

Fungi

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I. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally fungi were accepted as a single kingdom along with bacteria (Monera), plants (Plantae), animals (Animalia), and protists (Protista) according to the five-kingdom scheme of Whittaker (1969). However, with advances in ultrastructural, biochemical, and particularly molecular biology, treatment of fungi as one of the five kingdoms of life has become increasingly untenable. The organisms studied by mycologists are now established as polyphyletic and are referred to in 11 phyla and one form-phyllum in three kingdoms of Eukaryota—namely Protozoa, Chromista, and Fungi. Members of the Protozoa are predominantly unicellular, plasmodial, or colonial phagotrophic, wall-less in the trophic state, with tubular mitochondrial cristae and nontubular flagellar mastigonemes. The Chromista are unicellular, filamentous or colonial primarily phototrophic organisms, often with cellulosic cell walls and with tubular mitochondrial cristae and flagellar mastigonemes. True fungi feed by absorption, contain chitin and β -glucans in their cell walls, have mitochondria with flattened cristae and are mostly non-flagellate; if flagellate, flagellar mastigonemes are absent (Hawksworth et al., 1995).

Of the more than 70,000 fungal species that have been described, only a relatively small number can be regarded as primary postharvest pathogens of vegetables. Most of these belong to the Ascomycota or Deuteromycota, with a few species in the Basidiomycota, Zygomycota (all true fungi) or Oomycota (kingdom Chromista). These phyla are characterized by the following:

Ascomycota: Meiospores (ascospores) produced endogenously in asci, which are either naked or contained within an ascoma.

Basidiomycota: Meiospores (basidiospores) produced exogenously on basidia of various shapes.

Deuteromycota: Sexual reproduction absent or unknown. Mitospores (conidia) absent or formed on conidiophores existing singly, clustered in specialized structures such as sporodochia or synnemata, or produced in a conidioma. Represent the anamorphs (asexual stages) of many ascomycetes and basidiomycetes.

Zygomycota: Meiospores (zygospores) produced by gametangium. Mitospores (sporangiospores) produced in sporangia.

Oomycota: Meiospores (oospores) produced by gametangium. Motile mitospores (zoospores) biflagellate, at least one of the flagella having mastigonemes (Agrios, 1997; Alexopoulos et al., 1996; Hawksworth et al., 1995).

From the above it appears there are no primary postharvest pathogens in the Protozoa and Chytridiomycota, the latter being the only phylum of Fungi having a flagellate phase. Two pathogens that could represent these taxa are *Spongospora subterranea* f. sp. *subterranea*, the cause of powdery scab of potato, and *Synchytrium endobioticum*, causal agent of wart disease of potato, respectively. Both these organisms infect tubers before harvesting and are known to occasionally increase during storage (Hooker, 1983).

One or more fungi can attack vegetables before, during, or after harvesting. Although limited in number, the spectrum of fungal species that can affect postharvest quality of vegetables is diverse (Table 1). Most of the pathogens are specific to a particular vegetable or to a few vegetable species, whereas others have a more extensive host range, e.g., *Botrytis cinerea*, *Fusarium oxysporum*, *Lasioidiplodia theobromae*, *Macrophomina phaseolina*, *Pythium ultimum*, *Rhizopus stolonifer*, *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*, and *Sclerotium rolfsii*. Similarly, certain species are restricted to an infection of vegetables after harvest, whereas many others can also infect growing crops. *B. cinerea*, for instance, causes blossom blights, damping-off, stem cankers or rots, leaf spots, and tuber, corm, bulb and root rots in addition to the storage rots listed in Table 1 (Agrios, 1997). Sometimes several species of a genus can attack a single crop, e.g. *Fusarium* dry rot of potato caused mainly by *Fusarium solani*, but frequently also by *F. avenaceum*, *F. equiseti*, *F. oxysporum*, *F. sambucinum*, *F. sporotrichioides*, and various other *Fusarium* spp. (common names for plant diseases, APSnet, 1996; Snowdon, 1992). Also, infection by one pathogen can predispose hosts to infection by another pathogen causing a different disease—e.g. powdery scab of potato caused by *S. subterranea* f. sp. *subterranea* can promote infection of potato tubers by the late blight fungus *Phytophthora infestans* and other organisms (Snowdon, 1992).

II. SURVIVAL AND DISSEMINATION OF INOCULUM

Since the edible component of most vegetable crops is produced in soil (bulbs, roots and tubers) or in close proximity to it (flower, leaf, stem and fruit vegetables), soil constitutes an important source of initial inoculum. The majority of postharvest pathogens are therefore adapted to survival in soil—e.g., sclerotia of *Sclerotinia* and *Sclerotium* spp., microsclerotia of *Polyscytalum pustulans*, chlamydospores of *Fusarium* spp., phaeodictyospores of *Alternaria solani*, thick-walled oospores of *Phytophthora* and *Pythium* spp., zygospores of Mucorales, cystosori of *S. subterranea* f.sp. *subterranea*, etc. (Domsch et al., 1980; Harris et al., 1997; Hooker, 1983). Other sources of survival include trellis stakes (*Phoma* spp.), storage crates (*L. theobromae*, *Rhizoctonia carotae*, *Rhizopus* spp.), crop residues (*Alternaria alternata*), weeds (*Colletotrichum capsici*, *Phomopsis phaseoli*), propagating

material (*Helminthosporium solani*, *Phytophthora capsici*), and even footwear (*Phoma lingam*) (Besri, 1983; Clarke and Moyer, 1988; Jensen, 1971; Snowdon, 1992).

Dissemination of fungal spores essentially depends on their nature—e.g., motile spores are mostly dispersed by free water, dry nonmotile spores by air currents, and wet nonmotile spores by rain or irrigation splashing. However, the various types of spores can also be dispersed by other mechanisms. Contaminated tools and equipment are effective means of transmitting pathogens—e.g., *P. lingam* and *Phytophthora porrii* (Geeson, 1976; Snowdon, 1992). Insects carry many pathogens; for example, *Macrophomina phaseolina* is carried by tuber moth (Paharia, 1960), *Rhizopus oryzae* and *R. stolonifer* by fruit flies (Butler and Bracker, 1963; Jones et al., 1991), *L. theobromae* by cockroaches and sweet potato weevils (Clarke and Moyer, 1988), and *Geotrichum candidum* by flies and fruit flies (Butler, 1961). Resistant structures produced by some fungi can survive passage through the alimentary canal of farm animals and are so disseminated to other areas, e.g., *S. subterranea* f. sp. *subterranea* (Morse, 1914) and certain *Pythium* spp., according to Dowson (1931) (Snowdon, 1992).

III. FUNGAL ATTACK MECHANISMS

The evolution of fungal plant pathogens toward a high degree of specialization for individual plant species is reflected in the different ways that plants are attacked (Jackson and Taylor, 1996). Certain pathogens are unable to penetrate intact plant surfaces and, consequently, are opportunistic parasites that infect only through wounds or natural openings (lenticels, stomata, buds, growth cracks, etc.). Alternatively, opportunists infect plants weakened by physical or physiological stresses such as chilling, frost damage, sunscald, senescence, etc. Certain pathogens rely on an initial recognition of a living host to induce the production of infection structures that allow penetration and colonization of the host. Important mechanisms involved in direct or wound penetration involve the transition from saprophytism to parasitism and the degree of virulence once pathogenicity has been established (see Chap. 25).

Certain, postharvest vegetable pathogens penetrate intact surfaces of the host directly, whereas others infect through natural openings or wounds. Infections leading to postharvest decay can be separated into three categories, viz. incipient, latent (or quiescent), and wound infections.

A. Incipient Infections

The concept of incipience refers to an initial or early infection stage beginning to develop. This may occur at any time before or after harvest (Bruton, 1994). Incipient infections often pass unnoticed through the culling process during harvesting, packaging, or retail display. They may remain active and cause decay, although further development can in most instances be arrested by postharvest fungicide applications or refrigeration. An active decay sometimes appears during transport and storage, which can lead to “nests” of decaying produce. The storage environment as well as the duration of storage frequently determine the development of such nests. Nests are much more likely to develop as the vegetable nears the end of its postharvest life.

B. Latent or Quiescent Infections

Quiescent infections result when the pathogen's development becomes arrested. Quiescence can be initiated at virtually any stage of infection, penetration to colonization

Table 1 Fungal Pathogens of Vegetables That Cause Postharvest Losses

Pathogen	Disease	Crop ^a	Primary mode of infection
<i>Acrothecium carotae</i> Arsvoll	<i>Acrothecium</i> rot	Car	?
<i>Alternaria</i> spp.	<i>Alternaria</i> storage rot	Swe	Wound
<i>Alternaria alternata</i> (Fr.:Fr.) Keissler	<i>Alternaria</i> rot (Cau), black pod (Bea, Cucs), black shoulder (Tom), tuber rot (Pot)	Bea, Cau, Cucs, Pot, Tom	Preharvest, incipient
<i>Alternaria brassicae</i> (Berk.) Sacc.	<i>Alternaria</i> rot	Bras, Sws, Tur	?
<i>Alternaria brassicicola</i> (Schwein.) Wiltshire	<i>Alternaria</i> rot	Cab, Cau	?
<i>Alternaria dauci</i> (Kühn) Groves and Skolko	Black rot	Car, Par	Incipient, wound
<i>Alternaria porri</i> (Ellis) Cif.	Purple blotch	Gar, Oni	Preharvest, wound
<i>Alternaria radicina</i> Meier, Drechsler and Eddy	Black rot	Car, Cel, Par	Incipient, wound
<i>Alternaria raphani</i> Groves and Skolko	<i>Alternaria</i> rot	Bro, Cab	?
<i>Alternaria solani</i> Sorauer	<i>Alternaria</i> rot/tuber rot	Pot	Wound
<i>Ascochyta boltshauseri</i> Sacc.	Speckle disease	Bea	Preharvest
<i>Ascochyta fabae</i> Speg.	<i>Ascochyta</i> pod spot	Bea	Incipient
<i>Ascochyta pisi</i> Lib.	<i>Ascochyta</i> pod spot	Pea	Incipient
<i>Aspergillus alliaceus</i> Thom and Church	Yellow mold rot	Oni	?
<i>Aspergillus flavus</i> Link:Fr.	<i>Aspergillus</i> rot	Cas, Pep, Tom	Wound
<i>Aspergillus niger</i> v. Tieghem	<i>Aspergillus</i> black mold rot (Car), <i>Aspergillus</i> rot, black mold rot (Oni)	Car, Cas, Oni, Pep, Tom, Yam	Wound
<i>Botrytis aclada</i> Fresen.	Neck rot	Oni	?
<i>Botrytis byssoides</i> J.C Walker	Neck rot	Oni	?
<i>Botrytis cinerea</i> Pers.:Fr.	Brown strain (Oni), gray mold, gray mold rot, storage rot (Bee)	Aub, Bee, Bras, Car, Cel, Cru, Cucs, End, Leg, Let, Oni, Pep, Pars, Pot, Rhu, Sol, Swe, Yam	Incipient, latent, wound
<i>Botrytis fabae</i> Sardina	Chocolate spot, gray mold rot	Legs	Incipient

<i>Botrytis porri</i> Buchw.	<i>Botrytis</i> rot, gray mold rot	Gar, Lee	Wound
<i>Botrytis squamosa</i> J.C. Walker	Neck rot	Gar, Oni	Incipient
<i>Ceratocystis fimbriata</i> Ellis and Halst.	Black rot	Swe	Incipient, wound
<i>Choanephora cucurbitarum</i> (Berk and Ravenel) Thaxt.	<i>Choanephora</i> fruit rot, <i>Choanephora</i> rot	Bee, Cau, Cucs	Wound
<i>Cladosporium cladosporioides</i> (Fresen.) de Fries	<i>Cladosporium</i> rot	Aub	Wound
<i>Cladosporium cucumerinum</i> Ellis and Arth.	<i>Cladosporium</i> rot, gummosis	Cucs	Wound
<i>Cladosporium fulvum</i> Cooke	<i>Cladosporium</i> rot	Tom	
<i>Cladosporium herbarum</i> (Pers.) Link	<i>Cladosporium</i> rot	Pep, Tom	Wound
<i>Cladosporium oxysporum</i> Berk. and Curt.	<i>Cladosporium</i> rot	Tom	Wound
<i>Colletotrichum erumpens</i> Sacc.	Anthracnose	Rhu	Latent
<i>Colletotrichum capsici</i> (Sydow) Butler and Bisby	Anthracnose	Pep	Latent
<i>Colletotrichum coccodes</i> (Wallr.) S.J. Hughes	Anthracnose	Sol	Latent
<i>Colletotrichum dematium</i> (Pers.:Fr.) Grove	Anthracnose	Bee, Pep, Spi, Tom	Latent
<i>Colletotrichum gloeosporioides</i> (Penz.) (Penz. and Sacc. in Penz.)	Anthracnose	Pep, Tom	Latent
<i>Colletotrichum lindemuthianum</i> (Sacc. and Magnus) Lams.-Scrib.	Anthracnose	Bea, Cow	Latent, wound
<i>Colletotrichum orbiculare</i> (Berk and Mont.) Arx	Anthracnose	Cucs	Latent
<i>Colletotrichum truncatum</i> (Schw.) Andris and Moore	Anthracnose	Bea	Latent
<i>Cylindrocladium clavatum</i> Hodges and May	<i>Cylindrocladium</i> rot	Pot	Wound
<i>Epicoccum nigrum</i> Link	Storage rot	Swe	Wound
<i>Fusarium acuminatum</i> Ellis. and Everh.	<i>Fusarium</i> rot	Cucs	Wound
<i>Fusarium avenaceum</i> (Corda ex. Fr.) Sacc.	<i>Fusarium</i> dry rot, <i>Fusarium</i> rot	Asp, Aub, Car, Cucs, Pot, Tom	Latent, wound

Table 1 Continued

Pathogen	Disease	Crop ^a	Primary mode of infection
<i>Fusarium culmorum</i> (W.G. Smith) Sacc.	<i>Fusarium</i> rot	Asp, Gar	Incipient
<i>Fusarium equiseti</i> (Corda) Sacc.	<i>Fusarium</i> dry rot, <i>Fusarium</i> fruit rot	Aub, Cucs, Pot, Tom	Latent, wound
<i>Fusarium graminearum</i> Schwabe	<i>Fusarium</i> rot	Cucs	Wound
<i>Fusarium moniliforme</i> Sheldon	<i>Fusarium</i> rot	Asp, Aub, Coc, Pep, Yam	Wound
<i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> Schlecht. emend. Snyder. and Hans.	Basal rot (Buls), <i>Fusarium</i> crown rot, <i>Fusarium</i> dry rot, <i>Fusarium</i> rot (Yam), surface rot (Swe)	Art, Asp, Bulb, Cab, Cocs, Cucs, Pep, Pot, Sol, Swe, Yam	Incipient, wound
<i>Fusarium sambucinum</i> Fuckel	<i>Fusarium</i> dry rot	Pot	Latent, wound
<i>Fusarium scirpi</i> Lambotte and Fautr.	<i>Fusarium</i> rot	Cucs	Wound
<i>Fusarium semitectum</i> Berk. and Ravenel	<i>Fusarium</i> fruit rot	Cucs	?
<i>Fusarium solani</i> (Mart.) Appel and Wollenw. emend. Snyder. & Hans.	<i>Fusarium</i> dry rot (Pot), <i>Fusarium</i> fruit rot, <i>Fusarium</i> rot	Cas, Cocs, Cucs, Pot, Squ, Swe, Yam	Wound
<i>Fusarium sporotrichioides</i> Sherb.	<i>Fusarium</i> dry rot	Pot	Latent, wound
<i>Geotrichum candidum</i> Link ex Leman	Rubbery rot (Pot), sour rot	Car, Oni, Pep, Pot, Tom	Wound
<i>Helminthosporium solani</i> Durieu and Mont.	Silver scurf	Pot	?
<i>Lasiodyplodia theobromae</i> (Pat.) Griffon and Maubl.	<i>Botryodyplodia</i> rot, Java black rot (Swe), <i>Lasiodyplodia</i> fruit rot (Cucs)	Cas, Coc, Cucs, Oni, Swe, Tom, Yam	Incipient, wound
<i>Macrophomina phaseolina</i> (Tassi) Goidanich	Charcoal rot, <i>Macrophomina</i> rot	Bee, Car, Cucs, Gar, Oni, Pep, Pot, Swe, Tom	Preharvest, wound
<i>Microdochium panattonianum</i> (Berl.) Sutton	Anthrachnose	Bras, Leaf	Incipient, latent
<i>Monilochaetes infuscans</i> Halst. ex Harter	Scurf	Swe	Preharvest
<i>Mucor mucedo</i> Mich. ex St.-Am.	<i>Mucor</i> rot	Tom	?
<i>Mucor piriformis</i> Fischer	<i>Mucor</i> rot	Tom	?
<i>Mucor racemosus</i> Fresen.	Storage rot	Swe	?
<i>Mycocentrospora acerina</i> (Hartig) Deighton	Licorice rot	Car, Cel, Par	Incipient, wound

<i>Mycosphaerella brassicicola</i> (Duby) Lindau in Engl. and Prantl	Ring spot	Bras	Preharvest, incipient
<i>Myrothecium roridum</i> Tode:Fr.	Crater rot	Cucs, Sols	?
<i>Penicillium</i> spp.	Blue mold rot, storage rot (Bee)	Bee, Swe	Wound
<i>Penicillium aurantiogriseum</i> Dierckx	Blue/green mold rot	Gar, Oni, Tom, Yam	Wound
<i>Penicillium citrinum</i> Thom	Blue mold	Gar, Oni	Wound
<i>Penicillium corymbiferum</i> Westling	Blue mold	Gar, Oni	Wound
<i>Penicillium crustosum</i> Thom	Blue/green mold rot	Swe, Yam	Wound
<i>Penicillium digitatum</i> (Pers.:Fr) Sacc	Blue mold rot	Cucs, Gar, Oni	Wound
<i>Penicillium expansum</i> Link	Blue mold rot	Car, Gar, Oni, Tom	Wound
<i>Penicillium funiculosum</i> Thom	Blue mold	Gar, Oni	Wound
<i>Penicillium gladioli</i> McCulloch and Thom	Blue/green mold rot	Cucs, Yam	Wound
<i>Penicillium hirsutum</i> Dierckx	Blue mold	Gar, Oni	Wound
<i>Penicillium italicum</i> Wehmer	Blue mold rot	Cucs, Tom	Wound
<i>Penicillium oxalicum</i> Curie and Thom	Blue/green mold rot	Asp, Gar, Oni, Yam	Wound
<i>Penicillium sclerotigenum</i> Yaman	Blue/green mold rot	Yam	Wound
<i>Peronospora parasitica</i> (Pers.:Fr.) Fr.	Downy mildew	Bras	Incipient
<i>Phoma apiicola</i> Kleb.	<i>Phoma</i> crown rot	Cel	?
<i>Phoma betae</i> A.B. Frank	<i>Phoma</i> rot	Bee	Incipient, wound
<i>Phoma complanata</i> (Tode ex. Fr.) Desm.	<i>Phoma</i> rot	Car	?
<i>Phoma cucurbitacearum</i> (Fr.:Fr.) Sacc	<i>Didymella</i> black rot	Cucs	Wound
<i>Phoma destructiva</i> Plowr.	<i>Phoma</i> rot	Sols	Incipient, wound
<i>Phoma exigua</i> Desmaz.	<i>Phoma</i> rot	Aub, Pot, Tom	?
<i>Phoma exigua</i> Desmaz. var. <i>exigua</i>	Gangrene, <i>Phoma</i> rot	Bee	Incipient, latent, wound
<i>Phoma exigua</i> Desmaz. var. <i>foveata</i> (Foister) Boerema	Gangrene	Pot	Incipient, latent, wound
<i>Phoma lingam</i> (Tode: Fr.) Desmaz.	<i>Phoma</i> rot	Bras, Sws, Tur	?
<i>Phoma lycopersici</i> Cooke	<i>Phoma</i> rot	Aub, Tom	Preharvest, incipient
<i>Phomopsis capsici</i> Punith	<i>Phomopsis</i> rot	Pep	Incipient
<i>Phomopsis cucurbitae</i> McKeen	<i>Phomopsis</i> black rot	Cucs	Preharvest

Table 1 Continued

Pathogen	Disease	Crop ^a	Primary mode of infection
<i>Phomopsis phaseoli</i> (Desm.) Grove	Dry rot (Swe), <i>Phomopsis</i> pod blight (Bea), <i>Phomopsis</i> rot	Bea, Pep, Swe, Tom	Incipient
<i>Phomopsis vescans</i> (Sacc. and Sydow) Harter	<i>Phomopsis</i> rot	Aub	Incipient
<i>Phytophthora cactorum</i> (Lebert and Cohn) Schröter	<i>Phytophthora</i> rot, Rubbery brown rot (Car)	Asp, Car, Rhu	?
<i>Phytophthora capsici</i> Leonian	Buckeye fruit rot (Sols), <i>Phytophthora</i> rot	Cucs, Sols	Preharvest
<i>Phytophthora cryptogea</i> Pethybr. and Lafferty	<i>Phytophthora</i> rot (Asp) Pink rot (Pot)	Asp, Cas, Pot	Incipient
<i>Phytophthora drechsleri</i> Tucker	Buckeye fruit rot (Tom), <i>Phytophthora</i> wet rot (Bee), pink rot (Pot)	Bee, Cas, Pot, Tom	Incipient
<i>Phytophthora erythroseptica</i> Pethybr.	Pink rot	Cas, Pot	Incipient
<i>Phytophthora infestans</i> (Mont.) de Bary	Late blight	Pot, Tom	Incipient, wound
<i>Phytophthora megasperma</i> Drechsler	<i>Phytophthora</i> rot (Asp), rubbery brown rot	Asp, Car, Pot	?
<i>Phytophthora nicotianae</i> Breda de Haan	Buckeye fruit rot, <i>Phytophthora</i> rot	Bea, Rhu, Sols	?
<i>Phytophthora palmivora</i> (E. Butler) E. Butler	<i>Phytophthora</i> rot	Tom	?
<i>Phytophthora porri</i> Foister	Bulb rot (Buls), rubbery brown rot	Bras, Buls, Cab, Car	?
<i>Phytophthora richardiae</i> Buisman	<i>Phytophthora</i> rot	Asp	?
<i>Polyscytalum pustulans</i> (N.M. Owens and Wakef.) M.B. Ellis	Skin spot	Pot	Wound
<i>Pseudocercospora capsellae</i> (Ellis and Everh.) Deighton	<i>Cercospora</i> spot	Bras	?
<i>Pythium aphanidermatum</i> (Edson) Fitzp.	<i>Pythium</i> fruit rot (Aub, Tom), <i>Pythium</i> root rot (Bee), <i>Pythium</i> rot	Aub, Bea, Bee, Cucs, Swe, Tom	Wound

<i>Pythium arrhenomanes</i> Drechsler	<i>Pythium</i> fruit rot (Pot, Tom), watery wound rot (Bea, Cucs)	Bea, Cucs, Pot, Tom	Wound
<i>Pythium debaryanum</i> Auct. non R. Hesse	Leak (Pot), <i>Pythium</i> blight (Bea), <i>Pythium</i> fruit rot, Watery wound rot (Sols)	Bea, Car, Pot, Sols	Wound
<i>Pythium myriotylum</i> Drechsler	<i>Pythium</i> cottony leak, <i>Pythium</i> fruit rot	Aub, Cocs, Cucs, Tom	?
<i>Pythium scleroteichum</i> Drechsler	<i>Pythium</i> rot	Swe	Preharvest
<i>Pythium spinosum</i> Sawada	<i>Pythium</i> rot	Yam	Wound
<i>Pythium splendens</i> Braun	<i>Pythium</i> rot	Coc, Rhu, Swe	Preharvest
<i>Pythium sylvaticum</i> Campbell and Hendrix	<i>Pythium</i> rot	Yam	Wound
<i>Pythium ultimum</i> Trow	Beetlet rot, Leak (Pot), Pod rot (Bea), <i>Pythium</i> rot, <i>Pythium</i> fruit rot (Tom), rootlet rot (Swe), rubbery slate rot (Car)	Bee, Car, Cocs, Pot, Pum, Swe, Tom, Yam	Preharvest, wound
<i>Rhizoctonia carotae</i> Rador	Crater rot	Car	Incipient
<i>Rhizoctonia crocorum</i> DC. ex Fr.	Violet root rot	Car, Par	Preharvest
<i>Rhizoctonia solani</i> Kühn	Belly rot (Cucs), black scurf (Pot), bottom rot (Let), brown crown rot (Car), <i>Rhizoctonia</i> fruit rot (Tom), <i>Rhizoctonia</i> rot (Bee), sprout rot (Swe), Web blight (Bea)	Bea, Bee, Car, Cucs, Let, Pot, Swe, Tom	Preharvest incipient
<i>Rhizopus oryzae</i> Went and Prinsen Geerlings	<i>Rhizopus</i> soft rot	Bee, Bras, Car, Cas, Legs, Par, Pot, Swe, Tom, Yam	Wound
<i>Rhizopus stolonifer</i> (Ehrenb.:Fr.) Vuill.	Mushy rot (Oni), <i>Rhizopus</i> rot, <i>Rhizopus</i> soft rot	Bee, Bras, Car, Cucs, Legs, Oni, Par, Pot, Sols, Swe, Yam	Wound
<i>Rosellinia</i> sp.	<i>Rosellinia</i> black rot	Pot	Preharvest
<i>Sclerotinia minor</i> Jagger	<i>Sclerotinia</i> rot (Pot), watery soft rot, White mold (Legs, Pot, Sols)	Asp, Bras, Car, Cel, Leaf, Legs, Let, Sols, Par, Pot	Incipient
<i>Sclerotinia sclerotiorum</i> (Lib.) de Bary	<i>Sclerotinia</i> crown rot (Bee), <i>Sclerotinia</i> pink rot (Cel), <i>Sclerotinia</i> rot, storage rot (Swe), watery soft rot, white mold (Bea, Pot, Tom)	Bea, Bee, Bras, Car, Cel, Gar, Legs, Let, Oni, Pot, Sols, Tom, Swe, Sws, Tur	Preharvest, incipient

Table 1 Continued

Pathogen	Disease	Crop ^a	Primary mode of infection
<i>Sclerotium cepivorum</i> Berk.	White rot	Buls, Car, Rhu	Preharvest
<i>Sclerotium rolfii</i> Sacc.	<i>Sclerotium</i> rot (Bee, Cocs, Swe), southern blight (Pot, Sols), white rot	Bee, Buls, Car, Cau, Cucs, Legs, Let, Par, Pot, Rhu, Sols, Swe, Yam	Preharvest, incipient
<i>Spongospora subterranea</i> (Wallr.) Lagerh. f.sp. <i>subterranea</i> Tomlinson	Powdery scab	Pot	Preharvest
<i>Stemphylium botryosum</i> Wallr.	Black mold rot	Let, Tom	Incipient
<i>Stemphylium herbarum</i> E. Simmons	Black mold rot	Let, Tom	Incipient
<i>Synchytrium endobioticum</i> (Schilberszky) Percival	Wart	Pot	Preharvest
<i>Trichoderma harzianum</i> Rifai	Trichoderma rot	Cas	Wound
<i>Trichoderma koningii</i> Oudem.	Punky rot	Swe	Wound
<i>Trichothecium roseum</i> (Pers.:Fr) Link	Pink mold rot	Cucs, Pot, Tom	Wound
<i>Ulocladium consortiale</i> (Thüm.) E. Simmons	Black mold rot	Tom	Incipient

^a Composites:

Bras: Brassicas: Broccoli (*Brassica oleracea* L. var. *italica* Plenck); Brussel sprouts (*Brassica oleracea* L. var. *gemmifera* DC.); Cabbage (*Brassica oleracea* L. var. *capitata* Alef.); Chinese cabbage (*Brassica campestris* var. *pekinensis* (Laur.) Olsso); Cauliflower (*Brassica oleracea* L. var. *botrytis* Alef.)

Buls: Bulbs: Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*), Garlic (*Allium sativum* L.); Leek (*Allium ampeloprasum* L. var. *porrum* (L.) Gay); Onion (*Allium cepa* L.); Shallot (*Allium cepa* L. var. *aggregatum*)

Cocs: Cocoyams: Taro (*Colocasia esculenta* L.); Tannia (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium* L.)

Cucs: Cucurbits: Cucumber (*Cucumis sativus* L.); Marrow, Pumpkin, Squash (*Cucurbita* spp.); Melon (*Cucumis melo* L.); Watermelon (*Citrullus lanatus* Thunb.)

Leaf: Leafy vegetables: Chicory (*Cichorium intybus* L.); Endive (*Cichorium endivia* L.); Lettuce (*Lactuca sativa* L.)

Legs: Legumes: Bean (*Phaseolus vulgaris* L.); Pea (*Pisum sativum* L.)

Sols: Solanaceous fruit vegetables: Aubergine (*Solanum melongena* L.); Peppers (*Capsicum annuum* L.); Tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum* Mill.)

Specific crops:

Art: Artichoke (*Cynara scolymus* L.)

Asp: Asparagus (*Asparagus officinalis* L.)

Aub: Aubergine

Bea: Bean

Bee: Beet (*Beta vulgaris* L.)

Cab: Cabbage

Car: Carrot (*Daucus carota* L.)

Cas: Cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz)

Cau: Cauliflower

Cel: Celery (*Apium graveslens* L.)

End: Endive

Gar: Garlic

Lee: Leek

Let: Lettuce

Oni: Onion

Par: Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa* L.)

Pea: Pea

Pep: Peppers

Pot: Potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.)

Pum: Pumpkin

Rhu: Rhubarb (*Rheum rhubarbarum* L.)

Spi: Spinach (*Spinacia oleracea* L.)

Squ: Squash

Swe: Sweetpotato (*Ipomoea batatas* (L.) Lam.)

Sws Swede (*Brassica napus* L. var. *napobrassica* . . .)

Tom: Tomato

Tur: Turnip (*Brassica rapa* L.)

Yam: Yam (*Dioscorea* spp.)

Sources: Compiled from APS common names of plant diseases (APSnet 1996), APS Compendium series (Clark and Moyer, 1988; Hall, 1991; Jones et al., 1991; Schwartz and Mohan, 1995; Zitter et al., 1996), Ellis and Ellis (1985); Snowden (1992).

(Prusky, 1996). After arrival in infection courts, pathogen structures may remain dormant for varying periods of time; however, these periods are regarded as part of a latent or quiescent infection only if a parasitic relationship has developed (Verhoeff, 1974; Swinburne, 1983). Dormant pathogens usually become active when the vegetable is ripening (Verhoeff, 1974). The mechanisms that trigger the resumption in pathogen development are unknown (Bruton, 1994). Simmonds (1963) presented four possible explanations, which were redefined by Verhoeff (1974), Swinburne (1993) and Prusky (1996), and are elaborated on in Chapter 25.

C. Wound and Injury Infections

Many pathogens associated with quiescent infections penetrate host surfaces through wounds or natural infections, whereas others are restricted to wounds for gaining entry. Some of the most devastating postharvest diseases of vegetables originate from mechanical or physiological damage to the surface of the vegetable (Derbyshire, 1973; Friedman, 1960). Random mechanical injuries inevitably occur during harvesting and handling of vegetables, even when these operations are carried out carefully. Indeed, severing the vegetable from the plant can create an infection court for wound pathogens (Day et al., 1972; Geeson, 1976; Semb, 1971). Much more injury is inflicted by mechanical than by hand harvesting (Derbyshire, 1973; Tucker, 1974), whereas excessive pressure created during storage of some crops (e.g., potatoes) damages the lenticels, thereby predisposing them to infection (Dennis, 1987). In addition, the harvest, transport, grading and packing of certain produce can produce physical damage in the form of cuts, abrasions and bruising, which often aggravates disease (Cappellini et al., 1984). *R. stolonifer*, in particular, frequently occurs in solanaceous vegetables damaged by rough handling during and after harvesting (Snowdon, 1992). Rodents, and insects such as cockroaches, flies and weevils can also create wounds on vegetables, thereby providing points of entry for fungi (Clark and Moyer, 1988; Snowdon, 1992).

Physiological injuries induced by environmental stress can predispose vegetables to attack by fungi. Preharvest cold damage or postharvest chilling injury, for instance, can change membrane permeability and the activity of membrane-bound enzymes, leading to an accumulation of toxic intermediates that can damage or kill plant cells (Lyons, 1973). This disruption of the cellular function influences susceptibility to fungal invasion. For example, in unchilled tomatoes, infection by *B. cinerea* usually occurs through the calyx, whereas after chilling, the entire fruit is susceptible (Dennis, 1983; Tomkins, 1963). Infection by *B. cinerea* is also enhanced by chilling injury of peppers, eggplant, and cucumber (Dennis, 1983). Chilling injury has also been associated with infection of tomatoes and peppers by *Alternaria* spp. and cucumbers by *Phoma cucurbitacearum* (Dennis, 1983; Van Steekelenburg, 1982). Tomatoes may be infected by *Phoma lycopersici*, *P. destructiva*, and *P. exigua* through natural cracks at the stem end or through mechanical injuries (Jones et al., 1991; Snowdon, 1992), by *Phomopsis phaseoli* at weak points such as the blossom-end, sunscald lesions or wounds (Luttrell, 1947), and by *Cladosporium herbarum* and *C. oxysporum* through skin weakened by sun scald or chilling injury (Snowdon, 1992).

D. Infection Process

The initial stage of a pathogen's attack is often the adherence of a fungal spore to the plants surface. Adhesion has been related to intermolecular forces developing between

the surfaces of plant and pathogen, although certain spores contain adhesive substances that facilitate attachment (Brown and Howard, 1994). Germ tubes can either form a superficial mycelium preceding penetration or penetrate directly (Verhoeff, 1974). Fungi that penetrate directly produce fine hyphae or a penetration peg arising from an appressorium. Appressoria, which are clearly defined structures formed at the tip of a germ tube, attach to plant surfaces to facilitate penetration and subsequent infection. In certain fungi, penetration occurs only if melanin pigments accumulate in the appressorial wall. Melanin confers rigidity to the appressorium, whereas an accumulation of solutes by this structure leads to water absorption and increased turgor pressure. As this pressure accumulates at the base of the penetration peg, the tip of that peg physically breeches the host surface (Agrios, 1997).

Surface waxes on vegetables may provide signals for certain pathogens to form appressoria and infection pegs. Little is known about the surface waxes of vegetables. However spores of *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* landing on very hydrophobic surfaces, such as fruit wax produce appressoria (Podilia et al., 1993; Prusky and Plumbley, 1992). Kolattukudy et al. (1995) argued that this type of signaling between plant and pathogen was specific, since other plant waxes would not stimulate production of appressoria by *C. gloeosporioides*. The fatty alcohol fraction, which is 5% of the whole wax, was the most active inducer, with C₃₀ and C₃₂ as the major components. In tests with authentic compounds, C₂₄ and longer chain alcohols were most effective. By contrast, appressoria were not induced by the very-long-chain alcohols found in many plant waxes probably because some of these compounds may inhibit the process (see Chap. 25).

Macerating enzymes, secreted by the pathogen, almost invariably assist penetration of plant barriers by fungi. Many fungi have been shown to produce cutinases, which degrade cutin, the main component of the cuticle. Cutinases are esterases that can be induced in fungi by hydroxylated fatty acid monomers of cutin (Kolattukudy, 1985; Trail and Koller, 1990). Several observations support the involvement of cutinases in the penetration of the host cuticle. For example, enzymatic activity is highest at the point of penetration. The application of cutinase inhibitors to plant surfaces prevents infection. Cutinase-deficient mutants exhibiting reduced virulence became fully virulent when cutinase was applied to the plant surface. Fungi that infect only through wounds and do not produce cutinase can penetrate directly if transformed with a cutinase gene from another fungus (Brown and Howard, 1994; Kolattukudy, 1985; Schäfer, 1994; Trail and Koller, 1990). There are, however, exceptions to the rule. Stahl and Schäfer (1992), for instance, found that cutinase is not required for fungal pathogenicity on pea.

For most fungal pathogens of harvested vegetables, tissue invasion and lesion formation primarily depend on the pathogen's ability to produce pectolytic enzymes that degrade the middle lamellae of plant tissue. The consistency of fresh fruit and vegetables largely depends on pectic substances in the middle lamellae of cell walls that bind the cells together. Pectolysis leads to tissue maceration—i.e., loss of coherence and separation of individual cells. The membranes of separated cells increase in permeability, which leads to cell death and release of host metabolites. The metabolites may be used as a substrate for further development of the pathogen (Dennis, 1987). Pectin-degrading enzymes are involved in many plant diseases, particularly those characterized by macerated tissues. Three fundamentally different types of pectinases exist—namely, pectin methyl esterases that release methyl groups from carboxyls, polygalacturonases that hydrolyze α -1,4-galacturonosyl bonds, and transeliminases or lyases that split the α -1,4-galacturonosyl bonds by rearrangement of hydrogens. Various postharvest fungal pathogens produce both

endo- and exohydrolases, polygalacturonases, as well as lyases (Griffin, 1994). Although no known fungus produces each type of pectinase, several produce more than one kind (Chesson, 1980; Hancock et al., 1964; Lumsden, 1979; Sherwood, 1966; Verhoeff and Warren, 1972). Most of the pectinases are regulated by catabolic repression, although instances of constitutive enzyme formation and induction by galacturonate have been reported. Lyase formation is favored by alkaline pH (Bateman and Basham, 1976). Cell wall-degrading enzymes can be inactivated in host tissue by compounds such as polyphenols, tannins and proteins (see Chap. 25).

Other enzymes involved in plant tissue degradation—e.g., cellulases, hemicellulases, proteases, amylases, phospholipases, etc.—are not discussed here, as they mostly play a secondary (albeit sometimes important) role in postharvest pathology.

IV. EFFECT OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON DISEASE DEVELOPMENT

Environmental factors that promote infection of a postharvest pathogen in the field contribute to the severity of decay during storage. For instance, abnormally cool weather during the growing season of tomatoes can result in chilling injury providing a weakened surface that can easily be penetrated by opportunistic parasites such as *Cladosporium* spp., which are incapable of infecting sound fruit (Snowdon, 1992). If prevailing conditions are overcast, cool and damp, tomato plants do not thrive and fruit can more readily be infected by *Trichothecium roseum*, the cause of pink mold rot in storage (Welch et al., 1975). Cool, wet conditions in the field are also conducive to infection of tomato fruit by *Stemphylium herbarum* (Butler, 1959).

During storage, the three cardinal factors leading to disease development are temperature, humidity, and the gaseous environment. Of these, temperature probably has the most profound effect because it affects evaporation and the physiology of the host, pathogen and epiphytic microbes. For many vegetables, storage at low temperature is the most effective and practical way of delaying the development of fungal decay. This is due to retardation of the maturation process, thereby prolonging the disease resistance associated with immaturity, and/or by inhibiting pathogen growth or development (Dennis, 1987). However, sound tomatoes can become susceptible to infection if stored at low temperatures, particularly if the fruit is contaminated with *Fusarium* spp. (Snowdon, 1992). Postharvest chilling injury can also result in the surface of vegetables becoming more susceptible to direct invasion by various pathogens—e.g., *B. cinerea* on peppers, *Pythium* spp. on yam, and *Cladosporium* spp. on tomato (Raj et al., 1986; Ramsey and Heiberg, 1952; Snowdon, 1992).

With various postharvest fungal pathogens, storage at 0°C will only delay the onset of decay as the organisms are capable of growth, albeit slowly, at this temperature (Dennis and Cohen, 1976). Watery soft rot of carrot, celery and brassicas caused by *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum* and gray mold rot of carrot caused by *B. cinerea* are typical examples of diseases that can develop at 0°C (Lowings, 1955; Snowdon, 1992), whereas *Pseudocercospora capsella* continues to develop on brassicas at temperatures below 4°C (Crossan, 1954). Fungi such as *R. stolonifer*, on the other hand, are incapable of growth at temperatures below 4.5 to 5°C (Dennis and Cohen, 1976; Pierson, 1966). With tuberous or root crops such as potato, sweet potato, onion, carrot and yam, it often is advantageous to store the commodity at temperatures above the ideal storage temperatures for a short period after harvest (Dennis, 1987). During this “curing” period, wounds heal and the periderm

toughens. If done immediately after harvesting, this curing process can prevent or reduce wound infections during subsequent storage.

Relative humidity in the storage environment affects the activity of fungi on the surface of vegetables, but the effect depends on temperature. For vegetables that can be stored at 0°C, particularly those prone to evaporative loss, storage at 98% to 100% relative humidity is recommended (Dennis, 1987). Water loss from carrots, by as little as 8%, substantially increased their susceptibility to infection by *B. cinerea* and *R. stolonifer* (Goodliffe and Heale, 1977; Heale et al., 1977; Thorne, 1972). With cabbage, on the other hand, some dehydration of the outer wrapper leaves reduces fungal attack (Geeson and Browne, 1979). Where vegetables have to be stored at higher temperatures, as to prevent chilling injury, lower relative humidity in storage helps to avoid excessive microbial growth as well as condensation due to temperature fluctuations. Fortunately, quite a number of vegetables requiring such storage—e.g., tomato, peppers, aubergine and cucumber—have a waxy cuticle allowing them to retain moisture more effectively than leafy tissues (Robinson et al., 1975).

Controlled atmosphere (CA) storage employing low oxygen (<5%) or increased carbon dioxide levels (5% to 20%) have been used to slow down respiration of both the host and the pathogen, thereby suppressing development of postharvest rots. The efficacy of CA can further be improved by the inclusion of carbon monoxide. Fungi like *Rhizoctonia solani* and *Sclerotium rolfsii* are known to be intolerant of low oxygen and/or high carbon dioxide levels (Durbin, 1955; Mitchell and Mitchell, 1973), but conflicting results have been reported for other species, particularly *B. cinerea*. *B. cinerea* can grow, albeit at a reduced rate, at oxygen levels as low as 1% to 1.4% (Adair, 1971; Follstad, 1966). A raised carbon dioxide concentration of 8% stimulated growth if 2% oxygen was supplied and inhibition occurred only at carbon dioxide concentrations higher than 20% (Jarvis, 1977). Despite this apparent tolerance to a CA environment, storage in a CA containing 5% to 6% carbon dioxide and 3% oxygen consistently reduced spoilage by *B. cinerea* (Bohling and Hansen, 1977; Geeson and Browne, 1980; Henze, 1977). The controlling effect of CA therefore seems to be a consequence of delayed plant senescence, which restricts infection by the fungus (Yoder and Whalen, 1975). The effect of carbon monoxide on fungi associated with postharvest decay of vegetables has not been investigated extensively, but as most fungi are obligate aerobes it is obvious that the blockage of electron transport by carbon monoxide would impede their metabolic activity, albeit apparently to varying degrees (El-Goorani and Sommer, 1979).

V. HEALTH RISK OF FUNGAL VEGETABLE DISEASES TO HUMANS AND ANIMALS

Fungi, particularly those producing dry spores, such as *Alternaria*, *Aspergillus*, *Cladosporium* and *Penicillium*, are common allergens (Lacey, 1991). Although species of these genera frequently cause disease in vegetables, cases of allergic alveolitis, rhinitis, sinusitis, or asthma (in humans) attributable to these fungi in a postharvest vegetable environment are rare. Similarly, species in the genera *Alternaria*, *Aspergillus*, *Cladosporium*, *Fusarium*, *Geotrichum*, *Mucor*, *Mycocentrospora*, *Penicillium*, *Phoma*, *Rhizopus*, *Trichoderma*, and *Ulocladium* have been reported to cause opportunistic mycoses in humans (Kwon-Chung and Bennett, 1992; Larone, 1995). However, such opportunistic infections mostly occur only in humans compromised by malnutrition, alcoholism, cancer, diabetes, leukemia, infectious disease, trauma from surgery or injury, altered microbiota from prolonged use

of antibiotics, or immunosuppression by drugs, hormones, genetic deficiencies, etc. (Prescott et al., 1999). Nevertheless, as much as 90% of the mortality of AIDS is attributed to infection by organisms not normally pathogenic to healthy individuals (Mills and Masur, 1990), and such infections could therefore become more prevalent as the HIV epidemic spreads.

Mycotoxins are secondary metabolites produced by fungi that are harmful to humans and animals. Approximately 300 mycotoxins have been described and various outbreaks of mycotoxicoses have been documented (Cole and Cox, 1981; Marasas and Van Rensburg, 1979; Scudamore, 1998; Wyllie and Morehouse, 1977/78). Most of these cases have been ascribed to the consumption of contaminated grains or legumes. Several fungi infecting fruit and vegetables are also capable of producing mycotoxins. Manufacturers of juices, purees, baby foods, etc. use bulk quantities of fresh produce, rendering quality control of individual fruit or vegetables impractical and, hence, mycotoxin contamination of the processed product is more likely. Also, fungi that colonize the diseased or dead tissues associated with postharvest decays could be major sources of mycotoxins. By contrast, produce infected by nontoxigenic primary invaders (Sarantinos et al., 1996) or colonized by saprobic fungi (Ashworth et al., 1965), sometimes is protected from invasion by toxigenic fungi. Extensively decayed produce often is fed to farm animals. Mycotoxins in such feed could eventually end up in products destined for human consumption (De Jongh et al., 1964; Dorner et al., 1994; Kipper et al., 1991; Lusky et al., 1998; Micco et al., 1988; Prelusky, 1994). Humans themselves can transfer mycotoxins to their fellow beings, e.g. aflatoxin via mother's milk (Coulter et al., 1984) or through blood transfusion (Onyemelukwe and Ogbadu, 1981). Particularly perturbing are the many instances where animals themselves are affected by mycotoxins, often fatally. In this regard the increasing number of reports referring to real, suspected or potential mycotoxicoses in wildlife (Abbas and Bosch, 1990; Cole et al., 1988; Galash and Marchenko, 1991; Howerth et al., 1989; Huff et al., 1992; Lee et al., 1991; Li et al., 1994; Morrell and Adams, 1993; Neiger et al., 1995; Ruff et al., 1992; Sauviat et al., 1991) are of considerable concern.

Two well-known "mycotoxicoses" associated with vegetable diseases are celery photodermatitis and moldy sweet potato toxicosis. Celery photodermatitis is a contact dermatitis occurring among celery harvesters and results from sensitization of the skin to sunlight by the handling of celery plants infected by *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*. Exposure of pigs to infected material and to ultraviolet (UV) light induces symptoms resembling foot-and-mouth disease (Montgomery et al., 1987). The active compounds with phototoxic activity formed in infected celery tissue have been identified as the furocoumarins (psoralens) xanthotoxin and bergapten (Kadis et al., 1972). These compounds are not formed when other vegetables are infected by *S. sclerotiorum*, nor are they induced in celery infected by other decay fungi (Wu et al., 1972). However, furocoumarin production in celery can be triggered by infection with the soft-rot bacterium *Erwinia carotovora* (Karasawa et al., 1990), insect feeding (Trumble et al., 1994), and even by spraying of celery with fungicides such as chlorothalonil, mancozeb, or copper oxychloride (Nigg, 1997). Evidence indicates that carrots also produce photoactive furocoumarins in response to disease (Ceska et al., 1986), although the disease was not specified.

Moldy sweet potato toxicosis is a fatal respiratory disease of cattle attributed to the ingestion of mold-damaged sweet potatoes. Pathological lesions are restricted to the lungs and include edema, congestion and hemorrhage. These symptoms are induced by the pulmonary toxins 4-ipomeanol and ipomeanine, produced by sweet potatoes in response to invasion by certain fungi that are not otherwise toxic. Although chemical or physical

damage as well as various invading organisms can stimulate sweet potato to produce furanoterpenoid stress metabolites such as ipomeamerone, the above pulmonary toxins are formed only in the presence of specific fungi, particularly *Fusarium solani* (Burka et al., 1977).

In the above two examples, toxicity is induced by stress metabolites or phytoalexins produced by the host plant in response to fungal infection, rather than by the fungus itself. Although plant stress metabolites have received considerable attention in phytopathological literature, their effects on human and animal health have mostly been neglected. However, based on epidemiological grounds, the congenital birth defect spina bifida has been linked with the consumption of *Phytophthora infestans*-blighted potatoes by pregnant women (Renwick, 1972). This hypothesis was supported by experimental evidence that blighted potatoes could induce fetal malformations involving osseous defects of the cranial vault in marmosets (Poswillo et al., 1972). Subsequent studies showed that extracts of healthy potatoes could be teratogenic, and ascribed the toxicity to solanine, a steroid glycoside of the saponin group present in many solanaceous plants (Jelinek et al., 1976). Solanine levels increase when tubers are attacked by an incompatible race of *P. infestans* (host resistance), but not when tubers are infected by a compatible race (host susceptibility) (Kadis et al., 1972). Toxic glycoalkaloids such as α -solanine and α -chaconine are natural constituents of healthy potato tubers (Morgan and Coxon, 1987). The concentration of such chemicals in uninfected tubers is affected by the genetic constitution of the plant (Sanford and Sinden, 1972), conditions of cultivation, and postharvest treatment of tubers (Jadhav et al., 1981).

Numerous reports refer to the isolation of toxigenic fungi from vegetables, whereas some describe the production of mycotoxins in artificially infected produce (Blumenthal-Yonassi et al., 1988; Bosch et al., 1992; Desjardins and Plattner, 1989; El-Banna et al., 1984; Latus-Zietkiewicz et al., 1995). Mycotoxins that have been detected as natural contaminants in vegetables and related crops include aflatoxin in cassava (Gerona, 1986; Marasas and Van Rensburg, 1979), cytochalasin B, trichothecenes, and sambutoxin in potatoes (Kim et al., 1995; Lafont et al., 1983; Scott et al., 1975), zearalenone in sugar beet and celery (Bosch and Mirocha, 1992; Li and Meng, 1989), T-2 toxin and fusarenon-X in *Cucurbita ficifolia* (Carrillo, 1990), diacetoxyscirpenol, T-2 toxin and zearalenone in mustard seed (Chakrabarti and Ghosal, 1987), and aflatoxin B₁, zearalenone, ochratoxin A and citrinin in root drugs from *Achyranthes aspera*, *Acorus calamus*, *Adhatoda vasica*, *Clerodendrum serratum*, and *Picrorhiza kurroa* (Roy and Chourasia, 1990). The presence of aflatoxin B₁ in any commodity is of particular concern, as the compound is not only extremely toxic but also one of the most potent naturally occurring carcinogens known (Eaton and Groopman, 1994). Citrinin is a known cause of porcine nephrotoxicosis (Scott, 1977), whereas zearalenone can cause porcine hyperestrogenism and infertility in sheep. Trichothecenes such as deoxynivalenol, fusarenon-X and T-2 toxin may cause feed refusal, emesis and internal hemorrhage in animals (Marasas et al., 1984; Towers and Sprosen, 1992). Available evidence furthermore implicates trichothecene mycotoxins, particularly T-2 toxin, in outbreaks of alimentary toxic aleukia, a fatal human disease characterized by necrotic stomatitis, exhaustion of the bone marrow, extreme leukopenia, and multiple hemorrhages. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century this disease has been recorded in the former U.S.S.R. (Lutsky et al., 1978). Cytochalasin B has toxic effects on membrane function and the contractile mechanisms of cell movement and division (Griffin, 1994), whereas tenuazonic acid has been implicated in thrombocytopenic purpura, an acute bleeding disease endemic to Africa (Rabie et al., 1975; Steyn and Rabie, 1976). Ochratoxin A

can cause porcine nephropathy and is possibly also involved in Balkan nephropathy, a fatal chronic kidney disease that occurs in some rural populations in Bulgaria, Rumania, and Yugoslavia (Kuiper-Goodman and Scott, 1989). There is, furthermore, mounting evidence that ochratoxin A is a genotoxic carcinogen (Dirheimer, 1996). Sumbutoxin has been considered as a possible source of mycotoxicosis in experimental and farm animals, but its toxicity is relatively low (Kim et al., 1995).

A class of mycotoxins currently receiving considerable attention are the fumonisins, a group of related polar metabolites that have been implicated in mycotoxicoses such as porcine pulmonary edema (Osweiler et al., 1992), equine leukoencephalomalacia (Wilson et al., 1990), and human esophageal cancer (Chu and Li, 1992, 1994; Marasas et al., 1993; Rheeder et al., 1992; Yoshizawa et al., 1994). Fumonisins have also been reported to increase serum cholesterol levels and to induce chronic hepatotoxicity in vervet monkeys (Fincham et al., 1992). The above toxicoses have mostly been attributed to, or resulted from, the ingestion of corn contaminated with *Fusarium moniliforme*, the species from which fumonisins originally were isolated (Bezuidenhout et al., 1988). However, an increasing number of species are reported to produce fumonisins—e.g., isolates of *Fusarium anthophilum* (A. Braun) Wollenw.; *F. dlamini* Marasas, Nelson and Tousson; *F. globosum* Rheeder, Marasas and Nelson; *F. napiforme* Marasas, Nelson, and Rabie; *F. nygamai* Burgess and Trimboli; *F. oxysporum*, and *F. proliferatum* (Matsushima) Nirenberg (Abbas et al., 1995; Nelson et al., 1992; Seo et al., 1996; Sydenham et al., 1997; Thiel et al., 1991). Of the above species, *F. moniliforme* and *F. oxysporum* are important postharvest pathogens on various vegetable crops (Table 1), whereas species such as *F. proliferatum* and *F. nygamai*, which were described relatively recently (Burgess and Trimboli, 1986; Nirenberg, 1976), could show an increase in significance in future. Indeed, a recent report (Theron, 1999) has shown the last two species to be nonpathogenically associated with dry rot and stem-end rot of potato tubers in South Africa. It is furthermore noteworthy that fumonisins are structurally closely related to phytotoxic AAL-toxins produced by strains of *Alternaria alternata* (Mirocha et al., 1992) and that some isolates of *A. alternata* actually produce fumonisins (Abbas and Riley, 1996; Chen et al., 1992).

VI. DISEASE MANAGEMENT

Most plant disease control programs rely on the use of agrochemicals, and vegetable diseases are no exception to the rule. Control of postharvest diseases with chemicals often depends on an integrated approach, combining application of fungicides in the field to prevent preharvest infection with packinghouse or storage applications to control postharvest infection. The latter treatment also prevents or reduces spread of decay from infected to sound fruit or vegetables (Harvey, 1978). The use of fungicides for the control of postharvest diseases has previously been extensively reviewed (e.g., Dennis, 1987; Dixon, 1981; Eckert and Sommer, 1967; Sherf and MacNab, 1986; Chap. 18), and information regarding new compounds appearing on the market is readily available from agrochemical companies. A growing international concern over possible detrimental effect of fungicides on human health and the environment along with the development of pathogen resistance to fungicides have resulted in a greater need for development of alternative control measures. Furthermore, naturally occurring epiphytic inhabitants of aerial plant parts often influence phytopathogenic diseases (Andrews, 1992; Blakeman and Fokkema, 1982; Fokkema, 1993), and elimination of these natural inhabitants by fungicides through the "non-target" effect can lead to the development of iatrogenic diseases (Griffiths, 1981). Due to

these concerns, considerable effort has been devoted to the discovery of alternative measures for protecting vegetables from disease. As is evident from Chapter 23, biological control shows great potential to be an effective and environmentally compatible option. Other alternative control strategies—such as inoculum reduction through basic sanitation practices, prevention of wounding through safer harvesting and handling, and maintenance of an effective cold chain to prevent disease development—are discussed in Chapters 24, 16, and 17 respectively, while the innovative application of biotechnology and genetic engineering to improve resistance of plants to disease is dealt with in Chapter 19.

Except for disease resistance, the above control strategies primarily concern the postharvest milieu. However, prevention of disease should preferably start at preharvest level. For this purpose various options are available, broadly classifiable as cultural, ecological, physical, or novel. Cultural measures comprise pathogen exclusion, field hygiene, crop rotation, tillage, fertilization, irrigation, and plant spacing, about which more information is available in reviews by Gurkin and Jenkins (1985), Kahn (1991), Leach et al. (1993), Palti (1981), Punja et al. (1986), Scholte (1992), Steadman et al. (1973), Snowden (1992), Sumner et al. (1981), and others. Ecological aspects pertinent to preharvest management of vegetable diseases include classical biological control (Cook, 1993), mycorrhizae (Schenck, 1987), exploitation of naturally disease-suppressive soils and induction of soil suppressiveness (Hornby, 1983; Ko, 1982; Schneider, 1982; Schroth and Hancock, 1982), exclusion of insect vectors and damage (Gadoury et al., 1989), effective control of weed hosts (Raid and Pennypacker, 1987), antagonistic plants (Cook and Baker, 1983), decoy crops (White, 1954; Winter and Winiger, 1983), and organic soil amendment (Hoitink et al., 1991).

The utilization of composted organic material to control plant diseases may involve the development of systemic acquired resistance in the host. Soil incorporation of mature composts increases yield and plant and fruit size (Bryan et al., 1995; Obreza and Reeder, 1994; Roe et al., 1993), and it can suppress plant diseases caused by soil-borne organisms (Boehm and Hoitink, 1992; De Brito Alvarez et al., 1995; Hardy and Sivasithamparam, 1991; Schueler et al., 1989; Widmer et al., 1998). Disease-suppressive composts possess high microbial activity (Chen et al., 1988), and various organisms antagonistic to soil-borne pathogens have been isolated from them (Kuter et al., 1983; Kwok et al., 1987; Nelson and Hoitink, 1983). These findings suggest that suppressive organisms may at least partly be responsible for the decrease in disease observed in plants grown in compost-amended substrates. However, several reports indicate that composts may increase resistance of plants to disease (Roe et al., 1993; Tränkner, 1992; Zhang et al., 1996). It is unclear how increased resistance is brought about, but plants in compost mixes are colonized by various bacterial taxa, some of which are capable of inducing systemic resistance in plants (Liu et al., 1995; Maurhofer et al., 1994; Van Peer et al., 1991; Wei et al., 1991), possibly due to enhanced activity or accumulation of pathogenesis-related proteins (Maurhofer et al., 1994; Zhang et al., 1996, 1998). Effective control of foliar diseases has also been achieved with compost water extracts applied as topical sprays (Elad and Shtienberg, 1994; McQuilken et al., 1994; Stindt and Weltzien, 1990; Weltzien, 1992; Yohalem et al., 1994). Direct antagonism to and competition with the pathogen by the biota in the compost extract obviously play a role in disease suppression. However, filter-sterilized extracts have also been shown to exhibit activity (Cronin et al., 1996; Stindt and Weltzien, 1990; Weltzien, 1992; Yohalem et al., 1994), and it has been proposed that the protective effect of the extracts is due, at least in part, to the induction of systemic resistance in plants (Weltzien, 1992).

Classical biological control—i.e., the utilization of introduced antagonists—has been evaluated successfully against preharvest infections that cause postharvest losses (see Chap. 22). Potential antagonists can be applied to soil before or after planting (Strashnov et al., 1985; Velvis and Jager, 1983) or to seed (Elad et al., 1986), seedlings (Thirumalachar and O'Brien, 1977), foliage (Baker et al., 1985), or flowers (Nelson and Powelson, 1988).

Physical methods of disease control rely mainly on incineration or thermal inactivation or destruction of the pathogen. Flame and fire have been used for ages to destroy infected plant residues and to disinfest equipment (Hardison, 1976). Hot water treatment, although not applicable to the preharvest situation, is a well-known means of controlling fungal infections, particularly if the commodity is to be sold soon after harvesting (Barkai-Golan and Phillips, 1991). Combining hot water with fungicide treatment can improve control of diseases such as scurf on sweet potato caused by *Monilochaetes infusans* and *Fusarium* rot of cucurbits (Clark and Moyer, 1988; Zitter et al., 1996), probably due to an increase in chemical activity or deposition and penetration of the fungicides (Barkai-Golan and Phillips, 1991). Exposure of some storage organs to warm air (curing) removes excess moisture from their surfaces and promotes the healing of wounds through enhanced formation of periderm, thus restricting infection of the organs by weak pathogens (Kushman, 1959).

Soil solarization—i.e., inactivation of pathogens through hydrothermal heating of soil accomplished by covering moist soil with transparent polyethylene sheeting in summer (Katan et al., 1976)—has been used successfully for controlling various soil-borne pathogens. There are, however, indications that soil solarization also reduces diseases caused by foliar pathogens by eradicating infected plant residues and/or by affecting plant resistance through changes in the mineral content of the soil (Katan and DeVay, 1991). Fungal genera associated with postharvest vegetable disease that are suppressed by soil solarization include *Alternaria* (Abu-Blan and Abu-Gharbieh, 1994), *Botrytis*, *Cladosporium* (Garibaldi and Gullino, 1991), *Colletotrichum* (Davis and Sorensen, 1986), *Fusarium* (Katan et al., 1980; Raj and Kapoor, 1993), *Macrophomina* (Dubey, 1992), *Phoma* (Katan et al., 1980), *Phytophthora* (Chellemi et al., 1994; Yücel, 1995), *Pythium* (Pullman et al., 1981), *Rhizoctonia* (Keinath, 1995; Osman and Saheb, 1983), *Sclerotinia* (Phillips, 1990; Porter and Merriman, 1983) and *Sclerotium* (Basallote-Ureba and Melero-Vara, 1993; Duff and Connelly, 1993). Unlike fumigation with, for instance, methyl bromide, soil solarization does not create a biological vacuum, which renders soil conducive to invasion by pathogens. Indeed, it often induces suppressiveness that protects the soil from reinfestation (DeVay and Katan, 1991). Furthermore, soil solarization affects not only the biotic composition, but also the structure of the soil and soluble minerals available for plant and microbial growth (Chen and Katan, 1980; Stapleton and DeVay, 1986). It is therefore not surprising that plants often grow better in solarized soil even where no pathogen is involved (Stapleton et al., 1985). This improvement in growth response is ascribed to increased nutrient levels in the soil solution, stimulation of beneficial rhizosphere microorganisms, including mycorrhizal symbionts and nitrogen-fixing bacteria, and enhanced physiological processes in the plant (Chen et al., 1991; Gamliel and Katan, 1991; Gruenzweig et al., 1993; Nair et al., 1990). Soil solarization has also found application in the treatment of fresh (Duff and Barnaart, 1992) and recycled (Gamliel et al., 1989) container media and in the reclamation of organic soils (Meron et al., 1989). Efficacy of the process can be enhanced by supplementation with introduced antagonists (Ristaino et al., 1991; Sivan and Chet, 1993), reduced dosages of methyl bromide (Yücel, 1995), solar-heated water (Abu-Gharbieh, 1991), irrigation (Lodha, 1995), fertilization or organic soil amend-

ment (Gamliel and Stapleton, 1993a), particularly with cabbage residues (Gamliel and Stapleton, 1993b).

Novel approaches that have been described for the control of postharvest vegetable diseases include the use of ultraviolet (UV)-irradiation or ozone for decontaminating irrigation water (Runia, 1990; Stangellini et al., 1984), inhibition of pathogens with surfactants (Stangellini et al., 1996), radurization of produce (Barkai-Golan et al., 1968), and storage and transport under hypobaric atmospheres instead of an atmosphere low in oxygen and high in carbon dioxide or monoxide (Apelbaum and Barkai-Golan, 1977; Sommer, 1982). Other recent developments in disease control are the coating of fruit and vegetables with antitranspirant compounds that form a protective film on the plant surface (Han, 1990; Ziv and Zitter, 1992), spraying of plants with bicarbonates (Ziv and Zitter, 1992), and prevention of sporulation in pathogenic fungi that require light in the ultraviolet range for sporulation by equipping greenhouses with a special UV-absorbing vinyl film (Jarvis, 1989).

Systemic resistance to infection can be directly or indirectly induced in plants by exposing them to chemical compounds such as salicylic acid (Schneider and Ullrich, 1994), oxalate (Doubrava et al., 1988), phosphates (Gottstein and Kuc, 1989), unsaturated fatty acids (Cohen et al., 1991), jasmonic acid (Cohen et al., 1993), DL-3-amino-*N*-butanoic acid (Cohen, 1994); silicon (Chérif et al., 1992) and chitosan (Walker-Simmons et al., 1983). Besides inducing resistance in plants, chitosan is also known to initiate the formation of structural barriers in host tissue (El Ghaouth et al., 1994), cause morphological and cytological alterations in the pathogen (Benhamou, 1992; El Ghaouth et al., 1992) and, when applied as a coating to strawberries, to delay ripening of the berries by decreasing their respiration rate (El Ghaouth et al., 1991).

Plants contain a variety of antifungal compounds (Wanger, 1985; Grayer and Harborne, 1994), many of which have been implicated in the natural resistance of the plant to infection. These compounds, in pure or crude form, have potential as natural fungicides, and some of them are known to induce systemic plant defense mechanisms—e.g., extracts from giant knotweed [*Reynoutria sachalinensis* F. Schmidt (Nakai)] (Daayf et al., 1997), spinach and rhubarb (Doubrava et al., 1988). Plants can also be “immunized” against disease by prior inoculation with the particular pathogen (Dalisay and Kuc, 1995), a different pathogen (Stroember and Brishammer, 1991), or with extracts of pathogenic organisms (Ricci et al., 1989). As indicated previously, even plant growth-promoting rhizobacteria have been shown to protect plants against foliar diseases (Wei et al., 1991).

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