

***Penicillium oxalicum* Currie and Thom., an Entomogenous Fungus of the Rice Stem Borer *Scirpophaga incertulas* (Walker) (Pyraustidae : Lepidoptera)**

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During a survey conducted in the rice fields at Karamana, Trivandrum, egg masses of the rice stem borer *Scirpophaga incertulas* Walker were found to be infected by a fungus. The fungal pathogen was isolated in pure culture on potato dextrose agar and was identified as *Penicillium oxalicum*. The egg masses were sprayed with a spore suspension from five day old cultures containing 100 spores/ml and observed for two weeks. Twenty egg masses containing 30-50 eggs were used for the test. There was no emergence of larvae from treated egg masses whereas, 90% hatchability was observed in control. Mycelial growth was noticed within 48 to 72 h on the egg masses.

Delfinado (1959) recorded the incidence of *Penicillium* sp. on the larvae of *S. incertulas* in Philippines. In India, *P. oxalicum* has been reported as a fungal pathogen of *Cicadella*

spectra by Kuruvilla *et al.* (1980). This is the first report of *P. oxalicum* as a pathogen on *S. incertulas* in India.

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KEY WORDS : *Scirpophaga incertulas*,
Penicillium oxalicum

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