

Fusarium Wilt on Sweet Basil: Cause and Sources in Southeastern Spain

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This study concerned a new disease detected in 1997 in southeastern Spain – Fusarium wilt in basil (*Ocimum basilicum* L.), caused by *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *basilici*. Its importance was evaluated at two locations in the Almería area, where 14% of the plants presented symptoms of the disease after 4 months of cropping. The search for sources of the disease inoculum was centered on the health of the seeds and the polypropylene trays that were reused for plant production. Analysis of four lots of seeds from Germany and Italy showed that two of them harbored *F. oxysporum* f.sp. *basilici*. This finding was confirmed by the analysis of seeds collected from diseased plants. Furthermore, analysis of three reused trays revealed the presence of the pathogen on them and it was concluded that the trays acted as the source of dispersion of the mycosis.

KEY WORDS: Basil; Fusarium wilt; *Fusarium oxysporum* f.sp. *basilici*; seed health; health of nurseries.

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