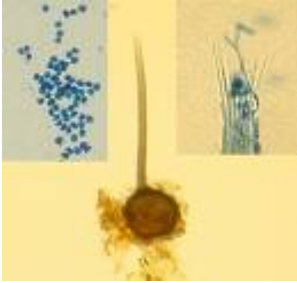


Mold of the Month March 2008

Ceratocystis fimbriata



Perithecia with very long apical beaks



Colony

Colony Description

The growth rate of *Ceratocystis fimbriata* is fairly rapid. Colonies reach to 4cm diameter in 10 days on MEA. The surface is hyaline at first. It often becomes light brown later. The texture is loosely cottony.

Microscopic Morphology

Ceratocystis fimbriata is characterized by ellipsoidal ascospores, flattened on one side and surrounded by a sheath with a hat-shaped rim. The teleomorph are formed by small globose perithecia with very long apical beaks. There are numerous asci with 1-celled colorless spores within the perithecia. Chlamydospores are produced too. They are usually 1-celled or in short chains.

Ecology

Ceratocystis fimbriata is worldwide distributed. As a parasite or saprophyte, it occurs mostly on the bark and wood. Some species cause a black rot of roots and stems of sweet potatoes. Some of them are blue-staining wood-inhabiting fungi. *Ceratocystis fimbriata* is dispersed by wind, rain and insects.

Health Effect

Ceratocystis fimbriata is primarily a xylem pathogen. On trees, infection typically occurs through fresh wounds. Root infections are also common. The fungus causes dark reddish-brown to purple or black staining in the xylem. No negative health effects on humans have been noted.