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PLANT DISEASE DETECTION

A CNN-Based Approach for Early Disease Detection and Classification

[1]Mr.Raviraj Sunil Lavhate, [2]Mr.Viraj Satish Patil, [3]Mr.Anurag Neeraj Dhere, [4]Prof. Jagannath B Metkari
[1,2,3]Student, [4]Assistant Professor
[1,2,3,4]Department of Data Science,
[1,2,3,4]D.Y. Patil College of Engineering and Technology, Kolhapur, India

Abstract: Agriculture is very important for food supply and the economy. However, plant diseases are a big problem for farmers because they can reduce the amount and quality of crops. Finding and treating plant diseases early is important to avoid major losses. Normally, farmers or experts check plants by looking at them directly, but this method is slow, hard work, and sometimes incorrect, especially when farming on a large scale. To solve this problem, we created a system that uses Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), a type of deep learning model that is very good at understanding images. Our model can look at pictures of plant leaves and detect if the plant is healthy or has a disease. It also tells the user the name of the disease and suggests how to treat and prevent it. We built a web application using Flask, where users can easily upload a leaf image. The CNN model quickly analyzes the image and gives accurate results. We used the PlantVillage dataset with over 54,000 images of different plant diseases to train the model. Our model achieved about 95% accuracy, showing it can detect plant diseases very well. This system can help farmers make faster and better decisions about their crops, reduce the use of chemicals, and improve overall farm productivity. In the future, we plan to add more types of plants, create a mobile app for easy use in the field, and connect the system with IoT devices for automatic monitoring. Overall, this project shows that AI can make farming smarter, more efficient, and more sustainable.

***Index Terms* - Plant Disease Detection, Deep Learning, Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN), Image Classification, PlantVillage Dataset, Web Application.**

1) INTRODUCTION

Agriculture plays a critical role in ensuring food security and economic stability across the globe. However, one of the major challenges faced by farmers is the prevalence of plant diseases, which can devastate crops and lead to significant financial losses. The impact of plant diseases goes beyond yield reduction—it affects the quality of the produce, disrupts supply chains, and influences market prices Early detection of plant diseases is crucial. Prompt intervention can prevent the spread of diseases, reducing the dependence on excessive use of pesticides and minimizing harmful environmental effects. Moreover, early identification helps farmers make timely and informed decisions regarding crop management, such as isolating infected plants, modifying irrigation schedules, or applying targeted treatments. Therefore, there is a strong need for efficient, accurate, and scalable solutions to detect plant diseases and assist in crop health management.

Traditionally, the identification and diagnosis of plant diseases have relied heavily on manual inspection by trained agricultural professionals or farmers. While this method has proven effective in many situations, it comes with several limitations such as it is time-consuming and labor-intensive, making it impractical for large-scale farming, it is prone to human error, particularly when symptoms are subtle or diseases are similar in appearance, it often results in delayed intervention, which can increase crop loss and treatment costs. Although manual diagnosis has been the standard approach, it is not efficient enough to meet the demands of modern agriculture, especially with the increasing scale and complexity of farming operations.

In recent years, advancements in machine learning and computer vision have enabled the development of automated plant disease detection systems. This project leverages the capabilities of Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs)—a specialized deep learning architecture highly effective in image classification tasks. The proposed system is a web-based application that allows users to upload an image of a plant leaf. The CNN model analyzes the image to detect and classify any disease present. Upon identification, the application also provides the detailed diagnosis of the disease, its symptoms and causes, recommended treatment and preventive measures.

Designed to be user-friendly and accessible, this tool enables even non-experts to accurately detect plant diseases. By empowering users with critical insights, the system supports better disease management, healthier crops, and more sustainable farming practices.

2) LITERATURE REVIEW

Elhoucine Elfatimi & Recep Eryigit [1] proposed a model which provides a comprehensive review of the application of CNNs in plant leaf disease detection, covering various implementations and their effectiveness. It highlights the need for large, highquality labeled datasets and powerful computational resources to achieve high accuracy. A major disadvantage is that these models often struggle to generalize well across different plant species and environmental conditions due to their high sensitivity to variations in the data.
Haut JM, Paoletti M, Plaza J, Plaza A [2] proposed a model which use of hyperspectral imaging for plant disease detection, processed using cloud-based K-means clustering. This approach captures more detailed spectral information than regular images, improving the detection accuracy of subtle disease symptoms. However, hyperspectral imaging is expensive, and cloud-based implementations require stable internet connectivity, which can be challenging in many agricultural settings.
Kamilaris A, Prenafeta-Boldú FX [3] proposed survey paper covers various deep learning applications in agriculture, including plant disease detection using CNNs and RNNs. It discusses the potential of these methods in automating agricultural tasks but points out significant drawbacks like the high need for data and computational power. Additionally, the models often struggle with real-world variability, such as changing environmental conditions, limiting their practical deployment in diverse agricultural scenarios.
Kawasaki Y, Uga H, Kagiwada S, Iyatomi H [4] proposed the use of CNNs for diagnosing viral plant diseases through leaf images, showing that CNNs can automate the identification process. However, the models face difficulties in differentiating between visually similar diseases and require extensive datasets representing various disease stages and conditions, which are often not readily available.
Liu B, Zhang Y, He D, Li Y [5] proposed deep CNNs to classify diseases in apple leaves, achieving high accuracy in disease identification. Nonetheless, the model's performance is heavily affected by variations in natural lighting and background conditions, common in real-world settings. Moreover, the model struggles with noisy or incomplete data, which limits its effectiveness outside controlled environments.

3) METHODOLOGY AND SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION

1.Dataset Selection

We used the PlantVillage dataset, which includes more than 54,000 images of plant leaves. The dataset covers both healthy and diseased leaves from several plant species, making it a great choice for training our model.

2.Preparing the Images

Before feeding the images into the model, we resized them to a consistent size so they could be processed efficiently. We also applied some basic image augmentation techniques like rotation and flipping. This helped our model learn better by simulating different viewing angles and conditions.

3.Building the CNN Model

We designed a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) from scratch. It included layers for detecting features in the images, like edges, textures, and color patterns. These layers were followed by pooling layers to reduce the size of the data, and then fully connected layers that made the final prediction about the disease.

4.Training the Model

The dataset was divided into training, validation, and test sets. We trained the model using the Adam optimizer and fine-tuned the parameters over several rounds (epochs). Throughout training, we monitored the model's performance to avoid overfitting and make sure it generalized well to new images.

5.Testing and Accuracy

After training, we tested the model using unseen images to evaluate how well it could identify diseases. Our CNN achieved about 95% accuracy, which shows it can reliably detect and classify plant diseases.

6.Creating the Web Application

To make the system user-friendly, we built a web app using Flask. This app allows users to upload an image of a leaf. The image is then analyzed by the trained CNN model, and the app displays the result—either identifying the disease or confirming that the plant is healthy. It also provides basic treatment advice based on the diagnosis.

7.Looking Ahead

In the future, we aim to expand the system to support more plant types and diseases. We're also planning to build a mobile version for farmers to use directly in the field. Another goal is to link the system with IoT devices to automatically monitor plant health over time.

System Architecture

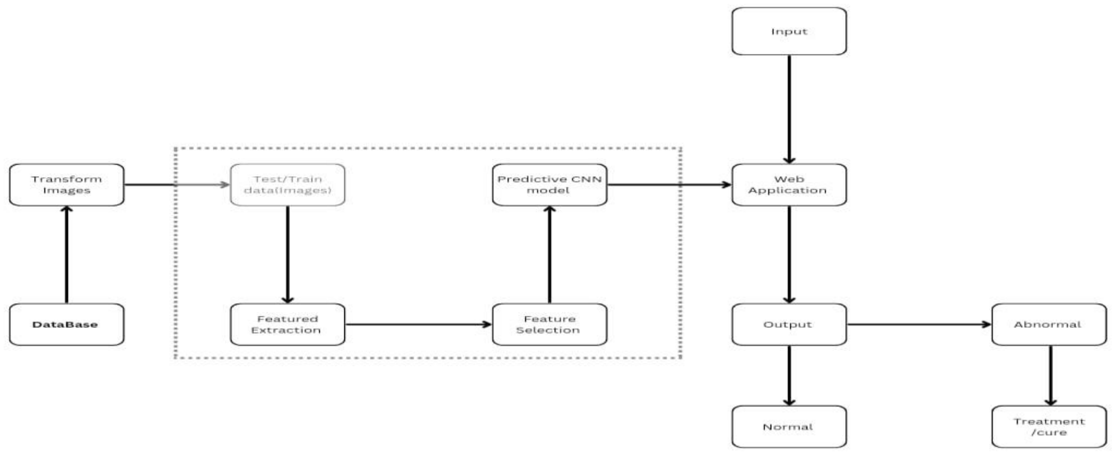

Fig 1 : System Architecture for plant disease detection

Implementation Details:

Step 1: Start

Step 2: Load the Dataset

- Use the PlantVillage dataset containing 39 classes of healthy and diseased leaf images.
- Perform dataset preprocessing (resizing images to 224x224 pixels, normalizing pixel values).

Step 3: Build the CNN Model

- Design a CNN architecture with:

4 Convolutional blocks (each block includes Conv2D + BatchNorm + ReLU + MaxPooling layers), Flatten the output. Fully Connected Dense Layers with Dropout for regularization, Final output layer with 39 neurons

(one for each class) using Softmax activation.

Step 4: Train the CNN Model

- Set loss function as Cross-Entropy Loss.
- Choose an optimizer like Adam.
- Train the model on the training dataset.
- Validate the model using the validation dataset after each epoch to monitor overfitting.

Step 5: Save the Trained Model

- After achieving good accuracy (~95%), save the trained model for inference

Step 6: Build the Web Application (Flask Backend)

- Create a Flask web server.
- Design routes/pages: o Home Page o Image Upload Page (AI Engine) o Market Page (Supplement Info)

Step 7: Accept User Input (Image Upload)

- Allow users to upload a plant leaf image from the web interface.

Step 8: Image Preprocessing on Upload

- Open and preprocess the uploaded image: o Resize to 224x224 pixels. o Normalize the image.

Step 9: Perform Disease Prediction

- Pass the processed image to the loaded CNN model.
- Predict the disease class based on maximum probability.

Step 10: Retrieve Disease Information

- Use pandas to read CSV files containing:

Disease name, Description, Symptoms, Recommended preventive measures.

- Match the predicted class and fetch related information.

Step 11: Display Results to User

- Show the disease prediction result along with treatment advice and preventive tips on the web page.

Step 12: End

4) RESULTS ANALYSIS

- Model Accuracy: ~95%
- Prediction Latency:<1 sec
- UI/UX: Fully responsive
- Supported Crops: Apple, Tomato, Potato, Grape, etc.
- Why we used CNN model

Aspects	CNN	RNN
Input Type	Works best with image data	Designed for sequential data
Feature Extraction	Automatically detects spatial Patterns (edges, textures) via convolutional filters	Detects temporal patterns or dependencies across time steps
Relevance	Ideal for image classification like plant disease recognition	Not suitable for static image classification
Data Dependency	Assumes local spatial correlation (nearby pixels are related)	Assumes temporal correlation (current input depends on previous ones)
Model Efficiency	Efficient for image data; uses less memory and faster to train for image classification	Inefficient for images—requires flattening, leading to high memory usage
Typical Use	Image classification, object detection, image segmentation	Language modelling , speech recognition, sentiment analysis
Training Time	Generally faster for image tasks due to optimized architecture	Slower and less effective for image tasks

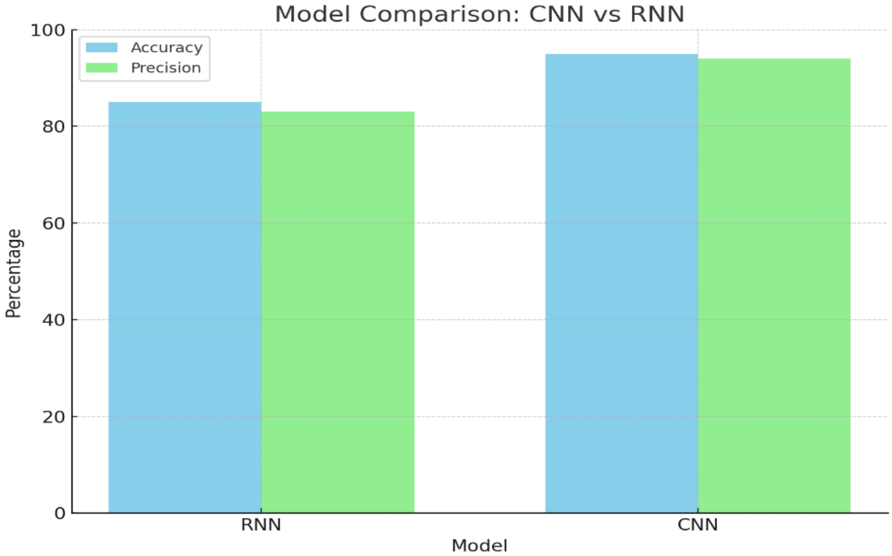

Figure 2: Accuracy and Precision Comparison between RNN and CNN

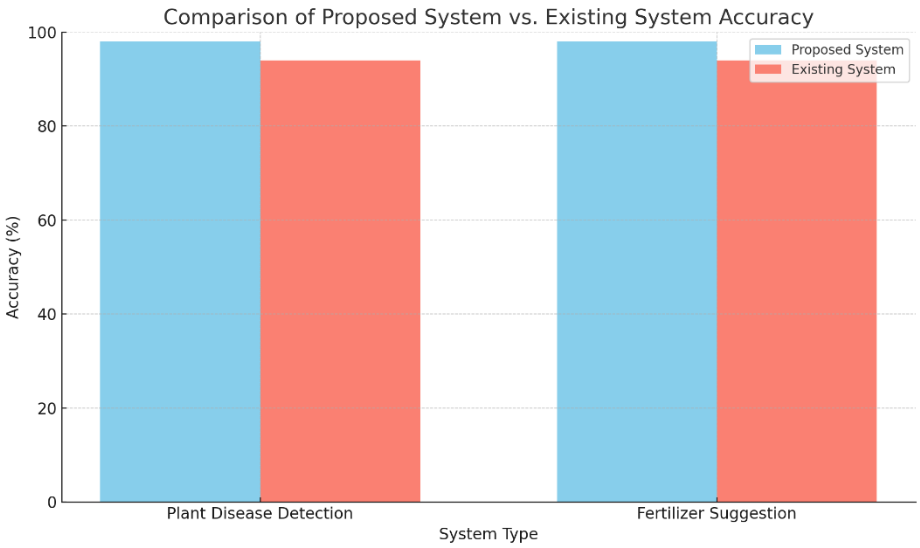

Figure 3: Accuracy Comparison between Proposed System and Existing System

5) Conclusion and Future Work

5.1 Conclusion:

This project successfully shows how deep learning, especially Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), can be used to detect and classify plant diseases from leaf images with high accuracy. By training the CNN model on a large dataset of healthy and diseased plant leaves, we built a system that can quickly and correctly identify various plant diseases. The model achieved around 95% accuracy, proving that it can be a helpful tool for farmers and agricultural experts. Using a simple web application, users can easily upload a leaf image and get instant disease detection results along with useful information on symptoms, causes, and prevention tips.
Overall, this system helps in early detection of diseases, which means farmers can take action faster and prevent bigger losses. It also reduces the need for excessive use of pesticides, supporting healthier and more sustainable farming. In the future, this project can be improved by including more plant species, creating a mobile app for field use, and adding features like severity detection and real-time monitoring through IoT devices. This project is a step towards making farming smarter and better with the help of artificial intelligence.

5.2 Future Scope:

In the future, this project can be improved by adding more plant types and diseases to make the system more useful for different farmers. A mobile application can be developed so that farmers can easily use it in the fields with their smartphones. The model can also be connected to IoT devices like cameras and sensors for real-time plant health monitoring. Additionally, features like detecting the severity of the disease and suggesting specific treatments can be added. Making the system more explainable and accurate under different weather and lighting conditions will help in building even more trust and usability for farmers around the world.

6) REFERENCES

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