JETIR.ORG ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue
JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)
An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

EARLY DETECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF ARECANUT PLANT AND SEED DISEASES

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Abstract: Arecanut cultivation is a significant aspect of agriculture in many tropical regions. However, it is often threatened by various plant and seed diseases that affect yield and crop quality. This research introduces a deep learning-based framework, utilising a Residual Neural Network (ResNet) architecture, to enable early and accurate detection of arecanut diseases. The system analyses images of arecanut plants to identify infections and offers recommended treatments, helping farmers mitigate potential crop losses. This approach integrates conventional farming practices with advanced AI technologies, fostering sustainable agriculture.

***Index Terms* - Arecanut, Deep Learning, Convolutional Neural Networks, ResNet, Agriculture AI, Early Diagnosis.**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Arecanut (Areca catechu), known botanically as *Areca catechu*, is an economically vital crop in several parts of South and Southeast Asia. Despite its importance, arecanut farming is highly susceptible to diseases such as bud rot, yellow leaf disease, and stem bleeding. These conditions can severely damage crops and reduce productivity. Traditionally, farmers rely on visual inspection to identify symptoms, a process that can be inaccurate and inefficient.

Recent advancements in artificial intelligence (AI), particularly in deep learning and image recognition, offer more efficient alternatives to traditional methods. Techniques such as convolutional neural networks (CNNs) can identify subtle symptoms in plant images with high accuracy. When integrated with mobile applications and Internet of Things (IOT) support, these tools can provide real-time alerts and improve disease control strategies. This research leverages such modern approaches to empower farmers, especially those with small to medium holdings, with accurate and accessible diagnostic tools for protecting their crops.

II. EXISTING SYSTEM

In existing agricultural practices, disease identification primarily depends on visual inspections by experts or experienced farmers. While this method can occasionally be effective, it is heavily influenced by external factors such as lighting conditions, the observer's skill, and the disease's progression stage. These variables often lead to misdiagnoses or delays in treatment, which can worsen the impact on crops.

Moreover, most conventional systems lack the automation necessary for real-time intervention or large-scale deployment. Without automated decision support tools, farmers face challenges in responding promptly to outbreaks, resulting in significant productivity losses. To address these shortcomings, the development of intelligent, data-driven systems is essential for modernising disease detection in arecanut farming

III. PROPOSED SYSTEM

This research introduces an automated disease recognition framework specifically designed for arecanut crops. The system uses a deep convolutional neural network based on the ResNet architecture to classify images of plant parts such as leaves, nuts, and trunks. A comprehensive dataset comprising both healthy and diseased samples is used to train the model, ensuring broad generalisation capabilities.

The system includes:

- A mobile and web-based interface for image uploads
- A backend engine that processes inputs and predicts disease types
- Integration with weather APIs to support disease outbreak forecasting

The system offers real-time results with over 90% accuracy and user-friendly interfaces for farmers.

IV. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Dataset Collection

The dataset for this project consists of over 11,000 labelled images of arecanut plants, captured under various conditions and representing both healthy and diseased states. The images were sourced from field visits and public agricultural databases. To enhance model performance, the dataset was balanced to avoid class bias, and images were preprocessed to minimise background noise and standardise input dimensions.

3.2 Model Design

The system utilises a deep residual convolutional neural network (ResNet), chosen for its ability to train effectively on large-scale image datasets without suffering from vanishing gradients. The architecture includes residual skip connections, which allow the network to learn deep feature representations and improve classification accuracy even with subtle visual cues.

3.3 System Workflow

The platform follows a client-server architecture and is composed of the following modules:

- **User Interface**: A web and mobile front-end enables users to upload images easily.
- **Prediction Engine**: The server-side model handles preprocessing, classifies the input, and returns the prediction.
- **External Services**: The system connects to weather APIs to enhance disease prediction by correlating climate patterns with infection likelihood.

Together, these components create a seamless experience for end users, supporting quick disease detection and preventive action.

V. PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENT

The performance requirements for the proposed system focus on ensuring accuracy, efficiency, and reliability in disease classification for areca nut leaves. The system aims to achieve a classification accuracy of at least 90%, with a processing time of no more than 2 seconds per image on standard hardware. It should handle batch processing of at least 50 images simultaneously with minimal latency in a GPU-enabled environment, such as Google Colab. Scalability is a key requirement, enabling the model to manage datasets exceeding 11,000 images without significant performance degradation. Robustness is essential, ensuring effective performance across varied lighting conditions, angles, and noise levels, with an accuracy drop of less than 5%. Additionally, the system must generalise well to unseen data, accommodating different varieties of areca nut leaves and diseases. Efficient resource utilisation is critical, with the system optimising GPU and CPU usage to ensure computational overhead does not exceed 80% of available resources. Reliability is prioritized for continuous operation, maintaining consistent performance over 24 hours in real-time monitoring scenarios. Furthermore, the false positive and false negative rates should remain below 5%, and energy efficiency should be ensured by optimizing computational processes to minimize resource consumption, particularly in GPU-intensive tasks.

Efficient resource usage is another critical aspect, with the model engineered to maintain GPU/CPU load under 80% during peak operations. To support real-time use cases, the system is structured for continuous operation, maintaining 24-hour uptime. It also keeps false positive and false negative rates below 5%, reducing misclassification risk. Power consumption and computation time are optimized, especially during intensive image classification tasks, ensuring sustainable performance in field conditions.

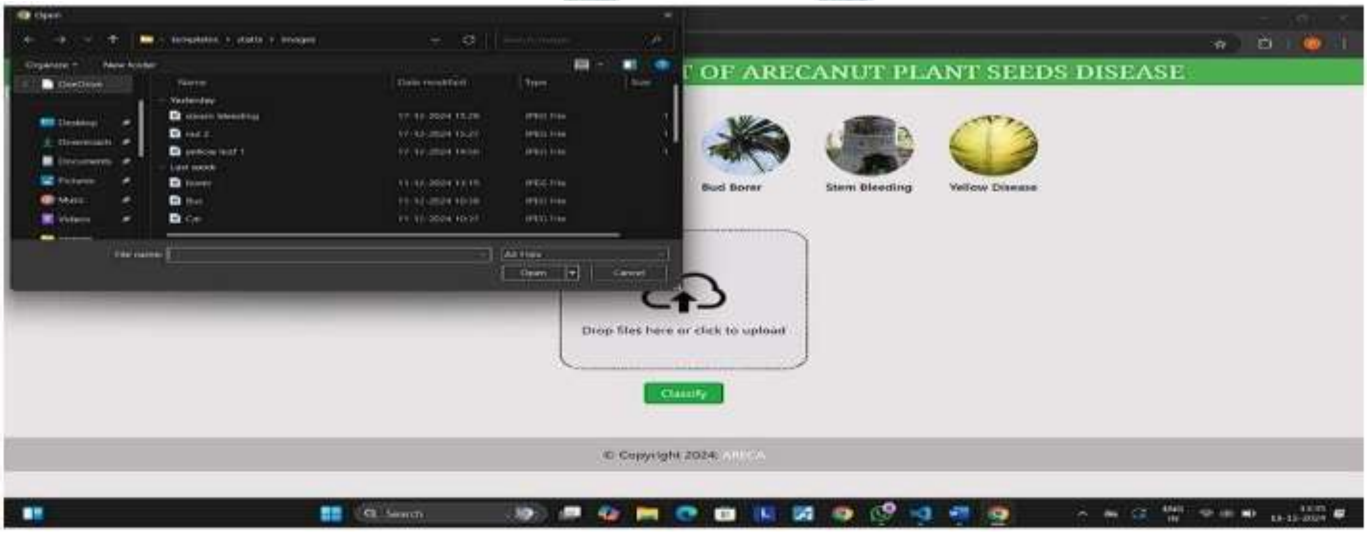
VI. TESTING

4.1 Home Page Interface

The application interface is designed for simplicity and clarity. The homepage prominently displays the title, "Early Detection and Management of Arecanut Plant Seed Diseases," emphasising the core objective. Users can browse through six visual categories: Healthy Leaf, Healthy Nut, Healthy Trunk, Bud Borer, Stem Bleeding, and Yellow Leaf Disease. Each category is paired with a representative image for easy recognition.

4.2 Image Selection

Users can choose images from their device's gallery or file manager. Once selected, the image is automatically uploaded, and the system begins the preprocessing phase. With a single tap, users can initiate classification, and prediction outcomes are instantly shown on-screen. The intuitive design supports smooth navigation for users with limited technical expertise.

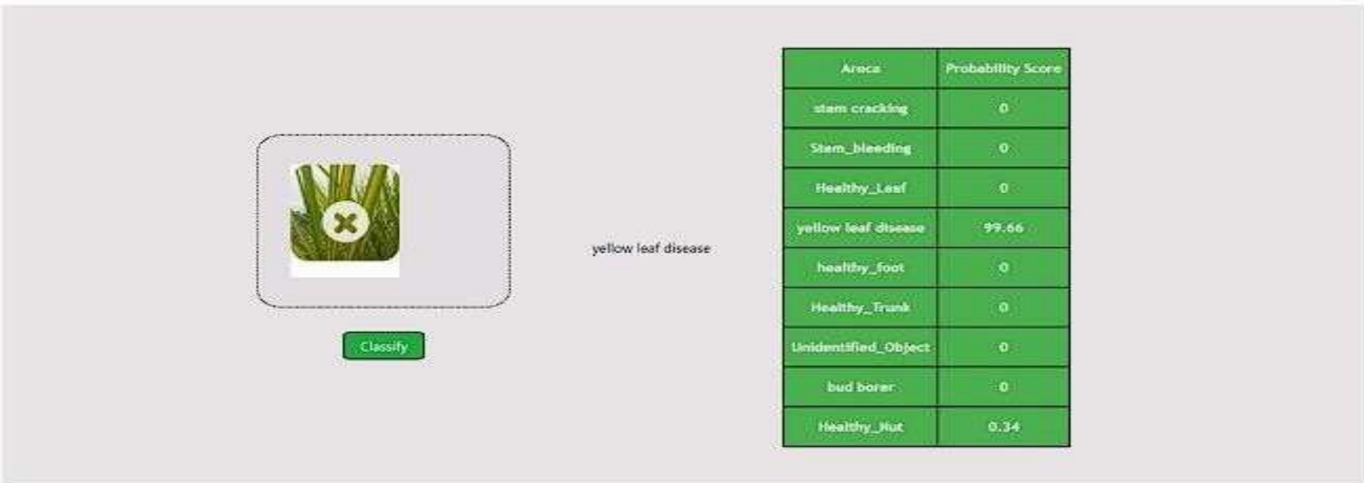


4.3 SELECTION OF IMAGE

Upon uploading, the selected image is rendered within the interface to confirm successful loading. A visible "Classify" button appears below the image, enabling the user to proceed with the diagnosis. This visual confirmation reduces user uncertainty and ensures that the correct image is being analysed before prediction.

4.4 DISEASE IDENTIFICATION

The uploaded image is processed through the trained deep learning model, which evaluates key visual indicators such as colour distribution, texture, and structural patterns. The system assigns a probability score to each disease category and selects the most likely match. For example, in a test case, the model predicted "Yellow Leaf Disease" with a confidence score of 99.66%, while other categories like “Healthy Nut” received much lower probabilities. This output assists users in making informed decisions regarding plant treatment.



VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The proposed model achieved over 90% accuracy in disease classification. Testing methodologies included unit testing, integration testing, and system testing to validate the reliability and usability of the platform.The confusion matrix and loss plots demonstrated the system’s robustness with minimal overfitting. Real-world testing with farmers confirmed the system’s effectiveness and practicality. The proposed model demonstrated strong performance metrics during validation:

- **Accuracy:** Above 90%
- **Detection Time:** Less than 5 seconds per image
- **System Uptime:** 99.9%
- **Concurrent User Capacity:** 500+

VIII. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

This research illustrates the feasibility of applying deep learning to agricultural disease detection, particularly for arecanut crops. By combining machine vision with AI, the system supports farmers in timely disease management, enhancing productivity and sustainability.

Future directions include:

- Implementation of Vision Transformers for improved accuracy
- IoT integration for real-time monitoring
- Multilingual interfaces
- Expansion to other crop types using transfer learning.

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