

## Grassy Shoot Disease on Sugarcane



Grassy Shoot disease is one of the most important diseases caused by *Phytoplasma* and affecting sugarcane crop throughout its crop growth stages. It is observed in many states of India. This disease causes severe damage to the ratoon crop.

### Symptoms

- This disease is characterized by the production of numerous small and thin tillers having narrow leaves with or without albinism.
- Diseased plants exhibit varying degrees of loss of chlorophyll, ranging from total green to white. Premature and excessive tillering gives a crowded appearance like 'grass' to the clump.
- The root system of the affected plant reduced and plants are usually reduced in height (stunted growth). Affected clumps hardly produce one or two weak canes.
- In some cases, there is also formation of aerial roots at the lower nodes.
- Secondary infection on the full-grown canes shows side sprouting and yellowing.



### Transmission

This disease transmitted through diseased seed material, stools, mechanically by Cutting knives and also through insect –Aphids.

### Management

- Use of healthy diseased free seed collected from seed nursery.
- Roguing of affected stools and destruction – Mass eradication.
- Head therapy: seed material should be treated with moist hot air (54°C hr, 150min.).
- Ratooning of affected crop must be avoided.
- Crop rotation may be employed to reduce inoculum in the field
- Control of insect pests at right time.