

Leaf Diseases Of Onion (*Allium cepa* L.) In Kenya

¹Makelo M. N., ²Narla, R.D, ³Mibey R .K.

¹ Kenya Agricultural Research Institute, Kisii, P.O. Box 523, Kisii, Kenya

Email; magmakelo@yahoo.com

² University of Nairobi, Department of Crop Protection, Kabete Campus, P.O. Box 29053, Nairobi

³ Moi University, Eldoret. P.O. Box 3900.

ABSTRACT

Bulb onions are widely grown in all the provinces of Kenya but Central, Rift Valley, Western and Eastern Provinces have the highest production. A survey was conducted to determine the severity and incidence of onion diseases in Kenya. During the months of May and June 2003 five sites with 40 farmers per site were surveyed. Commonly grown onion varieties were screened at Kisii and Kabete Research farms for comparison. Disease incidence and severity were scored. Purple blotch (*Alternaria porri*), downy mildew (*Peronospora destructor*), stemphylium blight (*Stemphylium vesicarium*), pink rot (*Phoma terrestris*) and rust (*Puccinia alli*) were recorded. Purple blotch and downy mildew were the most important onion diseases in all the sites surveyed with the former being more severe in the hot and humid areas and the latter in the cooler wet regions. On-station screening indicated that Bombay Red and Tropicana hybrid were the most susceptible varieties to purple blotch while Red Creole was moderately susceptible. There is need for development of integrated control measures as the high cost of production is due to purchase of fungicides.