

## **DISEASES OF MAJOR MEDICINAL PLANTS**

by **K. K. JANARDHANAN**

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Despite the discovery and the wide-spread use of synthetic drugs, plants continue to be an important source of medicine throughout the world, particularly in the developing countries. The demand for them is so high that their collection from nature is far from sufficient to meet the need of the industry. Many pharmaceutical firms, particularly the ayurvedic industry, are therefore resorting to large scale cultivation of medicinal plants needed by them.

One problem faced by the cultivators is the diseases that occur in the medicinal plants. In this book, the common diseases occurring in sixteen important medicinal plants are mentioned. Various diseases, their symptoms, causal organisms and methods of control are described briefly. Some important local medicinal plants are not included, as no major diseases are reported in them. For controlling the diseases, various methods such as use of seeds from disease-resistant plants, crop rotation, wide spacing, avoidance of certain types of land while cultivating, certain simple agricultural practices like controlled watering, etc., are recommended at appropriate places. However, spraying of different types of fungicidal and insecticidal chemicals are also seen to be recommended for certain diseases. Although this might have been recommended for want of any other better control measures, one will have to be advised to think twice before resorting to this method, as this may result in the sprayed chemicals also finding their way to the human body through the drugs prepared with these plants.

This timely, well illustrated book would be useful to all those who are interested in the medicinal plants and their diseases, particularly to those who are concerned with their large scale cultivation to meet the demand of the fast growing natural drug industry.

**K. S. Manilal**