

Decline of date palm offshoots infected with *Chalara paradoxo* in Riyadh region

*Molan, Y.Y., **Al-Obeed, R.S., **Harhash, M.M. and *El-Hussieni, S.

*Plant protection- Plant production- College of Agriculture-King Saud University

P.O. Box 2460 Riyadh 11451

Abstract. The objective of this study was to investigate the decline of new transplanted date- palm (*Phoenix dactylifera* L.) offshoots in new orchards. Samples of diseased rachis, and fronds were collected from three to five years old date- palm offshoots in an orchard in Horameila area. Symptoms on the date- palm offshoots included dry bone of outer leaves with crack and break of blade apart from fiber tissues with developed fungal black spores on the infected tissues. The sampled date- palm offshoots were the following cultivars: Naboot saif, Barhi, Nabtat Ally, Sagie, Meanifi, Roshody, Maigfizi and Rothan. A fungus was isolated from the symptomatic tissues of the collected samples on Potato Dextrose Agar medium plates, which were incubated at room-temperature. Slides prepared from the isolated fungus were examined under the light microscope and the fungus was identified as *Chalara paradoxo*. Pathogenicity of the fungus was tested in fronds of date palm- offshoots of some of the pervious cultivars. Disease severity index was determined using a scale ranged from (0-5). Results of the pathogenicity test indicated significant susceptibility differences among the tested cultivars to *C. paradoxo*, the cause of black scorch in date palm trees.