

Seed Bulb Treatment on Onion

Recognize the problem

Many of the fungal diseases affecting onion are seed borne. Preventive actions are always better than curative actions to minimize economic loss. Therefore, seed treatment before establishment of the crop is essential.

Background

Seed treatments can often be used to control pathogens that occur on or in the seeds. By treating the bulbs before planting, disease infection can be prevented as all of the fungal inoculum remaining in the seeds will be destroyed by this practice. Some examples for such seed borne fungi are *Fusarium* spp., *Botrytis* spp., *Sclerotium* spp. and *Pythium* spp.

Management

The following steps are recommended to be carried out for seed treatment.

- Separate onion bulbs singly and clean them to remove the outer skin.
- Prepare a solution of 180 grams of thiophanate methyl 50 %+ thiram 30 % WP in 100 litres of water. This will be sufficient for treating 50 Kg of onion bulbs.
- Put 25 kg of bulbs into one net bag, keeping half of the bag empty and loosely tie the neck of the bag
- Immerse the bag for 30 minutes in the solution
- Remove the bulbs and spread them in the shade to drain the excess water before planting
- This prepared solution can be used to treat another set of 25 Kg of onion bulbs in the same way

Preparation of solution. (Photo by A. Vakeesan, CABI)



Separated onion bulbs are ready for soaking. (Photo by A. Vakeesan, CABI)



When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.

Scientific name(s) > *Fusarium* spp., *Botrytis* spp., *Pythium* spp., *Sclerotium* spp.

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: Sri Lanka

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