeri; *A. larcinus* Burch.; *A. verticillatus* L. and *A. virgatus* Bak. These species are considered to be potential sources of resistance for breeding commercial cultivars resistant to *Stemphylium* leaf spot.