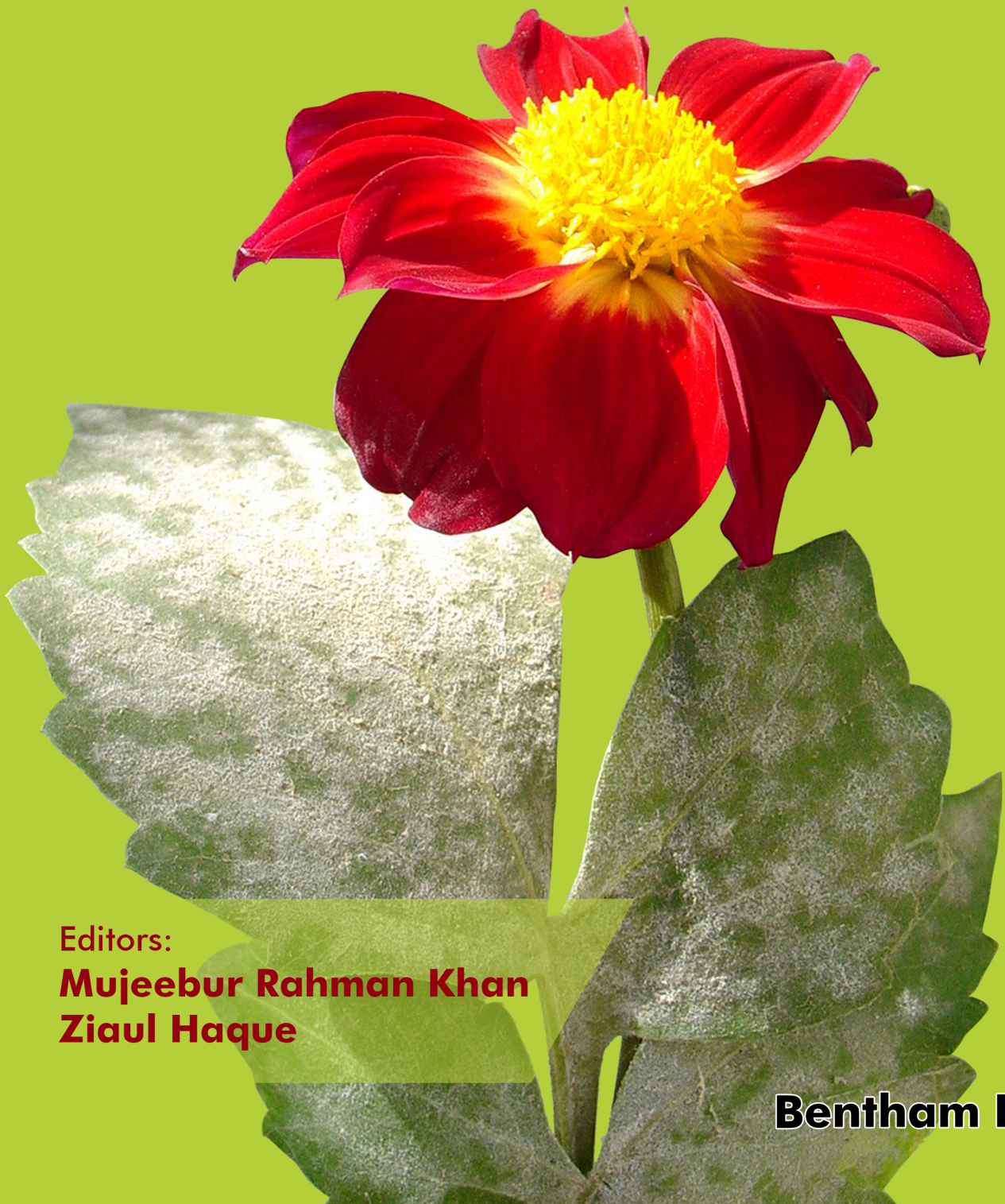


# **DISEASES OF ORNAMENTAL, AROMATIC AND MEDICINAL PLANTS**



Editors:  
**Mujeebur Rahman Khan**  
**Ziaul Haque**

**Bentham Books**

# **Diseases of Ornamental, Aromatic and Medicinal Plants**

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## CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	i
PREFACE .....	ii
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS .....	iii
<b>CHAPTER 1 MAJOR DISEASES OF CUT FLOWERS</b> .....	1
<i>Harjot Singh Sidhu and Deepak Kumar</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
<b>DISEASES OF AZALEA</b> .....	3
Anthracnose .....	3
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	3
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	3
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	4
<i>Management</i> .....	4
Root Rot and Vascular Wilt .....	4
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	4
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	4
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	4
<i>Management</i> .....	5
Root-Rot .....	5
Bacterial Wilt .....	6
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	6
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	6
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	6
<i>Management</i> .....	6
Bacterial Blight .....	6
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	6
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	7
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	7
<i>Management</i> .....	7
<b>DISEASES OF CARNATION</b> .....	7
Fusarium Wilt .....	7
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	7
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	9
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	9
<i>Management</i> .....	9
Stem/Root Rot .....	9
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	9
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	10
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	10
<i>Management</i> .....	12
Leaf Spot .....	12
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	12
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	12
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	12
<i>Management</i> .....	12
Botrytis Blight .....	12
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	12
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	13
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	13

<i>Management</i> .....	15
Fusarium Rot .....	15
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	15
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	15
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	15
<i>Management</i> .....	16
Fasciation .....	16
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	16
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	16
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	16
<i>Management</i> .....	17
<b>DISEASES OF CHINA ASTER</b> .....	17
Botrytis Blight .....	17
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	17
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	17
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	17
<i>Management</i> .....	18
Fusarium Root-rot and Wilt .....	18
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	18
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	18
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	19
<i>Management</i> .....	19
<i>Rhizoctonia</i> Stem and Root-rot .....	19
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	19
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	20
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	20
<i>Management</i> .....	20
Aster Yellows .....	20
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	20
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	20
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	21
<i>Management</i> .....	21
<b>DISEASES OF CHRYSANTHEMUM</b> .....	21
<i>Alternaria</i> Leaf Spot .....	21
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	21
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	21
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	21
<i>Management</i> .....	21
<i>Sclerotinia</i> Stem Rot .....	22
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	22
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	22
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	22
<i>Management</i> .....	22
White Rust .....	23
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	23
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	23
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	23
<i>Management</i> .....	23
Brown Rust .....	23
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	23
Botrytis Blight .....	24

<i>Aetiology</i> .....	24
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	24
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	24
<i>Management</i> .....	24
Root Rot .....	24
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	24
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	25
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	25
<i>Management</i> .....	25
Fasciation .....	26
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	26
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	26
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	26
<i>Management</i> .....	26
Viral Disease .....	26
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	27
<i>Biology and Transmission</i> .....	27
<i>Management</i> .....	27
<b>DISEASES OF GERBERA</b> .....	27
Botrytis Blight .....	27
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	27
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	27
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	28
<i>Management</i> .....	28
Powdery Mildew .....	28
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	28
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	28
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	28
<i>Management</i> .....	28
Fusarium Rot .....	29
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	29
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	29
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	29
<i>Management</i> .....	29
Viral Diseases .....	29
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	29
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	30
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	30
<i>Management</i> .....	30
<b>DISEASES OF MARIGOLD</b> .....	30
Damping Off and Root-rot .....	30
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	30
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	31
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	31
<i>Management</i> .....	32
<i>Alternaria</i> Leaf Spot and Flower Blight .....	32
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	32
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	32
<i>Biology and epidemiology</i> .....	33
<i>Management</i> .....	33
White Mould .....	33

<i>Aetiology</i> .....	33
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	34
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	34
<i>Management</i> .....	35
Botrytis Flower Blight .....	35
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	35
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	35
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	35
<i>Management</i> .....	35
Rust .....	36
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	36
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	36
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	36
<i>Management</i> .....	36
<b>DISEASES OF ORCHID</b> .....	36
Black Spot .....	36
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	36
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	37
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	37
<i>Management</i> .....	37
Shoot Rot or Top Rot .....	37
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	37
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	37
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	38
<i>Management</i> .....	38
Black Rot .....	38
Brown Speck and Blight .....	38
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	38
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	38
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	39
<i>Management</i> .....	39
<b>DISEASES OF ROSES</b> .....	39
Powdery Mildew .....	39
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	39
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	39
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	40
<i>Management</i> .....	40
Black Spot .....	41
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	41
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	41
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	42
<i>Management</i> .....	42
Rust .....	42
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	42
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	43
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	44
<i>Management</i> .....	44
Botrytis Bud and Twig Blight .....	44
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	44
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	44
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	45

<i>Management</i> .....	45
Anthracnose .....	46
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	46
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	47
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	47
<i>Management</i> .....	47
Mosaic .....	48
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	48
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	48
<i>Ecology and Disease Transmission</i> .....	48
<i>Management</i> .....	48
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	48
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	50
<b>CHAPTER 2 MAJOR DISEASES OF POTTED FLOWERS</b> .....	61
<i>Ziaul Haque and Mujeebur Rahman Khan</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	61
<b>AZALEA AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	62
Phytophthora Root Rot, Dieback and Crown Canker .....	63
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	63
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	63
<i>Disease Cycles and Epidemiology</i> .....	64
<i>Management</i> .....	64
Pythium Root Rot .....	64
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	64
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	64
<i>Disease Cycles and Epidemiology</i> .....	65
<i>Management</i> .....	65
Cylindrocladium Blight and Wilt .....	65
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	65
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	66
<i>Disease Cycles and Epidemiology</i> .....	67
<i>Management</i> .....	67
Leaf and Flowers Galls .....	67
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	67
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	68
<i>Disease Cycles and Epidemiology</i> .....	68
<i>Management</i> .....	69
Rhizoctonia Root Rots and Web Blight .....	69
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	69
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	69
<i>Disease Cycle and Epidemiology</i> .....	69
<i>Management</i> .....	70
<b>BEGONIA AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	70
<i>Fusarium wilt</i> .....	70
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	70
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	71
<i>Disease Dispersals</i> .....	71
<i>Management</i> .....	71
Grey Mould .....	71
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	71



<i>Symptoms</i> .....	71
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Dispersal</i> .....	72
<i>Management</i> .....	72
Powdery Mildew .....	72
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	72
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	72
<i>Epidemiology</i> .....	73
<i>Management</i> .....	73
Pythium Root Rot .....	73
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	73
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	74
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Dispersals</i> .....	74
<i>Management</i> .....	74
Bacterial Spot or Bacterial Blight .....	74
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	74
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	75
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Cycles</i> .....	75
<i>Management</i> .....	75
Clover Yellow Mosaic .....	76
<b>COLEUS AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	76
Botrytis Blight .....	76
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	76
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	77
<i>Disease Cycle and Epidemiology</i> .....	77
<i>Management</i> .....	77
Downy Mildew .....	78
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	78
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	78
<i>Disease Cycle and Epidemiology</i> .....	79
<i>Management</i> .....	79
Rhizoctonia Root and Crown Rot .....	79
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	79
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	80
<i>Disease Cycle and Epidemiology</i> .....	80
<i>Management</i> .....	80
<b>GARDENIA AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	80
Gardenia Canker and Wilt .....	81
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	81
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	81
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Dispersals</i> .....	82
<i>Management</i> .....	82
Myrothecium Leaf Spot .....	82
Powdery Mildew .....	82
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	82
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	83
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Dispersals</i> .....	83
<i>Management</i> .....	83
Rhizoctonia Root Rot and Web Blight .....	83
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	83
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	83
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Dispersals</i> .....	84

<i>Management</i> .....	84
Bacterial Leaf Spot .....	84
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	84
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	84
<i>Epidemiology and Dispersal of Disease</i> .....	84
<i>Management</i> .....	85
<b>POINSETTIA AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	85
Alternaria Leaf Spot .....	85
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	85
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	86
<i>Epidemiology and Dispersal of Disease</i> .....	86
<i>Management</i> .....	86
Anthracnose .....	86
Gray Mould .....	87
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	87
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	87
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Cycle</i> .....	87
<i>Management</i> .....	88
Powdery Mildews .....	88
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	88
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	88
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Cycle</i> .....	89
<i>Management</i> .....	89
Pythium Root Rot .....	89
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	89
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	89
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Cycle</i> .....	90
<i>Management</i> .....	90
Xanthomonas Leaf Spot .....	90
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	90
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	91
<i>Disease Dispersal</i> .....	91
<i>Management</i> .....	91
Poinsettia Mosaic .....	91
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	91
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	91
<i>Transmission</i> .....	92
<i>Management</i> .....	92
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	92
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	92
<b>CHAPTER 3 MAJOR DISEASES OF FLOWERING GEOPHYTES</b> .....	96
<i>Fayaz A. Mohiddin, Zakir Amin, Heena Altaf, Suriya Jan, Shugufta Parveen and Ziaul Haque</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	96
<b>CALADIUM AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	97
Fusarium Tuber Rot .....	98
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	98
<i>Disease Cycle and Epidemiology</i> .....	98
<i>Management</i> .....	99
Pythium Root Rot .....	99

<i>Symptoms</i> .....	99
<i>Epidemiology and Disease Cycle</i> .....	100
<i>Management</i> .....	100
Rhizoctonia Root Rot and Blight .....	100
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	100
<i>Disease Cycle and Epidemiology</i> .....	101
<i>Management</i> .....	101
Bacterial Leaf Spot and Blight .....	101
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	101
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	102
<i>Management</i> .....	102
Dasheen Mosaic Virus .....	102
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	102
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	102
<i>Management</i> .....	103
<b>CYCLAMEN AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	103
Anthracnose .....	105
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	105
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	105
<i>Management</i> .....	105
Grey mould or Botrytis Blight .....	106
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	106
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	106
<i>Management</i> .....	106
Fusarium Wilt .....	107
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	107
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	107
<i>Management</i> .....	107
Powdery Mildew .....	108
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	108
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	108
<i>Management</i> .....	108
Pythium Root Rot .....	108
Bacterial Soft Rot .....	109
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	109
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	109
<i>Management</i> .....	109
Viral Diseases .....	109
<b>DAFFODIL AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	110
Basal Rot .....	110
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	110
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	111
<i>Management</i> .....	111
Fire Disease .....	112
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	112
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	112
<i>Management</i> .....	112
Leaf Blotch .....	112
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	112
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	113
<i>Management</i> .....	113

Smoulder .....	113
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	114
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	114
<i>Management</i> .....	115
White Mould .....	115
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	115
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	115
<i>Management</i> .....	116
Soft Rot .....	116
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	116
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	116
<i>Management</i> .....	117
Viral Disease .....	117
<b>GLADIOLUS AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	117
Botrytis Blight .....	118
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	118
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	119
<i>Management</i> .....	119
<i>Curvularia</i> Spot .....	119
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	120
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	120
<i>Management</i> .....	120
Fusarium Yellows and Corm Rot .....	120
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	121
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	122
<i>Management</i> .....	122
Rust .....	123
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	123
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	123
<i>Management</i> .....	123
Stromatina Rot .....	124
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	124
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	124
<i>Management</i> .....	125
Bacterial Scab .....	125
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	125
<i>Disease Dispersal</i> .....	125
<i>Management</i> .....	125
Bean Yellow Mosaic .....	126
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	126
<i>Biology and Transmission</i> .....	126
<i>Management</i> .....	127
Cucumber Mosaic Virus .....	127
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	127
<i>Biology and Transmission</i> .....	128
<i>Management</i> .....	129
<b>LILY AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	129
Botrytis Blight .....	130
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	130
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	130
<i>Management</i> .....	130

Stump Rot, Foot Rot and Stem Blight .....	131
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	131
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	131
<i>Management</i> .....	131
Root Rot .....	131
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	131
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	132
<i>Management</i> .....	132
Southern Blight/Crown Rot .....	132
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	132
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	132
<i>Management</i> .....	133
Phytoplasma Diseases .....	133
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	133
<i>Biology and Transmission</i> .....	133
<i>Management</i> .....	133
Viral Diseases .....	134
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	134
<i>Transmission</i> .....	134
<i>Management</i> .....	134
<b>TUBEROSE AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	134
Stem Rot .....	135
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	135
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	135
<i>Management</i> .....	135
Leaf Blight or Botrytis Blight .....	136
Blossom Blight .....	136
Alternaria Leaf Spot .....	136
Sclerotium Wilt .....	137
Flower Bud Rot .....	137
Tuberose Mild Mottle Virus .....	137
<b>TULIP AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	137
Tulip Fire .....	138
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	138
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	138
<i>Management</i> .....	139
Fusarium Bulb Rot and Fusarium Basal Rot .....	139
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	139
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	139
<i>Management</i> .....	140
<i>Penicillium</i> Bulb Rot and Blue Mould .....	140
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	140
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	140
<i>Management</i> .....	140
Pythium Root and Bulb Rot .....	141
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	141
<i>Management</i> .....	141
<i>Rhizoctonia</i> Rot and Blight or Gray Bulb Rot .....	142
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	142
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	142
<i>Management</i> .....	142

Bacterial Soft Rot .....	142
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	143
<i>Biology and Epidemiology</i> .....	143
<i>Management</i> .....	143
Viral Diseases .....	143
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	144
<i>Biology and Transmission</i> .....	144
<i>Management</i> .....	144
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	145
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	145
<b>CHAPTER 4 MAJOR DISEASES OF TURF</b> .....	153
<i>Faheem Ahamad and Mujeebur Rahman Khan</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	153
<b>ALGA (EUKARYOTIC ALGAE AND CYANOBACTERIA)</b> .....	154
Symptoms .....	155
Favourable Environmental Conditions .....	155
Management .....	156
<b>ANTHRACNOSE</b> .....	157
Symptoms .....	157
Biology and Life Cycle .....	158
Management .....	159
<b>RHIZOCTONIA INFECTION PATCHES, LEAF AND SHEATH SPOT</b> .....	160
Symptoms .....	160
Biology and Life Cycle .....	161
Management .....	163
<b>DAMPING-OFF</b> .....	164
Symptoms .....	165
Epidemiology .....	165
Management .....	166
<b>PYTHIUM BLIGHT OR GREEN SPOT</b> .....	166
Symptoms .....	167
Biology and Disease Cycle .....	167
Management .....	168
<b>RUST</b> .....	169
Symptoms .....	170
Biology and Disease Cycle .....	170
Management .....	171
<b>POWDERY MILDEW</b> .....	171
Symptoms .....	172
Management .....	172
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	173
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	173
<b>CHAPTER 5 NEMATODE PROBLEMS IN ORNAMENTAL PLANTS</b> .....	182
<i>Mujeebur Rahman Khan, Ziaul Haque, Mohammad Akram and M. Shahid Anwar Ansari</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	182
Nematode Problems in Ornamental Plants .....	183
<b>ANTHURIUM</b> .....	185
Burrowing Nematode ( <i>Radopholus similis</i> ) .....	186
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	186



<i>Nematode Dispersal</i> .....	186
<i>Management</i> .....	186
Foliar Nematode ( <i>Aphelenchoides fragariae</i> ) .....	187
<b>CHRYSANTHEMUM</b> .....	187
Foliar Nematode ( <i>Aphelenchoides ritzemabosi</i> ) .....	188
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	188
<i>Biology and Life Cycle</i> .....	188
<i>Management</i> .....	189
Root-Lesion Nematode ( <i>Pratylenchus</i> Species) .....	189
<b>CROSSANDRA</b> .....	189
Root Lesion Nematode ( <i>Pratylenchus delattrei</i> ) .....	190
Root-knot Nematodes ( <i>Meloidogyne</i> Spp.) .....	190
Other Nematodes .....	190
<b>ROSES</b> .....	191
Root Lesion Nematode ( <i>Pratylenchus</i> Species) .....	191
<i>Management</i> .....	191
Root-knot Nematode ( <i>Meloidogyne</i> Species) .....	192
<i>Management</i> .....	192
<b>TUBEROSE</b> .....	192
Foliar Nematode ( <i>Aphelenchoides</i> Spp.) .....	192
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	193
<i>Biology and Life Cycle</i> .....	193
<i>Management</i> .....	194
Root-knot Nematode ( <i>Meloidogyne</i> Species) .....	194
<i>Management</i> .....	194
<b>ORCHID</b> .....	195
Foliar Nematode ( <i>Aphelenchoides</i> Species) .....	195
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	195
<i>Biology and Life Cycle</i> .....	196
<i>Management</i> .....	196
<b>GLADIOLUS</b> .....	196
<b>GERBERA</b> .....	197
<b>JASMINE</b> .....	198
<b>LILIES</b> .....	198
<b>NARCISSUS</b> .....	198
Stem and Bulb Nematode ( <i>Ditylenchus dipsaci</i> ) .....	199
Foliar Nematode ( <i>Aphelenchoides subtenius</i> ) .....	200
<b>TULIPS AND HYACINTH</b> .....	200
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	201
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	201
<b>CHAPTER 6 MAJOR DISEASES OF AROMATIC PLANTS</b> .....	207
<i>Abdus Samad and Sabiha Saeed</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	207
<b>CYMBOPOGON AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	210
Collar Rot and Wilt .....	211
<i>Management</i> .....	211
Lethal Yellowing .....	211
<i>Management</i> .....	212
Rust .....	212
Leaf Blight .....	212

Red Leaf Spot .....	213
<b>EUCALYPTUS AND ITS DISEASES .....</b>	<b>213</b>
Pink Disease .....	213
<i>Management</i> .....	214
Damping-off .....	214
<i>Management</i> .....	214
<i>Cylindrocladium</i> Shoot Blight .....	215
<i>Management</i> .....	215
<i>Coniella</i> Leaf Blight .....	216
<b>GERANIUM AND ITS DISEASES .....</b>	<b>216</b>
Rust .....	216
<i>Management</i> .....	217
Alternaria Leaf Spot .....	217
<i>Management</i> .....	217
Botrytis Leaf Blights .....	217
<i>Management</i> .....	218
Bacterial Blight .....	218
<i>Management</i> .....	219
Cucumber Mosaic Disease .....	219
<b>MINT AND ITS DISEASES .....</b>	<b>219</b>
Rust .....	220
<i>Management</i> .....	220
Powdery Mildew .....	220
<i>Management</i> .....	221
Wilt .....	221
Aerial Blight .....	221
Stolon and Root Rot .....	222
<i>Management</i> .....	222
Mosaic Disease .....	222
<b>OCIMUMS OR BASIL AND ITS DISEASES .....</b>	<b>223</b>
Downy Mildew .....	223
<i>Management</i> .....	224
Fusarium Wilt .....	224
Anthracnose .....	224
Gray Mould .....	224
Cercospora Leaf Spot .....	225
Bacterial Leaf Spot .....	225
<b>ROSE AND ITS DISEASES .....</b>	<b>225</b>
Black Spot .....	226
<i>Management</i> .....	226
Powdery Mildew .....	227
<i>Management</i> .....	227
Rust .....	227
Rose Rosette Disease .....	227
Crown Gall .....	228
<b>ORCHID AND ITS DISEASES .....</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>TUBEROSE AND ITS DISEASES .....</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>229</b>
<b>CHAPTER 7 DISEASES OF TUBEROUS MEDICINAL PLANTS .....</b>	<b>232</b>

<i>Mohammad Zuhaib and Archana Singh</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	232
<b>ASHWAGANDHA AND ITS DISEASES</b>	233
Fusarium Wilt	234
<i>Aetiology</i>	235
<i>Symptoms</i>	236
<i>Disease Cycle</i>	236
<i>Management</i>	237
Leaf Spot	237
<i>Aetiology</i>	237
<i>Symptoms</i>	238
<i>Disease Cycle</i>	238
<i>Management</i>	238
Witches Broom	239
<i>Aetiology</i>	239
<i>Symptoms</i>	239
<i>Phytoplasma Detection</i>	240
<i>Transmission</i>	240
<i>Management</i>	241
<b>SAFED MUSLI AND ITS DISEASES</b>	241
Finger/Root Rot	242
<i>Aetiology</i>	242
<i>Symptoms</i>	242
<i>Disease Cycle</i>	243
<i>Management</i>	243
Tuber Rot	243
<i>Symptoms</i>	244
<i>Disease Cycle</i>	244
<i>Management</i>	244
Leaf Blight	244
<i>Aetiology</i>	245
<i>Symptoms</i>	245
<i>Disease Cycle</i>	245
<i>Management</i>	246
<b>COLEUS (PATARCHUR) AND ITS DISEASES</b>	246
Wilt	247
<i>Aetiology</i>	247
<i>Symptoms</i>	247
<i>Disease Cycle</i>	248
<i>Management</i>	248
Root Rot	249
<i>Aetiology</i>	250
<b>ASPARAGUS AND ITS DISEASES</b>	250
Root-rot and Wilt	251
<i>Aetiology</i>	251
<i>Symptoms</i>	252
<i>Disease Cycle</i>	252
<i>Management</i>	253
Phytophthora Spear Rot	254
<i>Aetiology</i>	254
<i>Symptoms</i>	254

<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	254
<i>Management</i> .....	255
Asparagus Rust .....	256
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	256
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	256
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	256
<i>Management</i> .....	257
<b>TURMERIC AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	257
Rhizome Rot .....	258
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	258
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	259
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	259
<i>Management</i> .....	260
Colletotrichum Leaf Spot .....	260
<i>Aetiology</i> .....	261
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	261
<i>Management</i> .....	262
Leaf Blotch .....	262
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	262
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	262
<i>Management</i> .....	262
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	263
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	264
<b>CHAPTER 8 DISEASES OF NON-TUBEROUS MEDICINAL PLANTS</b> .....	272
<i>Mujeebur Rahman Khan, Ziaul Haque, Mohammad Haniph Shah, Seemab Zamir</i>	
and <i>Kartikey Pandey</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	272
<b>ALOE VERA AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	273
Anthracnose .....	273
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	274
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	274
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	275
<i>Management</i> .....	276
Aloe Rust .....	276
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	276
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	277
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	277
<i>Management</i> .....	278
Dry Rot .....	278
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	278
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	278
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	279
<i>Management</i> .....	280
Bacterial Soft Rot .....	280
<b>BASIL AND ITS DISEASE</b> .....	281
Powdery Mildew .....	281
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	281
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	282
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	283
<i>Management</i> .....	283

Fusarium Wilt .....	284
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	284
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	284
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	284
<i>Management</i> .....	284
Corynespora Leaf Spot .....	285
Anthracnose .....	285
<b>ISABGOL AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	286
Downey Mildew .....	286
Wilt .....	287
<b>MENTHA AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	288
<i>Verticillium Wilt</i> .....	289
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	289
<i>Management</i> .....	289
Root Rot and Wilt .....	290
Rust .....	291
<i>Causal Organism</i> .....	291
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	291
<i>Disease Cycle</i> .....	292
<i>Management</i> .....	292
Leaf Spot .....	293
<b>NONI AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	293
Dry Fruit Rot .....	293
Leaf Blight and Dry Fruit Rot .....	294
Soft Rot .....	294
<b>LIQUORICE AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	295
Root-rot .....	295
Stem Rot .....	295
Gray Mould .....	296
Alternaria Leaf Spot .....	296
<b>ROSA GRASS AND ITS DISEASES</b> .....	296
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	296
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	297
<b>CHAPTER 9 NEMATODE PROBLEMS IN MEDICINAL PLANTS</b> .....	308
<i>Rakesh Pandey, Mujeebur Rahman Khan, Ziaul Haque and Irfan Ahmad</i>	
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	308
<b>ASHWAGANDHA (WITHANIA SOMNIFERA)</b> .....	309
Root-knot Nematode .....	310
<b>BASIL (OCIMUM SPP.)</b> .....	311
Root-knot Nematode .....	311
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	312
<i>Biology and Life Cycle</i> .....	312
<i>Management</i> .....	312
<b>BRAHMI (BACOPA MONNIERI)</b> .....	312
Root-knot Nematode .....	313
<b>COLEUS (COLEUS FORSKOHLII)</b> .....	314
Root-knot Nematode .....	314
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	314
<i>Biology and Life Cycle</i> .....	315
<i>Management</i> .....	315

<b>HENBANE (HYOSCYAMUS SPP.)</b> .....	316
<i>Root-knot Nematode</i> .....	316
<b>MENTHA OR MINT (MENTHA SPP.)</b> .....	318
Root-knot Nematode .....	320
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	320
<i>Life Cycle and Biology</i> .....	321
<i>Management</i> .....	321
Root-lesion Nematode .....	322
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	323
<i>Biology and Life Cycle</i> .....	323
<i>Management</i> .....	324
<b>NONI (MORINDA CITRIFOLIA)</b> .....	324
Root-knot Nematode .....	324
<i>Symptoms</i> .....	324
<i>Life Cycle and Biology</i> .....	325
<i>Management</i> .....	325
<b>SAFED MUSLI (CHLOROPHYTUM BORIVILLIANUM)</b> .....	325
Root-knot Nematode .....	326
<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	326
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	327
<b>SUBJECT INDEX</b> .....	357



## FOREWORD

Plant diseases in ornamental, aromatic, and medicinal crops are common in occurrence and account for up to 12-20% yield losses. The book “*Diseases of Ornamental, Aromatic and Medicinal Plants*” by Prof. M. R. Khan and Dr. Z. Haque presents exclusive and comprehensive information on the major diseases and nematode problems in important ornamental plants (cut flowers, potted flowers, and flowering geophytes, turfs), medicinal plants (tuberous and non-tuberous) and aromatic plants. The present book aims to fill the knowledge gap and provides up-to-date relevant information in one place. It embodies nine chapters highlighting the aetiology, symptoms, disease cycle, economic importance, distribution, and management aspects with advanced and sustainable approaches. The present book shall serve as an important reference source to UG/PG students, academics, professionals, gardeners, scientists, researchers, and extension personnel in universities and institutes, bureaus, directorates, research stations, etc. dealing with plant diseases and nematode problems in ornamental, aromatic and medicinal plants. I wish to congratulate the editors of the book and contributors of the chapters for putting together their efforts to bring out this volume.

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## PREFACE

The cultivation of ornamental plants such as cut flowers, potted flowers, and flowering geophytes has become an emerging commercial sector due to the continuously rising demand for flowers throughout the world. This sector also provides enough opportunities for employment generation as well as foreign earnings. The global trade of florists' crops has been projected to be more than \$100 billion annually. Medicinal plants are essential to human life and are utilized in both ancient and modern medical practices all over the world. India is a rich habitat for medicinal and aromatic plants, and accounts for about 9.18 lakh tonnes of production annually. Similarly, aromatic plants assume eminence and economic significance for containing high-value aromatic compounds. However, diseases in these plants are major factors, that destroy around 10-20% of crop produce during pre-harvest and post-harvest stages. A book presenting exclusive and comprehensive information on "Diseases of Ornamental, Aromatic and Medicinal Plants" is lacking in the market, as a result, potential readers are deprived of up-to-date relevant information. The present book aims to fulfill the gap of knowledge and embodies nine chapters covering major diseases and nematode problems in ornamental (such as, anthurium, azalea, begonias, caladium, carnation, china aster, chrysanthemum, coleus, cyclamen, daffodils, gardenia, gerbera, gladiolus, lily, marigold, poinsettia, tulip, turfgrasses, *etc.*), aromatic (such as, basil, citronella, eucalyptus, Geranium, mint, rose, orchid, tuberose, *etc.*) and medicinal crops (such as, aloe vera, ashwagandha, asparagus, isabgol, liquorice, noni, patarchur, safed musli, rosa grass, turmeric, *etc.*), highlighting the aetiology, symptoms, disease cycle, economic importance, distribution, and management aspects with advanced and sustainable approaches. The present book shall serve as an important reference source to UG/PG students, academics, professionals, scientists, researchers, kitchen gardeners, horticulturalists, and extension personnel dealing with plant diseases in the above crops.

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**CHAPTER 1**

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**Major Diseases of Cut Flowers****Harjot Singh Sidhu<sup>1,\*</sup> and Deepak Kumar<sup>2</sup>**<sup>1</sup> *Maharana Pratap Horticultural University, Karnal, Haryana, India*<sup>2</sup> *Department of Nematology, CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar, Haryana, India*

**Abstract:** Flower cultivation at the commercial level has attained immense significance in the area of crop diversification and contributes a lot to the cultivator's economy. With the worldwide boom in the floriculture trade, the production of high-quality and disease-free flowers has become an important challenge in commercial floriculture. Various biotic and abiotic factors affect flower production in open fields and controlled environments. Among the cut flowers, anthurium, carnation, china aster, chrysanthemum, gerbera, marigold, orchid, rose, *etc.* are covered in this chapter with regard to their plant diseases. Anthracnose, black spot, botrytis blight, crown rot, leaf spot, powdery mildew, mosaic, root-rot, rust, twig blight, stem necrosis, stump rot, white rust, wilt *etc.* are important diseases of the above cut flowers that shall be discussed in detail and suitable management strategies shall also be presented in the chapter.

**Keywords:** Anthurium, Carnation, Chrysanthemum, Disease aetiology, Gerbera, Management, Orchid, Rose, Symptoms.

**INTRODUCTION**

Floriculture involves the growing of loose-cut flowers with stems and long leaves, dried flowers, decorative plants, nurseries, flower seeds and propagative materials. The cultivation of cut flowers has become an emerging sector due to multiple uses, satisfying the aesthetic needs of the people, employment-generating, a source of higher income for people and facilitating more foreign earnings. In addition, flowers are used as raw material in the manufacturing of essence, perfumes, medicines and confectioneries. Cut flowers are cultivated worldwide and the largest producer of cut flowers is China followed by India and the USA. However, by value, the largest importer and exporter is the Netherlands. In India, cut flowers are grown in an area of around 0.32 mha with the production of 1.96 MMT and 0.82 MMT (FAOSTAT, 2022).

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Cut or loose flowers such as anthurium, carnation, chrysanthemum, gerbera, marigold, orchid, rose and some other annuals are extensively grown to fulfil the demands of regional and national markets around the world. Cultivation of flowers and ornamental crops are viewed as a growing field but the export and import of flowers and other related products have come across many infrastructural problems like inadequate cooling systems during transportation, bad storage facilities and poor road conditions, especially in developing countries.

Other constraints with the production and handling of commercial cut flowers are shortage of trained manpower and poor phytosanitation. Various biotic and abiotic factors also affect cut flower production under open fields and protected conditions. Flowers are mostly grown in monoculture and so there are more chances to be attacked by various plant pathogens such as fungi, bacteria, viruses, phytoplasma, plant-parasitic nematodes *etc.* Sometimes, extensive economic loss to floriculture occurs due to disease occurrence. The qualitative and quantitative loss of flowers due to diseases greatly affect the economy of the farmers/growers and their products are rejected in the floriculture market. Important diseases associated with cut flowers are enlisted in Table 1. Major diseases of economically important cut flowers are described under:

**Table 1. Estimated losses caused by pathogens in cut flower plants (McGovern and Elmer, 2018).**

Crop	Disease/Pathogen	Country	Loss (%)
Anthurium	Bacterial blight ( <i>Xanthomonas axonopodis</i> pv. <i>dieffenbachiae</i> )	USA (Hawaii)	50–100
Caladium	Fusarium tuber rot ( <i>Fusarium solani</i> )	USA (Florida)	80–100
Carnation	Sclerotinia stem rot ( <i>Sclerotinia sclerotiorum</i> )	India	38.5
	Root knot ( <i>Meloidogyne incognita</i> )	India (Bangalore)	40–60
Celosia	Yellows ( <i>Candidatus Phytoplasma</i> spp.)	Israel	up to 100
China aster	<i>Fusarium wilt</i> ( <i>F. oxysporum</i> f. sp. <i>callistephi</i> )	USA (Connecticut)	up to 70
	Tobacco rattle virus	Japan	up to 63
	Tomato spotted wilt virus	Greece	37.7
Chrysanthemum	White rust ( <i>Puccinia horiana</i> )	Turkey (Izmir)	80
	Bacterial wilt ( <i>Dickeya chrysanthemi</i> )	Hungary (Budapest)	~100
	Tomato spotted wilt virus, Impatiens necrotic spot virus	Colombia	up to 80
Geranium	Bacterial blight ( <i>Xanthomonas hortorum</i> pv. <i>pelargonii</i> )	USA	up to 100



(Table 1) cont....

Crop	Disease/Pathogen	Country	Loss (%)
Gerbera	Tomato spotted wilt virus	Serbia, Venezuela	up to 30
Gladiolus	Fusarium corm rot ( <i>F. oxysporum</i> f. sp. <i>gladioli</i> )	India	60–80
Gypsophila	Powdery mildew ( <i>Erysiphe buhrii</i> )	Korea (Iksan City)	~100
Lily	Fire ( <i>Botrytis</i> spp.)	Most lily growing areas	up to 100
Lisianthus	Fusarium crown and stem rot ( <i>F. avenaceum</i> )	USA (Florida)	up to 70
Orchid	Bacterial brown spot ( <i>Burkholderia gladioli</i> )	China	10–25
	Foliar nematodes ( <i>Aphelenchoides besseyi</i> and <i>A. fragariae</i> )	USA (Hawaii)	up to 90
Rose	Crown rot ( <i>Phytophthora nicotianae</i> )	Argentina	10–25
	Crown gall ( <i>Agrobacterium tumefaciens</i> )	Kenya	5–60
	Gray mould ( <i>Botrytis cinerea</i> )	Ethiopia (East Shoa Zone)	up to 31 (postharvest)
Snapdragon	Downy mildew ( <i>Peronospora antirrhini</i> )	USA	up to 100
	Phytophthora stem rot and wilt ( <i>Phytophthora</i> spp.)	USA	50
Multiple crops (Gerbera, Lisianthus, Rose)	Gray mould ( <i>Botrytis cinerea</i> )	The Netherlands (Flower Exchange)	15–30 (postharvest)

## DISEASES OF AZALEA

### Anthracnose

#### *Aetiology*

Anthracnose of anthurium is caused by *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* (Penz.) Sacc. The disease is also known as black nose or spadix rot.

#### *Symptoms*

The spadix's individual flowers are the main targets of the disease. The infection begins as little, black spots that subsequently become larger. Under damp conditions, a general rot of the entire spadix may happen in the advanced stages.

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**CHAPTER 2**

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**Major Diseases of Potted Flowers****Ziaul Haque<sup>1</sup> and Mujeebur Rahman Khan<sup>1,\*</sup>**<sup>1</sup> *Department of Plant Protection, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India*

**Abstract:** Ornamental crops have deceptively benefited humankind since very early times and the importance of ornamental crops is being recognized by every individual from birth to death. It may be cultivated for cut flowers, dry flowers, live or dried plants, bulbs, and tuber, gardening/landscaping and also used in perfume, medicines, flavouring and colouring agents. Plant diseases are a major bottleneck in flower production and the losses caused by plant pathogens in important potted flowers have been estimated to be as high as 100%. Phyto-pathogens directly reduce the production and marketability of potted flowers. In this chapter, diseases of important potted flowers viz., azalea (*Rhododendron obtusum*), begonias (*Begonia* spp.), coleus (*Plectranthus scutellarioides*), gardenia (*Gardenia jasminoides*) and poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) are discussed with detailed emphasis given to disease aetiology, diagnostic symptoms, disease cycle and their management.

**Keywords:** Aetiology, Begonia, Coleus, Disease, Economic loss, Gardenia, Management, Poinsettia.

**INTRODUCTION**

The importance of ornamental crops is recognized by every individual and it has been cultivated for various purposes since very early times. They may be cultivated for cut flowers, dry flowers, live or dried plants, bulb tubers and gardening/landscaping. Flowers are generally used for making garlands, bouquets, wreaths, hair adornment, buttonholes, religious offerings, decorations, exhibitions, etc. They are also used for the production of perfume and oils. The oils are also used in the soap and cosmetic industry. Flowers and other parts are also used in medicines as flavouring and colouring agents. Potted flowering plants are now a vibrant, fast-growing, very profitable and estimated to be over \$100 billion global industry (McGovern and Elmer, 2018).

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Plant diseases are a major bottleneck in flower production and even a minor decline in quality might render the crop unmarketable. The crop losses in representative floriculture crops have been projected to be as high as 100%. The pathogenic infections reduce the ornamental value by 10%, which leads to a \$10 billion yearly loss in monetary terms. Besides, postharvest diseases also inflict substantial losses (10–30%) in overall florists' crops across the world (McGovern and Elmer, 2018). The flowers, as well as propagative material, are immediately affected by plant pathogens, which limit productivity and marketability. The global demand of flowers leading to their movement across countries has greatly contributed to the spread of diseases and their vectors. This may also influence disease scenario on other crops.

In this chapter, important diseases enlisted in Table 1 of potted flowers *viz.*, Azalea (*Rhododendron obtusum*), Begonias (*Begonia* spp.), coleus (*Plectranthus scutellarioides*), Gardenia (*Gardenia jasminoides*) and Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) are discussed with detailed emphasis on disease aetiology, diagnostic symptoms, disease cycle and their sustainable management.

**Table 1. List of some important diseases associated with potted flowers.**

Potted Flowers	Important Diseases
Azalea ( <i>Rhododendron obtusum</i> )	Phytophthora Root Rot, Dieback, Wilt, Pythium Root Rot, Cylindrocladium Blight, Leaf And Flower Gall, Rhizoctonia Root Rot, Web Blight and Witches' Broom.
Begonia ( <i>Begonia</i> spp.)	Fusarium Wilt, Botrytis Blight, Powdery Mildew, Pythium Root Rot, Bacterial Spot and Viral Diseases.
Coleus ( <i>Plectranthus scutellarioides</i> )	Botrytis Blight, Downy Mildew, Crown Rot, Pythium Root Rot, Rhizoctonia Root Rot and Viral diseases.
Gardenia ( <i>Gardenia jasminoides</i> )	Gardenia Canker, Myrothecium Leaf Spot, Powdery Mildew Rhizoctonia Root Rot, Phytophthora Root And Stem Rot, Pythium Root Rot And Bacterial Leaf Spot.
Poinsettia ( <i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i> )	Alternaria Leaf Spot, Anthracnose, Botrytis Blight, Powdery Mildew, Scab, Stem Rot, Root Rots, Bacterial Leaf Spot And Poinsettia Mosaic Virus.

## AZALEA AND ITS DISEASES

Azalea [*Rhododendron obtusum* (Lindl.) Planch] is one of the most often used flowering plants (Fig. 1) and is grown for decorative purposes all over the world. Though they are evergreens, their cold hardiness varies, hence, some form of winter protection is necessary. Large and varied flower sizes and colours are two of the most common horticultural traits and are considered in the development of new cultivars. The major diseases of azalea are as follows:



Fig. (1). Azalea plant with flowers. [Courtesy: Dow Gardens, Bugwood.org].

### **Phytophthora Root Rot, Dieback and Crown Canker**

Azaleas are susceptible to infection from *Phytophthora* spp. worldwide (Linderman, 2018). Depending on the species, *Phytophthora* can cause dieback, crown canker, and root rot. While some species only affect the roots and crown, others might produce all of these symptoms. The majority of these diseases harm plants in the ground or in pots or containers, whether they are in nurseries or fields.

#### ***Causal Organism***

Typically, *Phytophthora cinnamomi* and *P. nicotianae* (syn. *P. parasitica*) are responsible, but in some regions, *P. citricola* is also found to infect azaleas (Linderman, 2018).

#### ***Symptoms***

Azaleas are susceptible to root infections from the time they are propagated through cuttings to the time they are planted in the ground. In below-ground parts, brown, necrotic spots can be seen on infected roots. When the root system is severely infested, the leaves may become chlorotic and subsequently necrotic, but they hardly ever wilt. As a result, the leaves and sometimes the entire plant shrink in size. In some cases, the infection from the roots can spread to the lower stem tissue, causing fatal crown cankers. When the bark is peeled away, the brownish internal wood is exposed, revealing the cankers.

## Major Diseases of Flowering Geophytes

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**Abstract:** Flowering geophytes are important ornamental or florist crops that mainly have tuberous roots, tuberous stems, true tuber and rhizomes or corms. The global trade of florists' crops including flowering geophytes is projected to be more than \$100 billion annually. Plant pathogens have a direct impact on the production and marketability of flowering geophytes. In this chapter, important flowering geophytes viz., caladium, cyclamen, daffodils, gladiolus, lily, tuberose and tulip and their major diseases are described with special emphasis on disease aetiology, symptoms/signs, biology, disease cycle and management.

**Keywords:** Caladium, Cyclamen, Daffodils, Gladiolus, Lily, Tuberose, Tulip.

### INTRODUCTION

Flowers have a good impact on our emotions in a variety of ways (Haviland-Jones *et al.*, 2005). The use of flowers in graves has been reported as far back as 60,000 years, during the Neanderthal epoch (Solecki, 1975). For thousands of years, humans have been actively growing flowers (Ackerson, 1967), but in recent times, the flower production has become a highly profitable industry worldwide. It has been reported that the annual global trade for flower crops is over \$100 billion annually (African Business Magazine, 2012).

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Flowering geophytes are important ornamental or florist crops that mainly have tuberous roots, tuberous stems, true tuber and rhizomes or corms. Plant pathogens have a direct impact on the production and marketability of these flowering geophytes, as well as propagative material. It has been observed that global movement of flowering geophytes from their permanent production facilities to newer ones caused the spread of diseases along with their vectors. In this chapter, we are describing the major diseases of important flowering geophytes *viz.*, caladium, cyclamen, daffodils, gladiolus, lily, tuberose and tulip with special emphasis on disease aetiology, symptoms/signs, biology, disease cycle and management.

### CALADIUM AND ITS DISEASES

Caladium (*Caladium x hortulanum*, Araceae; syn. *C. bicolor*) is a favourite crop among indoor and outdoor florists and is distinguished by its vibrant leaf (Fig. 1). Florida (USA) produces over 95% of the caladiums in the world. All phases of the growth of caladium, including field production and storage, are susceptible to pathogen infection and diseases. Pathogens that often infect caladium include *Pythium spp.*, *Fusarium solani*, *Sclerotium rolfsii*, *Rhizoctonia solani*, *Xanthomonas axonopodis*, *Pectobacterium carotovorum*, *Meloidogyne* species and *Dasheen mosaic virus*. Brief descriptions of the important diseases affecting caladium are as follows.



**Fig. (1).** Caladium (*Caladium bicolor*) plant. [Courtesy: Deena Sharon Chadi, Bugwood.org].

## **Fusarium Tuber Rot**

Causal Organism: *Fusarium solani*

The disease is the major issue impacting the quality and quantity of caladium plants, especially tubers (McGovern, 2004). This disease has progressively reduced the tuber production of several cultivars in Florida over the past ten years. Additionally, it has partially led to the elimination of some important commercial cultivars (McGovern, 2004). The infection of *Fusarium* on the tubers of commercial cultivars has been increased significantly with a disease incidence ranging from 90-100% (Gilreath *et al.*, 1999; McGovern, 2004).

### ***Symptoms***

The pathogen infiltrates the caladium tuber's base, causing the infection to advance towards the upper region of the plant. The fungus first causes a light brown discoloration on the tubers, but with time it darkens. A distinctive and early indication of the disease is individual brown spots on infected tuber fibres. Once the *F. solani* infection is over, the only thing left is a tuber that has entirely dried and is powdery in nature.

### ***Disease Cycle and Epidemiology***

Although the epidemiology and pathogenic disease cycle are not completely understood, however, it appears that plants or plants' tissues serve as the primary habitat for the fungus survival and spread. The fungus produces different types of spores like micro- and macroconidia in addition to the resting spores in the form of chlamydo spores for long-term survival in case of unfavourable periods in the soil. Amongst these, micro and macroconidia may move through the air, however, it is unclear how they affect *Fusarium* tuber rot. The diseases are shown up in the field and in storage. Mycelium and chlamydo spores found in seed tubers are the best modes of *F. solani* survival. The disease can linger on objects, utensils, machinery, and soil between crops (especially wood or abraded plastics). *Fusarium* survives as resistant chlamydo spores for years without a living host. The pathogen may infect plants through wounds left behind by harvesting methods.

The optimal temperature range for the mycelial growth in culture ranges between 25- 30.5 °C and the optimal soil temperature requirements range from 26-28 °C to allow maximal pathogen development (Goktepe *et al.*, 2007). Deng *et al.* (2007) found that experimentally infected tubers decomposed more quickly at temperatures ranging from 13–18 °C. Because caladium is a tropical crop, it

## Major Diseases of Turf

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**Abstract:** Turf grasses are extensively planted for ornamental landscaping or decorative purposes and for upgrading outdoor grounds in tropical and warm temperate regions. Most of the important turf is known by various common names such as Bermuda, couch, kweek and Doob. They are also valuable for soil stabilizing and livestock herbage. Turfgrass experiences a variety of disease problems, many of which result in a significant damage to turf appearance. In many instances, diseases are considered for low-quality turf, although other factors may also be responsible for this. Turfs are affected by several algal, fungal, and bacterial pathogens. This chapter provides a detailed account of the symptomatology, aetiology, biology, and management of a few important prevalent turf diseases *viz.*, algae problem, anthracnose, Rhizoctonia patches, leaf and sheath spot, blight, Pythium damping off, rust and powdery mildew.

**Keywords:** Aetiology, Economic loss, Management, Symptom.

### INTRODUCTION

Turfgrasses are among the most extensively planted ornamental grasses. The production of turfgrass constitutes a promising economic industry worldwide (Mwamula and Lee, 2021). In addition to its inherent function in soil stabilization, turfgrass is crucial in making suitable surfaces for outdoor sports (Ignatieva *et al.*, 2020). The turf is also equally important for lawns in commercial places such as malls, hotels, parties, gardens, residential compounds, cemetery lawns, *etc.* (Clayden *et al.*, 2018). Turfgrass, for instance, is used to cover the lawns of homes, schools, and cemeteries, in addition to playing a more significant part in the upgrading of outdoor grounds (Chawla *et al.*, 2018). The cushioning effect decreases the impact of a jerk as well as injuries due to falling, slipping, bruising,

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*etc.* compared to non-turf or wooden surfaces (Chang *et al.*, 2017). The most lucrative market is found on golf courses (Larson *et al.*, 2012).

From an ecological point of view, turf grasses play an important role in soil and water conservation, as well as providing recreational and aesthetic benefits (Hayden *et al.*, 2015). They are also versatile in their ability to grow under a wide range of environmental conditions and are used for various purposes, including landscaping, sports fields, and wildlife habitats (Hempson *et al.*, 2015). In addition to their functional benefits, turf grasses also provide numerous environmental benefits, such as reduced soil erosion, improved soil health, and carbon sequestering. Overall, turf grasses play an important role in sustainable land management and are an important component of many urban and rural landscapes (Monteiro, 2017).

Frequently, inadequate fertilizer, phytotoxicity, mower issues, animal damage, dry or damp patches, thatch, competition from other plants, or any other inappropriate management, results in dead and dying grass. Correct diagnosis of the issues is necessary for effective management of turf (Dernoeden, 2020). Unfortunately, there is still a lack of study on efficient sod production, particularly in relation to common turfgrass pests and diseases. A variety of disease problems, primarily algal, fungal, bacterial, and nematode pose a significant threat to turf fields and challenge their proper maintenance (Poinar and Georgis, 2020). Some of the important diseases of turf are discussed below.

### **ALGA (EUKARYOTIC ALGAE AND CYANOBACTERIA)**

Eukaryotic algae are widespread in soils (Metting, 1988). There are a number of examples of visually visible algal growths on the soil surface in natural or semi-natural grassland ecosystems such as *Zygonium* especially on acidic soils (West and Fritsch, 1927) and cyanobacteria (mostly *Nostoc*) on grassland soils (Booth, 1941). Cyanobacteria can also occasionally be seen adhering to the bottom parts of grass stems, as in the case of *Nostoc ommune* var. *flagelliforme* (Whitton *et al.*, 1979). *Oscillatoria* is reported to make slime on golf greens (Hodges, 1987a,b). *Cosmarium*, *Cylindrocystis*, *Dactylothece*, *Klebsormidium*, *Mesotaenium*, and *Ourococcus* are one of the important genera of green algae identified as slime-producing algae in grasses (Baldwin, 1988). All of them except *Klebsormidium* and *Ourococcus* can make a lot of mucilage (Bourrelly, 1966). *Klebsormidium*, which is one of the most common filamentous green algae on land, is often found in groups of algae from other genera.

## Symptoms

Although algae can damage turf around the year, in damp winter weather it can be frequently observed. The symptoms are scum and slime surface layer green-brown-black in colour or blue-green in case of *Nostoc* interaction (Dawson, 1968). Although cyanobacteria or *Zygonium* is commonly associated with infestation forms of 'scums', its identification is difficult on the basis of a dark surface. The texture of wet "scum" is either sticky (Wise, 1961) or rubbery (Daniel and Freeborg, 1979). It can develop a parchment-like crust when it dries out (Beard, 1975; Decker and Decker, 1988), although this crust may later break, peel, and become detached from the soil (Shurtleff and Randall, 1978).

The formation of the black layer, which is also referred to as the "black plug layer", is an issue in turf. It generally arises in a root zone that is mainly comprised of sand. Affected turf areas generally thin out and turn into golden colour (Hodges, 1987b). The organic substances like mucilage produced by algae, bind with sand particles and fill pores making it harder for water to get through the turf profile (Kershasky, 1987). According to Hall (1987), dead algae trapped in the turf profile may cause the establishment of false water tables, which can result in waterlogging and, ultimately, anoxic conditions.

There have been three types of algae problems, symptoms in turf grasses *i.e.*, scum, slime and black layer. Due to the enormous growth of alga, surface 'scum' is formed which leads to the generation of profuse mucilaginous 'slime'. The hardened slime layer forms a black layer which causes impediment of water penetration through the grass profile. Apparently, the scum and slime frequently overlap, but their identification by turf managers is difficult. They may not have the skill to identify the species of this potential so algal growths may or may not contain species that generate enough quantity of mucilage which may put people at danger of sliding on them (Baldwin and Whitton, 1992).

## Favourable Environmental Conditions

Algae usually grow where the turf is bare (Fig.1) (Shildrick, 1990) or where it is thin and weak (Shiels, 1984). The amount of water defines the growth of algae. Algae cause problems when the turf surface is wet, waterlogged, poorly drained, or flooded. Algae problems are also linked to compacted soil. This is partly because compacted soil hurts the overall grass growth and also makes it hard for water to get through (Baldwin, 1988).

## Nematode Problems in Ornamental Plants

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**Abstract:** Nematode infestation in ornamental crops affects the quantity and quality of flower yield, reducing flower size, total flower number, and the productive life of the plant. The most devastating nematode genera affecting ornamental crops are root-knot nematode, *Meloidogyne* species; foliar nematode, *Aphelenchoides* species; stem and bulb nematode, *Ditylenchus* species and root-lesion nematode *Pratylenchus* species. Nematode management in ornamental plants is difficult for many reasons, but practising nematode-free planting material, using cultural methods like a nursery or field cleanliness and application of nematicides can reduce the nematode populations. Hot water treatment of planting material is effective in eliminating nematode infection in vegetatively propagative materials. The use of resistant cultivars and biocontrol agents may also limit nematode damage in the plants. In this chapter, the problem of nematodes in important ornamental plants *viz.*, Chrysanthemum, tuberose, crossandra, orchid, anthurium, gladiolus, gerbera, jasmine, lilies, narcissus, tulip and hyacinth are described, and information on general approaches of nematode management are discussed.

**Keywords:** Chrysanthemum, *Ditylenchus* spp., Economic importance, Gladiolus, *Meloidogyne*, *Pratylenchus* spp.

### INTRODUCTION

Nematodes are multicellular animals and one of the most widespread organisms present in the soil. However, only a small portion of these organisms are plant parasitic, while the rest are free-living and survive on a different substrate (Khan, 2023c; Haque and Khan, 2021). The nematode body is thin, thread-like, bilaterally symmetrical, flexible, fusiform to cylindrical, and tapering at both ends (Khan, 2008). The majority of nematodes remain vermiform throughout their life, but some nematodes, such as reniform nematodes, root-knot nematodes, and cyst nematodes, assume sedentary life at maturity, and mature females develop to

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saccate forms (Khan, 2016). Generally, the adults of plant nematodes are 0.3 to 11 mm long with a specific gravity slightly greater than water (Khan, 2023b). Due to their microscopic size (~1/100 to 1/8 inch) and their subterranean habit, nematodes cannot be seen by the naked eye; hence, their crop damage generally remains hidden from the farmers (Sasser, 1989; Khan *et al.*, 2021). Plant parasitic nematodes (PPN) infect almost all kinds of agricultural as well as ornamental crops and plants throughout the world, and inflict significant yield loss (Khan, 2007). The estimated crop production loss is about 10 percent worldwide due to the nematodes (Bahadur, 2021); however, in a broader range, the nematodes may cause 9-15% yield loss to the different crops and plants (Khan, 2023a). Nematode invades young emerging lateral roots, root hairs, cortical cells, epidermal cells and vascular tissue, which lead to the disfunctioning of the root system and, subsequently, the significant suppression of plant growth (Khan and Jairajpuri, 2012a, 2012b). Plant nematodes use the stylet to perforate the host surface and inject enzymes and hormones originating from the oesophageal glands. The enzymatic secretions and feeding by sedentary nematodes transform the host tissue into the large multinucleate specialized nutritive cells (as by root-knot nematode), syncytia (as by cyst nematodes) and nurse cells (by citrus nematode) for the establishment of their permanent feeding site. The feeding leads to the creation of wounds on the root surface, and this also exposes the roots to infection by soil pathogens (Khan and Sharma, 2020).

Nematodes cause damage to all parts of the plant, from belowground parts (root, tubers, bulb, rhizomes) to aboveground (stem, leaves, inflorescence, seed, fruits *etc.*) (Khan, 2016). The extent of host damage and crop loss caused by plant nematodes is determined by their soil population reproductive potential, plant species and, environmental conditions. (Khan, 2008). Cereals (Owen *et al.*, 2023; Khan *et al.*, 2023c), oil seed crops (Singh and Campos, 2023), vegetables (Correia *et al.*, 2023), fruit crops (Mokrini *et al.*, 2023), fibre crops (Mukherjee *et al.*, 2011), beverage crops (Mohotti *et al.*, 2023), and ornamental crops (Khan *et al.*, 2023c) are all known to be severely damaged by the nematodes (Haque and Khan, 2021). The present chapter describes nematode infestation in important ornamental plants and offers practical solutions for their management.

### **Nematode Problems in Ornamental Plants**

Ornamental plants, including cut flowers, potted flowers, flowering geophytes and decorative plants, are important sources of income for millions of people worldwide. Currently, the global market size of flower and ornamental plants is around \$ 44 billion (CAGR, 2023). The estimated area under ornamental production is about 142 mha with 2980.05 MT global production. India is one of the leading producers and consumers of ornamental plants.

PPNs attack almost all types of ornamental crops that are grown in the home garden, modern landscape industry, and protected and open-field cultivation systems. In this chapter, important ornamental plants viz., Chrysanthemum, tuberose, crossandra, orchid, anthurium, gladiolus, gerbera, jasmine, lilies, narcissus, tulip and hyacinth are severely attacked by plant nematodes problems in protected as well as in open field conditions (Khan *et al.*, 2023c). Monoculture of the ornamentals provides a crucial environment for the invasion of nematodes and other pathogens, which severely reduce the quality of the flowers to an extent that makes them unmarketable. The infected planting materials serve as the potential nematode inoculum.

The nematode species which frequently attack ornamental plants include endoparasites such as *Meloidogyne* spp., *Pratylenchus* spp., *Aphelenchoides* spp., *Ditylenchus* spp., as well as semi-endo and ectoparasites viz., *Rotylenchulus*, *Tylenchorhynchus*, *Xiphinema*, *Helicotylenchus*, *Hoplolaimus*, *Trichodorusetc.* (Table 1). Among them, root-knot nematodes are the most notorious and widely occurring nematodes and attack almost all kinds of ornamental plants.

**Table 1. List of some important diseases associated with potted flowers.**

Crops	Nematode Species	References
Aster ( <i>Aster</i> sp.)	<i>Aphelenchoides ritzemabosi</i> , <i>A. fragariae</i> , <i>D. dipsaci</i> , <i>M. hapla</i> , <i>Meloidogyne</i> spp.	Intrama, 1962; Gill and Sharma 1976
Carnation ( <i>Dianthus</i> sp.)	<i>M. incognita</i> , <i>M. arenaria</i> , <i>M. javanica</i> , <i>M. hapla</i> , <i>Pratylenchus</i> spp., <i>P. coffeae</i> , <i>T. nanus</i> , <i>H. multicinctus</i> , <i>L. elongates</i> , <i>X. basiri</i> , <i>Criconemeides xenoplax</i> , <i>C. curvatum</i>	Dabaj <i>et al.</i> , 1994; Johnson <i>et al.</i> 2006
China Aster ( <i>Callistiphus chinensis</i> )	<i>Meloidogyne</i> spp.	Krishnappa <i>et al.</i> 1980; Khan and Parvatha Reddy, 1992
Chrysanthemum ( <i>Chrysanthemum</i> sp.)	<i>Aphelenchoides ritzemabosi</i> , <i>Apratylenchoiaes homoglans</i> , <i>Helicotylenchus crenatus</i> , <i>Hopolaimus indicus</i> , <i>Meloidogyne incognita</i> , <i>M. indica</i> , <i>M. javanica</i> , <i>Pratylenchus penetrans</i> , <i>P. coffeae</i> , <i>P. chrysanthus</i> , <i>R. reniformis</i> , <i>Tylenchorhynchus dubius</i>	Rashid and Khan, 1975; Gill and Sharma, 1976; Sen and Dasgupta, 1977 Khan <i>et al.</i> , 2005a and 2006
Crossandra ( <i>Crossandra</i> sp.)	<i>Pratylenchus delattrei</i> , <i>M. incognita</i> , <i>Longidorus</i> , <i>africanus</i>	Khan and Parvatha Reddy, 1994
Gerbera ( <i>Gerbera</i> sp.)	<i>M. incognita</i> , <i>P. coffeae</i> , <i>T. nanus</i> , <i>H. multicinctus</i> , <i>H. indicus</i> , <i>Hoplolaimus indicus</i> , <i>R. reniformis</i> , <i>L. elongates</i> , <i>X. basiri</i>	Nagesh and Parvatha Reddy, 2000 and 2005; Johnson <i>et al.</i> 2006

**CHAPTER 6****Major Diseases of Aromatic Plants****Abdus Samad<sup>1</sup> and Sabiha Saeed<sup>2,\*</sup>**<sup>1</sup> CSIR, Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants, Lucknow, India<sup>2</sup> Department of Plant Protection, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India

**Abstract:** Aromatic plants provide the chief raw materials for cosmetics, perfumery and food industries. In recent years, with the rising need for therapeutic herbal medicines, attention towards aromatic plants has increased. Because of inherent and remedial pharmacological characteristics, aromatic plants are also exploited as natural medicines, and are mainly used for the extraction of essential oils, which have tremendous application in various industries. Aromatic plants become infested with many diseases that cause degradation of the quality and quantity of the required economic product. Considerable success has been achieved in managing the disease through cultural practices and biological and chemical control. The present chapter focuses on major diseases caused by fungi, viruses and bacteria threatening the bioactive potential, biomass, yield and various plant products of important aromatic plants, viz., basil (*Ocimum* spp.), citronella (*Cymbopogon* spp.), eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), Geranium (*Geranium* spp.), mint (*Mentha* spp.), rose (*Rosa* spp.), orchid (*Orchis* spp.), tuberose (*Polianthes tuberosa*), etc. To enhance metabolite productive potential and raw material quality, necessary strategies of management for diseases have been defined, which are presented in the chapter.

**Keywords:** Basil, Citronella, Diseases management, Eucalyptus, Geranium, Mint, Rose.

**INTRODUCTION**

Aromatic plants assume immense economic significance for containing aromatic compounds. Different parts of the aromatic plant, like stem, wood, fruit, flower, and foliage, secrete fragranced volatile substances in the form of essential oil, green exudate, oleoresin and balsam. Among these, essential oils are secondary metabolites that are highly concentrated and perform diverse functions in the plant system. These oils are volatile, odorous, highly concentrated and hydrophobic compounds. Essential oils are a mixture of secondary metabolites that contain

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terpenes and phenylpropenes (Greathead, 2003). Aromatic plants (Fig. 1) such as basil (*Ocimum* spp.), citronella (*Cymbopogon* spp.), eucalyptus (*Eucalyptus* spp.), geranium (*Geranium* spp.), mint (*Mentha* spp.), rose (*Rosa* spp.), orchid (*Orchis* spp.), tuberose (*Polianthes tuberosa*), etc. have characteristic fragrance and flavour properties, which contain biological activities and are extensively employed in healthcare and aromatherapy as well as in many industries such as flavouring and fragrance, pesticides and repellents, cosmetics, spices, and herbal beverages (Samarth *et al.*, 2017).



**Fig. (1).** Photographs of some important aromatic plants. **A:** Citronella, **B:** Eucalyptus, **C:** Geranium, **D:** mint, **E:** Ocimum, **F:** Rose.

Aromatic plants possess antimicrobial and antioxidant activity, which have been found to have several health applications in preventing and reducing disease risk like cardiovascular, inflammation, atherosclerosis and cancer (Gutteridge and Halliwell, 2010; Ndhlala *et al.*, 2010). They are comprised of hundreds of organic compounds, which include benzenoids, organic sulphur, terpenoids and nitrogenous compounds, which perform at several levels. Aromatic oils, herbs, and aroma chemicals are considerably used in cosmetic, flavoring, perfumery and drug industries. Additionally, they have become vital components of human activity.

The production of aromatic compounds is affected by several abiotic and biotic constraints. Among the biotic constraints, several viral, fungal, and bacterial diseases are a serious threat to the bioactive potential, biomass and yield of aromatic plants. The loss caused by the phytopathogens not only suppresses the plant yield but also affects the secondary metabolites, and the quality of raw material, which consequently reduces the market value of the produce. In this chapter, major fungal, viral, and bacterial diseases of economically important aromatic plants such as mint, basil or *tulsi*, geranium, citronella, rose, eucalyptus, orchid and tuberose (Table 1), along with management strategies are discussed.

**Table 1. Major diseases of some aromatic plants with their causal organism.**

Aromatic Plants	Diseases	Causal Organism
Mint ( <i>Mentha</i> spp.)	Rust	<i>Puccinia menthae</i>
	Powdery mildew	<i>Erysiphe cichoracearum</i>
	Wilt	<i>Verticillium albo-atrum</i> var. <i>menthae</i>
	Aerial blight	<i>Rhizoctonia solani</i>
	Stolon and root rot	<i>Theilavia basicola</i> , <i>Rhizoctonia bataticola</i>
	Mosaic disease	<i>Tobacco mosaic virus</i>
Basil ( <i>Ocimum</i> spp.)	Downy mildew	<i>Peronospora belbahrii</i>
	Fusarium wilt	<i>Fusarium oxysporum</i> f. sp. <i>basilicum</i>
	Anthraxnose	<i>Colleotrichum gleosporioides</i> and <i>C. capsica</i>
	Gray mold	<i>Botrytis cinerea</i>
	Cercospora leaf spot	<i>Cercospora ocimicola</i>
	Bacterial leaf spot	<i>Pseudomonas cichorii</i>



## Diseases of Tuberous Medicinal Plants

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**Abstract:** Tuberous medicinal plants (TMP) are an important group of plants in which roots are modified into tubers and used for medicinal purposes. Many TMPs viz., Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*), safed musli (*Chlorophytum borolivianum*), Patarchur (*Coleus forskohlii*), asparagus (*Asparagus adscendens*), turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), *Holostemma adakodien*, *Typhonium trilobatu*, etc. are currently used in the preparation of stimulants, tonics, carminatives and expectorants. Plant diseases especially those caused by fungi, bacteria and viruses pose a serious threat to the profitable cultivation of tuberous medicinal plants. Important diseases of tuberous medicinal plants include root rot, wilt, tuber rot, rhizome-rot etc, which are mainly caused by soil-borne pathogens such as *Fusarium*, *Verticillium*, *Sclerotium*, *Rhizoctonia* and *Pythium* species. Growers generally use fungicides/pesticides to control these diseases. However, chemical residues in the plant tissue resulting from pesticide application make TMP medicine unsafe for human health. Biological control using antagonistic fungi and bacteria is a good substitute for chemical pesticides. In this chapter, we present an elaborate description of the important diseases of TMPs along with their sustainable management options.

**Keywords:** Asparagus, Ashwagandha, *Fusarium* spp., *Pythium* spp., *Rhizoctonia* spp., Safed musli, *Sclerotium* spp., *Verticillium* spp.

### INTRODUCTION

Medicinal plants are essential to human life and are utilised in both ancient and modern medical practises worldwide. They aid in disease prevention, health maintenance, and the treatment of various diseases. Despite enormous progress in modern allopathy's research and development, 80% of the world's population still relies on herbal medicine to treat their health issues (Goto *et al.*, 1998). It is interesting to note that in developed nations, the demand for herbal remedies has multiplied, mainly due to the side effects of modern medication. In India, over 7500 species of higher plants have been identified as having therapeutic benefits (Shiva, 1996; Kala *et al.*, 2006). About 9.18 lakh tonnes of medicinal and aroma-

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tic plants are produced in India annually on 5.57 lakh hectares of land (Ashashri *et al.*, 2015). More than 5000 different types of medicinal plants, employed in 10,000 different herbal preparations, are found in India. The natural ecosystem's forests provide 90% of the raw materials that the herbal business needs, leading to the brutal exploitation and destruction of the ecosystem's natural habitats (Mathivanan *et al.*, 2016).

Typically, a particular component of a medicinal plant, such as its seeds, leaves, flowers, roots, *etc.*, has therapeutic significance. Some medical plants have evolved their roots into tubers, which make up a significant group of therapeutic plants known as tuberous medicinal plants (TMPs). The underground storage organs of plants are known as tubers. Plant tubers have two important biological functions: first, as a storage organ, and second, as propagules to get through the dormant phase before they sprout and produce a new plant. The primary component of tuberous plants contains starch, and proteins and is used as a staple diet in most nations. Currently, a variety of TMPs that are high in dietary fibre, carotenoids, steroids, saponins, polyphenolics, and anthocyanins are utilised to make stimulants, tonics, carminatives, and expectorants (Sharma and Ramawat, 2013; Edison *et al.*, 2006). Ashwagandha (*Withania somifera*), safed musli (*Chlorophytum borolivianum*), patarchur (*Coleus forskohlii*), asparagus (*Asparagus adscendens*), turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), *Holostemma adakodien*, and *Typhonium trilobatu* are some of the tuberous medicinal plants frequently used in India to prepare herbal formulations for healthcare.

Plants that are crucial for medicine are regularly attacked by pests and pathogens which might lower their biomass and oil content (Gupta *et al.*, 2008). This lowers the therapeutic value of the plant and has a negative impact on the quality of its medicinal components. The use of these contaminated parts as medicine may also have a damaging effect on the human body (Chavan and Korekar, 2011). The lucrative and profitable cultivation of TMPs *viz.*, Ashwagandha (*Withania somifera*), safed musli (*Chlorophytum borolivianum*), Patarchur (*Coleus forskohlii*), asparagus (*Asparagus adscendens*), turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), *etc.* is seriously threatened by root rot and wilt pathogens, especially *Fusarium*, *Verticillium*, *Sclerotium*, *Rhizoctonia*, and *Pythium* species. In this chapter, the description of the important diseases of the above TMPs along with their sustainable management options is discussed in detail.

## ASHWAGANDHA AND ITS DISEASES

Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*, fam. Solanaceae), commonly known as “Indian Winter cherry” or “Indian Ginseng” is an important TMP. It is cultivated mostly in Africa, the Mediterranean region and Middle East Asia (Pati *et al.*,

2008). This medicinal plant's roots, leaves (Fig. 1), and fruits possess tremendous therapeutic value, especially roots that contain an important alkaloid called withanolide-A. In India, the roots of Ashwagandha are processed as powder and extracts are exported to the countries like USA, Canada, U. K., Sweden, Czech Republic, Australia, Italy and Germany (Anonymous 2017). It is one of the most significant herbs in *Ayurveda*, the traditional medical system in India, and has been used for thousands of years as a *Rasayana* because of its wide-ranging health advantages. Ashwagandha roots are used in more than 200 Ayurvedic formulations as the main ingredient (Ashashri *et al.*, 2015). It possesses immense therapeutic value against several ailments such as mental diseases, asthma, inflammation, arthritis, rheumatism, tuberculosis, and various other diseases, including cancer (Sreeramu and Farooqi, 2004). *Withania somnifera* is prone to several pests and diseases. Fusarium wilt and Leaf spot diseases are the most prevalent diseases, which occur in a severe form in major cultivation areas of the countries as described below.



Fig. (1). Ashwagandha plant.

### **Fusarium Wilt**

A wilt of Ashwagandha is an important and widely spread disease in nurseries as well as the commercial fields (Farooqui and Sreeramu, 2001). Sometimes, the infection causes complete failure of the crop (Sharma and Trivedi, 2010). Root rot and wilt of Ashwagandha are also reported from Bangladesh (Rehman *et al.*, 2014).

## Diseases of Non-Tuberous Medicinal Plants

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**Abstract:** Medicinal plants constitute an important group of horticultural crops and many non-tuberous medicinal plants *viz.*, aloe vera (*Aloe vera*), basil (*Ocimum sanctum*), mentha (*Mentha arvensis*), noni (*Morinda citrifolia*), isabgol (*Plantago ovata*), mulethi or liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), rosa grass (*Cymbopogon nardus*), *etc.* are currently used to prepare stimulants, tonics, carminatives, and expectorants. Various biotic and abiotic stresses affect the production of these medicinal crops. Among the biotic stresses, diseases caused by fungi, bacteria, viruses, and nematodes are major constraints. Diseases of aloe vera (such as anthracnose, dry rot, rust, soft rot), noni (dry rot, leaf blight, soft rot, root-knot), basil (anthracnose, leaf spot, powdery mildew, wilt), mentha (leaf spot, root-rot, rust, wilt), isabgol (Downey mildew, wilt), rosa grass (leaf blight, Red leaf spot), liquorice (leaf spot, root-rot) pose a serious risk to the successful cultivation of these medicinal plants. The economically significant diseases of non-tuberous medicinal plants are discussed and the relevant information is described in this chapter.

**Keywords:** Aloe vera, Basil, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, Isabgol, Mentha, *Morinda citrifolia*.

### INTRODUCTION

Medicinal plants play an important role in modern science as well as conventional medical practices around the globe and help people stay healthy, prevent sickness, and treat diseases. Generally, a specific part of the medicinal plants *e.g.* seeds, leaves, flowers, roots, *etc.* has medicinal value. Many non-tuberous medicinal plants *viz.*, aloe vera (*Aloe vera*), basil (*Ocimum sanctum*), mentha (*Mentha arvensis*), noni (*Morinda citrifolia*), isabgol (*Plantago ovata*), mulethi or liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), rosa grass (*Cymbopogon nardus*), *etc.* are currently used to prepare stimulants, tonics, carminatives, and expectorants.

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Most African, Asian and Latin American countries use conventional medication to assist in meeting some of their basic healthcare requirements. Up to 80% of people in Africa use traditional medicine as their primary form of healthcare (Payyappallimana, 2010). Around 158 million people utilise supplemental medications in the United States, where around US\$18 billion was spent on conventional medicine in 2016. (Ghorbanpour *et al.*, 2017). The UK spends about US\$230 million annually on alternative medicine. The industry for herbal medicines is already worth more than US\$60 billion annually and is continuously expanding (Anonymous, 2023). Various biotic and abiotic stresses affect the production of these non-tuberous medicinal crops (Farooqui and Sreeramu, 2004). Major challenges include plant diseases caused by various pathogenic microbes. Important diseases of non-tuberous medicinal plants and their sustainable management are presented under:

### **ALOE VERA AND ITS DISEASES**

Aloe vera is a semi-tropical plant that originated in India and is used in a wide range of therapeutic procedures. The plant is a perennial succulent member of the Asphodelaceae family that can tolerate drought. The word “*aloe*” is derived from the Arabic or Hebrew word “*alloeh*” which both mean bitter shining stuff. ‘*Ghee kunwar*’ is its Sanskrit name. It plays a significant historical role in indigenous medical systems such as *Ayurveda*, *Siddha*, *Unani*, and homoeopathy (Baby and Justin, 2010). The genus contains around 250 species, among them *Aloe barbadensis* and *A. vera* are medicinally important. The plant has lance-shaped, pointy leaves with jagged edges. *Aloe barbadensis* contains more than 200 different substances, roughly 75 of which have biological effects. Chromones, anthraquinones (such as aloe-emodin), anthrones, and their glycosides are just a few of the numerous substances found in aloe vera leaves. Aloe vera also contains lipids, sugars, vitamins, minerals, proteins, glycoproteins, amino acids, and organic acids in addition to these substances. (Roy *et al.*, 2012; Saeed *et al.*, 2004; Patidar *et al.*, 2012). Aloe vera is quite susceptible to plant pathogens and important diseases that hamper its production, are described below.

#### **Anthracnose**

One of the most serious aloe vera diseases is anthracnose and a widespread problem for aloe growers (Kumar, 2014). It has been recorded in severe form in Europe, South America, and Western Australia since 1996. The disease is caused by *Colletotrichum* spp. which may grow and develop to infect a variety of hosts due to the varied climatic conditions in the Indian subcontinent. Due to the destruction of medicinally valuable plant components Alovera, it is a severe issue in India that causes a sizable loss (Avasthi *et al.*, 2011).

### ***Causal Organism***

Aloe vera anthracnose disease is caused by *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides*. The sexual stage of the fungus is (*Glomerella cingulata*: teleomorph). On infected plant leaves, the fungus rapidly produces conidia, acervuli, setae, and appressoria (Alam *et al.*, 2007).

### ***Symptoms***

The deep sunken lesions with an oval or circular form are the most typical anthracnose symptoms. Small, round to oval, dark green, water-soaked lesions are the first signs; later, they transform into circular lesions with tan to light brown centres. The lesion's centre changes colour from reddish-brown to brown as the patches mature (Fig. 1). As the condition is severe, the lesions collapse to produce a large necrotic region (Rajendran and Gnanavel, 2011).



**Fig. (1).** *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides* symptoms on *Aloe vera*.

## Nematode Problems in Medicinal Plants

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**Abstract:** Medicinal plants are regularly attacked by the plant parasitic nematodes, which can seriously harm these crops. However, only a few medicinal plants have been reported with regard to the extent of crop damage caused by the nematode. Root-knot nematodes (*Meloidogyne* spp.), root lesion nematodes (*Pratylenchus* spp.), and stunt nematodes (*Tylenchorhynchus* spp.) are major nematode pests that affect medicinal plants and significantly reduce their yield. The economically significant medicinal plants that are infected by nematodes include Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*), Basil (*Ocimum* spp.), Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*), Coleus (*Coleus forskohlii*), Henbanes (*Hyoscyamus* sp.), Noni (*Morinda citrifolia*), Menthol mint (*Mentha* spp.), Safed Musli (*Chlorophytum borivillianum*), etc. In the present chapter, nematode infestation in the above medicinal plants has been described in detail, and appropriate management options are suggested to avoid yield losses.

**Keywords:** Ashwagandha, Basil, Brahmi, Coleus, Henbanes, Mentha, Safed musli.

### INTRODUCTION

Plants produce various chemical compounds for different purposes. Medicinal plants have been used in traditional medicine since prehistoric times, also called medicinal herbs. The herbal system of medicine is widespread in most Asian countries like India, China, Japan, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Thailand. On a global scale, there is a growing interest in the use of various medicinal plants such as henbanes, ashwagandha, Brahmi, Safed Musli, menthol mint, coleus, basil, opium poppy, etc., for therapeutic, cosmetic, colouring, flavouring, and dyeing purposes, as well as the production of nutraceuticals and food supplements, and other products (Pandey, 2003; Gupta, 2012; Ahn, 2017). Medicinal plants are used in the raw form in medicines, or their oils, alkaloids, and other components are

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extracted as pharmaceutical, cosmetic, and homeopathic use (Pandey, 2010). The efficiency of medicinal plants must be of high quality due to active principles to meet the required purpose (Lubbe and Verpoorte, 2011). Traditional medicines derived from medicinal plants have gained more credibility and have become useful in supporting herbal medicine systems for human health and care.

In the last few decades, a significant increase in the frequency and severity of plant diseases caused by fungi, bacteria, viruses, phytoplasma and nematodes in medicinal crops has been recorded, apparently due to mono-culturing because of the high market value (Palombo, 2006; Sharma, 2013). Plant nematodes constitute a major group of pathogens that attack medicinal plants and are among the important bottlenecks in the production and protection of these plants (Panday, 2017; Costa *et al.*, 2019). Almost all medicinal plants have been subjected to attack by plant parasitic nematodes, but only in a few medicinal plants, significant crop damage has been recorded (Abtahi and Bakooie, 2017; Eapen and Pandey, 2018; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019, Pandey *et al.*, 2023). Various nematodes include ecto parasites (*Tylenchorhynchus* spp.), semi-endo parasites (*Rotylenchulus reniformis*), and endo-parasites (*Meloidogyne* spp.) occurring frequently in the root zones of medicinal plants (Pandey, 2017; Khan *et al.*, 2019; Nguyen *et al.*, 2019). In the present chapter, nematode infestation in common medicinal plants *viz.*, Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*), Basil (*Ocimum* spp.), Brahmi (*Bacopa monnieri*), Coleus (*Coleus forskohlii*), Henbanes (*Hyoscyamus* sp.), Noni (*Morinda citrifolia*), Menthol mint (*Mentha* spp.), Safed Musli (*Chlorophytum borivillianum*), *etc.* have been detailed describing the distribution, symptoms, biology, life cycle, host parasites relationship, and management options to avoid yield losses.

### **ASHWAGANDHA (*WITHANIA SOMNIFERA*)**

Ashwagandha, *Withania somnifera*, also referred to as Indian Ginseng or Indian Winter cherry, belongs to the family Solanaceae. It is one of the most significant herbs of Ayurveda (Singh *et al.*, 2011). The chemical components of ashwagandha include alkaloids *viz.*, anaferine, anahygrine, cuseohygrine, isopelletierine, steroidal lactones (withaferins, withanolides) and saponins (Mishra *et al.*, 2000). The plant is also known to produce withasteroids (Ray and Gupta, 1994), which have been linked to a variety of health benefits, including antioxidant, anti-tumor, adaptogenic, anti-stress, anti-convulsant, immunomodulatory, and neurological properties (Jayaprakasam *et al.*, 2003; Budhiraja *et al.*, 2000; Furmanowa *et al.*, 2001). The roots of *W. somnifera* can be used as a sedative in cases of senile debility and to control hiccups, cough, dropsy, rheumatism, and female disorders. It is beneficial for inflammatory conditions, ulcers, and scabies when applied externally. As a febrifuge, leaves are applied to



lesions, throbbing swellings and itchy eyes (Misra, 2004). There have been numerous phytonematodes that attack the ashwagandha; however, only root-knot nematode is considered to be an economic one and has been studied in detail.

### Root-knot Nematode

The root-knot disease of ashwagandha, predominantly caused by the *Meloidogyne incognita* and *M. javanica*, is widely spread, and more than 80% of plants are infested in India. The nematode-infected plant is stunted and chlorotic, with sparse branching and fewer, smaller leaves. These signs typically are not apparent until the nematodes have caused significant damage to the root system. The infected roots of such plants are heavily galled (Fig. 1; Eapen and Pandey, 2018). A host differential test was used to identify the *Meloidogyne* races and found that race-2 predominantly attacks ashwagandha (Pandey and Kalra, 2003).



**Fig. (1).** Ashwagandha plant infected with root-knot nematode, *Meloidogyne incognita*. [Courtesy: NASI, India].

For root-knot management, the application of neem extract (*A. indica*), marc from *Artemisia annua*, and distillates from *M. arvensis* and *Bergera koengii* (syn. *Murraya koenigii*) were found to prevent the development of root knots on *W. somnifera* roots and decreased the population of *M. incognita* (Pandey and Kalra, 2003; Pandey et al., 2003). The application of bio-control agents was less successful in controlling root-knot in *W. somnifera* than organic materials; this could be because the hosts reacted negatively to the bio-control agents. However,

## SUBJECT INDEX

### A

Abiotic stresses 272, 273  
 Acid 157, 241  
   cresylic 157  
   gibberellic 241  
 Activity 31, 72, 111, 160, 209, 226  
   active fungal 160  
   anti-microbial 226  
   antioxidant 209  
   photosynthetic 72  
 Agricultural waste 135  
 Aloe rust 277  
   disease 277  
   infection 277  
 Anhydrobiosis 323  
 Anthocyanins 233  
 Apple mosaic virus 48  
 Arabis mosaic virus (AMV) 48, 117, 143  
 Aromatherapy 208, 226  
 Aromatic oils 209  
 Atherosclerosis 209

### B

Bacterial infection 102  
 Bean yellow mosaic virus (BYMV) 126, 127  
 Biotechnological tools 327  
 Biotic stresses 272, 281  
 Black spot disease 42  
 Broom symptoms 240  
 Brooming activities 159  
 Brown lesions 12, 18, 20, 24, 32, 34, 86, 87,  
   114, 136, 138, 198, 294  
   necrotic 294  
   water-soaked 24  
 Brown patch(s) 120, 164  
   activity 164  
   heavy 120

### C

Cardiovascular conditions 314  
 Chemical fungicide application 263  
 Chlorosis 7, 47, 64, 117, 289, 295, 314, 316  
 Chrysanthemum 1, 2, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26,  
   182, 184, 187, 188  
   cultivation 24  
   infected 188  
   plants, infected 188  
   stem necrosis virus (CSNV) 26  
 Clover 76  
   Mosaic Potexvirus 76  
   Yellow Mosaic 76  
 CMV 127, 129, 219  
   infects 127  
   management techniques 129  
   transmission 219  
 Combat phytoplasma infections 134  
 Corms, disease-free 117  
 Corynespora leaf spot 285  
 Crop(s) 2, 3, 4, 62, 72, 77, 100, 101, 105, 143,  
   144, 145, 183, 194, 221, 284, 296, 314  
   beverage 183  
   canopy 72  
   fruit 183  
   management techniques 105  
   waste 77, 284  
 Cucumber mosaic 104, 110, 117, 127, 128,  
   129, 143, 144, 210, 219  
   disease cucumber mosaic virus 210  
   mosaic virus (CMV) 104, 110, 117, 127,  
   128, 129, 143, 144, 219  
 Cyclamen stunt disease 104  
 Cylindrocladium 65, 215  
   diseases 65  
   infection 215

**D**

- Dasheen mosaic virus 97, 102
- Debris 102, 112, 116, 196, 276
  - deteriorates 102
  - disease-laden 116
- Dietary fibre 233
- Disease(s) 3, 7, 15, 21, 27, 30, 35, 36, 74, 120, 139, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 226, 228, 234, 281
  - airborne 35
  - bacterial 209, 226
  - control techniques 120
  - devastating 74, 211, 212
  - heart 281
  - infection, soil moisture favour 214
  - mental 234
  - of azalea 3
  - of carnation 7
  - of chrysanthemum 21
  - of gerbera 27
  - of marigold 30
  - of orchid 36, 228
  - pink 15, 210, 213, 214
  - sour 139
- DNA fragment 240
- Downy mildew 286, 287
  - disease 286, 287
  - outbreaks 287
- Drought stress 159, 168
- DsMV infection 102

**E**

- Effects 276
  - gloeosporioides 276
  - inhibitory 276
- Egg masses 321
- Electron microscopy 240
- Endoparasites 184, 187, 192
- Environment, stressful 248
- Enzymes, hydrolytic 100
- Essential oils 192, 207, 210, 213, 216, 219, 223, 276, 293, 311
- Eucalyptus 214, 215
  - saplings 215
  - seedlings 214
- Exotic varieties 197

**F**

- Fertilizers 156, 166, 212
  - acidic 156
  - organic 156
- Flood-floor production 86
- Floral production 111
- Flower(s) 1, 2, 17, 24, 27, 32, 34, 35, 38, 61, 62, 106, 110, 112, 114, 130, 133, 134, 137, 138, 183, 193, 196, 198, 199, 200, 218, 293
  - blight diseases 32
  - bud abscission 133
  - disease-free 1
  - harvesting 114
  - infected 112, 193
  - of infected plants 199
  - ornamental 198
  - pathogen attacks 24
  - wasted 130
- Flower buds 36, 44, 68, 81, 114, 130, 193, 195, 227
  - immature 195
- Flowering plants 26, 62, 70, 185, 196
  - ornamental 196
- Foliage 42, 44, 86, 91, 109, 112, 167, 171, 195, 200, 207, 237, 314, 316
  - bud browning and dark streaks in diseases 195
  - infected 44
  - infection 237
- Fungal 72, 120, 217, 224, 276, 284, 289
  - diseases 120, 217, 224, 276, 289
  - growth 72, 284
- Fungicides 28, 29, 67, 70, 82, 88, 89, 90, 99, 111, 119, 164, 166, 169, 173, 212, 239, 243, 257, 276
  - chemical 70, 82, 88, 111, 164, 173, 243, 257
- Fungus 19, 24, 31, 40, 42, 44, 107, 111, 114, 119, 122, 159, 165, 201, 213, 217, 220, 224, 232, 242, 275, 283, 289, 296
  - antagonistic 40, 201, 232
  - basidiomycete 242
  - necrotrophic 224
- Fusarium 140, 252
  - colonises tissues 252
  - disease 140

**G**

Genetic diversity 40  
 Germination 20, 21, 24, 29, 88, 108, 115, 131,  
 135, 166, 255, 262, 283, 287  
 chlamydospore 29  
 process 88  
 Grass 133, 154, 156, 160, 167, 169, 170, 171,  
 172, 210, 211  
 cool-season 160, 169  
 infected 160, 170  
 lemon 210  
 multicut aromatic 210  
 Greenhouse 15, 64  
 climatic conditions 15  
 systems 64  
 Growers 201, 251  
 commercial flower 201  
 forced 251  
 Growth, brownish-orange 172

**H**

Harvest gladiolus flowers 127  
 Herbal medicine(s) 207, 232, 273, 309  
 systems 309  
 therapeutic 207  
 Hot water treatment 113, 115, 182, 189, 196,  
 200, 220  
 Humid weather conditions 38  
 Humidity regulation 88  
 Hydro distillation wastes 312  
 Hyoscyamine 316  
 Hyperplasia 190, 192  
 Hyperplastic growth 16  
 Hypertension 246

**I**

Immunodiagnostic techniques 7  
 Impatiens necrotic spot virus (INSV) 2, 26,  
 29, 30, 104, 109, 110  
 Infected 26, 27, 34, 35, 47, 48, 67, 98, 121,  
 188, 190, 198, 211, 219, 223, 228, 236,  
 240  
 corm tissue 121  
 plants 26, 27, 34, 35, 47, 48, 188, 190, 198,  
 211, 219, 223, 228, 236, 240  
 root systems 67  
 tuber fibres 98

Infection 4, 17, 19, 39, 47, 106, 158, 161, 220,  
 224, 281  
 airborne 39  
 necrotrophic 161  
 oxysporum 19  
 phytopathogenic 281  
 cushions 161  
 processes 4, 158  
 fungal 17, 47, 106, 161, 220, 224  
 Infects 127, 159  
 gladiolus plants 127  
 grass plants 159  
 Inflammatory bowel disease 286  
 Insects 13, 17, 48, 102, 105, 111, 116, 133,  
 143, 145, 275, 280  
 mitigating 111  
 phloem-feeding 133  
 INSV infection 30  
 Inter-cropping system 219  
 Iris yellow spot virus (IYSV) 26  
 Irregular-shaped chlorosis symptom 223  
 Isabgol 286, 288  
 crop 286  
 farming 286  
 plant 288  
 seeds 286

**L**

Leaf 64, 170, 191, 215, 262  
 blotch disease 262  
 chlorosis 64, 191  
 infection 215  
 topography 170  
 Leaf blight 239, 245  
 onion 239  
 disease 245  
 Lesions 31, 32, 38, 74, 86, 91, 101, 114, 115,  
 118, 120, 123, 124, 125, 160, 187, 212,  
 218, 222, 245, 278, 293, 294, 323  
 bacterial 91  
 brown colour 293  
 flower 118  
 fusing 212  
 infected 38, 74  
 nematode incites 187  
 on flower spikes 123  
 pinkish-brown colour 222  
 reddish-brown 245  
 Lily symptomless virus (LSV) 134, 143, 144

**M**

Marigold 1, 2, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 197, 276, 316, 325  
 cultivation 30  
 farming 34  
 growing 316  
 production 32  
 white mould of 33, 34  
 Medicinal 213, 232, 241, 246, 272, 309, 321, 324  
 herbal 324  
 crops 272, 309, 321  
 Metabolites, phytotoxic 32  
 Microclimatic conditions 213  
 Mineral oil 103  
 Monsoon season 215, 259, 293  
 Mosaic disease 127, 209, 219, 222, 223  
 cucumber 127, 219  
 Mosaic virus 49  
 Mycelial growth 98, 168, 249  
 Mycelium, brown 250

**N**

Narcissus 117  
 degeneration virus (NDV) 117  
 latent virus (NLV) 117  
 mosaic 117  
 white streak virus (NWSV) 117  
 yellow stripe virus (NYSV) 117  
 Necrosis, marginal 247  
 Necrotic 63, 66, 78, 110, 188, 212, 213, 216, 286, 294  
 lesions 78, 188, 212, 213, 216, 286, 294  
 spots 63, 66, 110  
 Neem cake 192, 194, 197, 249, 314, 316, 322, 324, 325  
 Nematode(s) 104, 182, 183, 186, 190, 197, 200, 210, 308, 309, 311, 312, 313, 315, 316, 317, 318, 322, 324  
 attack 200, 322  
 cyst 104, 182, 183, 322  
 diseases 104  
 induced root cell growth 315  
 infection 182, 190, 312, 316  
 plant parasitic 183, 201, 308, 309, 318  
 population 182, 190, 197, 311, 313, 316, 317, 322  
 reproduction 312, 324

soil-inhabiting 186  
 Nitrogen fertilizer 164

**O**

Oil 61, 136, 207, 210, 211, 212, 213, 219, 220, 223, 225, 226, 276, 294, 312, 318, 320, 322, 324  
 cakes 136, 312, 324  
 castor 276  
 garlic 294  
 ginger 294  
 ginger grass 210  
 neem 276  
 production 212  
 tulsi 294  
 Organic 88, 212, 224  
 manure 212, 224  
 waste 88  
 Ornamental 2, 61, 132, 182, 183, 184  
 crops 2, 61, 182, 183, 184  
 geophytes 132

**P**

Patch disease 160, 163, 164  
 brown 160  
 yellow 160  
 Pathogen 13, 15, 16, 17, 29, 31, 35, 64, 65, 67, 69, 80, 100, 132, 135, 139, 140, 197, 214, 218, 236, 238, 252, 286  
 fungal 197, 214  
 oomycete 286  
 viral 135  
 PCR techniques 16  
 Pea mosaic virus 126  
 Phytopathogenic bacteria 37  
 Phytophthora 4, 37  
 infections 4  
 parasitica 37  
 Plant(s) 7, 15, 25, 27, 63, 84, 100, 101, 112, 122, 128, 130, 183, 191, 195, 196, 197, 199, 201, 240, 243, 308, 309, 318  
 canopy 101  
 diseases harm 63  
 grown narcissus 199  
 nematode-affected 196, 197  
 parasitic nematodes (PPNs) 183, 191, 195, 197, 201, 308, 309, 318  
 pathogen-free 7

phytoplasma-free 240  
 stressed 25  
 viruses 27  
 virus-infected 128  
 waste 15, 84, 100, 112, 122, 130, 243  
 Plant diseases 1, 16, 43, 61, 62, 71, 232, 263,  
 273, 296, 309  
 growth hormones 16  
 infection 71  
 microbiomes 296  
 Plant debris 11, 20, 21, 35, 45, 75, 83, 89,  
 101, 102, 136, 142, 218, 219, 220, 225,  
 289  
 infected 21, 35, 75, 83, 101, 225, 289  
 PnMV infection 92  
 Potymovirus 91

**R**

Rhizoctonia infections 4, 141, 142, 160  
 Rhizome rot disease 260  
 RNA silencing technology 92  
 Root-knot nematode(s) 182, 183, 184, 190,  
 192, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 316, 317,  
 324, 325, 326  
 infection 326  
 Root(s) 29, 189, 190, 191, 211, 243, 294, 308,  
 322  
 fungus-infected 211, 295  
 lesion nematode (RLN) 189, 190, 191, 308,  
 322  
 rot disease 29, 243  
 Rose rosette virus (RRV) 210, 227  
 Rust 36, 170, 171, 217, 277, 278, 292  
 disease 36, 170, 171, 217, 292  
 fungi 170, 171, 277, 278  
 of marigold 36

**S**

Sclerotia, black stress-resistant 17, 35  
 Seed infection 20  
 Seed rhizomes 259, 262  
 infected 259  
 pathogen-free 262  
 Skin 213, 244, 246, 314  
 conditions 314  
 diseases 213  
 wrinkled brown 244  
 Soft rot disease 109

Soil 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 16, 19, 20, 24, 25, 32, 65,  
 100, 101, 107, 111, 114, 122, 125, 132,  
 133, 135, 136, 141, 145, 154, 155, 156,  
 157, 168, 183, 191, 198, 200, 221, 224,  
 236, 237, 243, 249, 284, 291, 252, 314,  
 321  
 acidic 19, 154, 236, 237  
 coarse sand 157  
 compacted 155  
 contaminated 6, 65, 114, 125, 133  
 disinfection technique 145  
 dry 133, 168  
 fertility 156  
 fumigation 16, 198, 200, 221  
 grassland 154  
 infested 7  
 moist 141  
 moisture 25, 249, 314  
 nematode population 200  
 pathogens 183, 191  
 salinity 168  
 sandy 321  
 solarization 9, 16, 19, 20, 24, 32, 133, 284,  
 291  
 sterilized 224  
 water 10  
 water-saturated 5  
 Sound horticultural techniques 25

**T**

Tobacco 2, 104, 117, 127, 143, 144, 145, 209,  
 222, 223  
 mosaic virus (TMV) 104, 209, 222, 223  
 rattle virus (TRV) 2, 117, 144, 145  
 rattling virus 143  
 ringspot virus 127  
 Tomato 2, 3, 26, 29, 30, 104, 109, 110, 144  
 bushy stunt virus (TBSV) 144  
 spotted wilt virus (TSWV) 2, 3, 26, 29, 30,  
 104, 109, 110  
 Transmission, viral 129  
 Transmitted viruses 103  
 Transverse septa 238  
 TSWV infection 30  
 Tuberosa mild mottle virus 137  
 Tulip 144  
 band-breaking virus (TBBV) 144  
 chlorotic blotch virus (TCBV) 144  
 mild mottle mosaic virus (TMMMV) 144

- severe mosaic virus (TSMV) 144
- top-breaking virus (TTBV) 144
- Turmeric 232, 233, 257, 258, 259, 260, 262, 263
  - infecting 258
  - production 258, 260
- Twigs, gleosporioides-infected 293

## V

- Viral 26, 29, 30, 62, 104, 109, 117, 127, 134, 143, 144
  - diseases 26, 29, 62, 104, 109, 117, 134, 143
  - infections 30, 109, 117, 127, 144
- Virus 26, 48, 117, 144
  - black ringspot 117
  - chrysanthemum stem necrosis 26
  - infection 144
  - narcissus degeneration 117
  - necrotic ringspot 48
  - symptoms 144

## W

- Water 7, 16, 23, 25, 37, 80, 91, 109, 116, 193, 218, 254, 274
  - conducting vessels 218
  - soaked lesions 7, 80, 193, 254, 274
  - splashing 16, 23, 25, 37, 91, 109, 116
- White cottony growth 211, 236
- Wounds, diabetic 257



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