



## Management of Pests and Diseases in Ber

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### INTRODUCTION

Ber is a good income option for farmers in areas with dry and hot climates. In Haryana, Ber is mainly cultivated in Hisar, Fatehabad, Jhajjar, Rewari, Bhiwani, Nuh and Mahendragarh districts. The fruit of the Ber is rich in many nutrients. Ber fruit is rich in Vitamin C, potassium, fiber, amino acids and antioxidants. Ber fruit is also low in calories and fat. Farmers can earn good income for a long time by cultivating Ber by advanced methods. However, income may be reduced drastically if pests and diseases are not managed on time in the Ber crop. The Ber crop is mainly attacked by the following pests and diseases:

**1. Ber fruit fly:** It is the most harmful pest to Ber. It is shaped like a house fly but its colour is brownish yellow. When the fruit is the size of a pea, the female fly lays eggs under the peel of the fruit. The affected fruits become crooked and shorn and ripen quickly and fall off. Such fruits are not fit to be eaten. Early and late fruiting and fruits with high sweetness suffer more losses.

#### Management :

- For the management of this pest, collect the insect-infested fruits daily and bury them 2 feet deep in the ground or feed the animals.
- In early November, when the plant starts to bear fruit and the fruits are as size of the pea, then spray 600 ml Oxidemeton-Methyl (Metasystox) 25 EC or 500 ml. Diamethoate (Rogor) 30 EC with 500 liters of water. Repeat the spraying of these chemicals in mid-December. At the end of January, spray 500 ml malathion 50 EC plus 5 kg of jaggery or sugar in 500 litres of water per acre. After spraying malathion, fruits to be harvested after two days and wash them with water for at least half an hour so that the effect of the chemical is not there.

- Fruit fly trap along with fruit fly specific lures may also be used for control of this pest.

**2. Lac insect:** Although it is useful if reared commercially for lac production, their presence on ber trees is considered as harmful because they devitalize the trees and adversely affect the yield of fruits. Young red tiny insect suck the sap from many soft twigs, which leads to a drastic decrease in yield and quality. Their body is covered with a sticky substance. Mold grows on the faecal of these insects. The outbreak of this pest starts from June-July. Old, infested branches help in spreading the outbreak.

**Management :**

- After harvesting the fruits, cut and burn the infested parts.
- When new growths starts, spray 400 ml of Monocrotophos (Nuvacron/Monocil) 36 W.S.C. or 600 ml of Oxidemeton-Methyl (Metasystox) 25 E.C. mixed in 500 litres of water per acre during August-September.

**3. Termites:** These pests cause significant damage to fruit-bearing, shaded, and other trees. They cause more damage in plants or newly planted saplings (which are planted in new and sandy soil). Dry and semi-arid climates are favourable for them. These pests do not prefer sunlight. They live underground, feeding on the roots of trees, hollowing out the trunk as they move upward. When the roots, bark, or central wood of the trees are damaged, the trees dry up and die. Their outbreak persists throughout the year, but it reduces during winter and rainy seasons.

**Management:**

- To control this pest, keep the field clean, do not allow any stumps, decayed debris, or dry

wood in the field, as it promotes termite infestation.

- Deep ploughing and proper watering around the treest so that the infestation of termites is reduced.
- Do not add raw manure and eliminate the queen termite.
- Before planting the new saplings, 50 ml Chlorpyrifos 20 E.C. along with 5 liters of water should be drenched per pit. Before adding the chemical, put 2-3 buckets of water in each pit.

**3. Powdery mildew:** Due to this disease, white powder accumulates on the fruits and leaves. The size of the fruit remains small. The surface of the fruit becomes rough. There is a drastic reduction in yield.

**Management:**

- To treat this, spray 0.1 percent kerathan or 0.2 percent sulfex just before flowering and the second spray should be given when fruits is of pea grain size. Again, provide two more sprays at an interval of 15 days of above-mentioned chemicals. It is very important for all fruits to be soaked in a fungicide solution for successful control.

**Black fruit spot disease:** It produces small, irregular, sunken, black spots on ber fruit. The infected fruits become disfigured and may drop off before harvest. The disease starts its appearance during February and is very severe during February-March. To prevent this, spray a 0.2 percent solution of copper oxychloride.