



## Grey Mold of Strawberry and Its Management

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Strawberry is an important fruit crop grown worldwide for its taste, nutritional value, and commercial importance. However, its production is severely affected by various diseases, among which Grey Mold caused by *Botrytis cinerea* is the most destructive. This disease mainly affects fruits, flowers, and leaves, especially under humid conditions, leading to heavy economic losses. Effective management of grey mold is essential to maintain both yield and fruit quality.

### Objectives of the Study

- To understand the causes and symptoms of grey mold in strawberry
- To study the environmental factors influencing disease development
- To evaluate its economic impact on strawberry production
- To explore effective management strategies
- To promote sustainable disease control practices

### Symptoms of Grey Mold

#### 1. On Fruits

Soft, light brown spots appear on fruits  
Infected fruits develop grey, fuzzy fungal growth  
Fruits rot quickly and become unmarketable

#### 2. On Flowers

Blossom blight occurs, leading to flower drop.  
Infection reduces fruit setting

#### 3. On Leaves and Stems

Brown lesions may develop  
Under severe conditions, plant vigor decreases

### Favorable Conditions for Disease Development

1. High Humidity (above 90%)
2. Moderate Temperature (15–25°C)
3. Poor Air Circulation
4. Frequent Rainfall or Overhead Irrigation

### Economic Impact of Grey Mold

#### 1. Yield Loss

Significant reduction in fruit production due to rot

#### 2. Quality Reduction

Infected fruits lose market value

#### 3. Increased Production Cost

More investment in fungicides and labor

#### 4. Post-Harvest Losses

Disease continues even after harvest, causing storage losses

### Management of Grey Mold

#### 1. Cultural Practices

- Maintain proper plant spacing for good air circulation
- Remove infected plant parts regularly
- Avoid overhead irrigation
- Use mulching to reduce soil contact

#### 2. Resistant Varieties

- Select varieties with tolerance to grey mold (if available)

#### 3. Chemical Control

Apply fungicides such as:

- Carbendazim
- Captan
- Iprodione
- Spray at flowering and fruiting stages

#### 4. Biological Control

- Use bio-agents like *Trichoderma* spp.
- Helps in reducing fungal infection naturally

#### 5. Integrated Disease Management (IDM)

- Combine cultural, biological, and chemical methods
- Ensure minimal environmental impact

### Government Support and Awareness

- Promotion of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Training programs for farmers
- Support for protected cultivation (polyhouse farming)
- Subsidies on bio-control agents

### Problems in Managing Grey Mold

- Lack of awareness among farmers
- Improper fungicide application
- Favorable climatic conditions for disease spread
- Limited availability of resistant varieties

### Areas of Improvement

- Development of resistant cultivars
- Increased farmer training programs
- Adoption of modern technologies like precision farming
- Encouragement of organic disease management

### Conclusion

Grey mold of strawberry is a serious disease that can cause major economic losses if not managed properly. By adopting integrated management practices, including cultural, biological, and chemical methods, farmers can effectively control the disease. Sustainable approaches not only reduce losses but also improve fruit quality and profitability.

### References

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