



# **Effect of Botanical Extracts and Essential Oils on *Alternaria brassicae* (Berk.) Sacc. of Mustard (*Brassica juncea* L.)**

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## **Authors' contributions**

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Mustard is an important oilseed crop in India. *Alternaria* leaf blight caused by *Alternaria brassicae* is an economically important disease of oilseed brassicas as it reduces the quality and quantity of the seeds. Botanical extracts and essential oils were tested on *Alternaria brassicae* at different concentrations to evaluate the effect *in vitro* by poison food technique in Completely Randomized Design (CRD). The study was done at the Department of Plant Pathology laboratory, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences during 2021-2022. The results revealed that all the botanical extracts and essential oils tested significantly inhibited the mycelial growth of *Alternaria brassicae*. Among the botanical extracts, the highest mycelial growth inhibition was found in garlic bulb extract @ 15% (93.11%), followed by garlic bulb extract @ 10% (87.33%). Among essential oils the maximum mycelial growth inhibition per cent was observed in eucalyptus

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oil @ 3% (95.77%), followed by eucalyptus oil @ 2% (88.22%). The higher concentration of all the botanical extracts and essential oils shows significantly higher per cent mycelial growth inhibition as compared to their lower levels.

**Keywords:** *Alternaria brassicae*; botanical extracts; essential oils; In vitro; mustard.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

“Indian mustard (*Brassica juncea* L.) is an important oilseed crop grown both in tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world. *Alternaria* blight is widely distributed disease in all mustard cultivated areas” [1]. “The symptoms of *A. brassicae* appear on leaves, stem, adult plants and in siliquae during ripening stage. Dark spots appear on leaves and siliquae which adversely effect on seed production and quality of mustard” [2]. “It causes high yield loss, 15-71% in productivity with 14-36% decrease in oil content” [3]. “Natural plant extracts modulate plant growth and are involved in plant defense responses, including limiting pathogen development” [4]. “The action of natural compounds such as terpenoids, phenolics, and alkaloids are not specific, and their effects on pathogens are versatile” [5]. “Essential oils constitute an important source of biologically active compounds, including antimicrobial, insecticidal, fungicidal, nematocidal, herbicidal, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties” [6]. Thus the present study aimed to evaluate the effect of botanical extracts and essential oil on *alternaria* blight of mustard.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The experiment was conducted in the Department of Plant Pathology Laboratory, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology and Sciences, Prayagraj, U.P. India during 2022. Laboratory experiment was carried out to find out the inhibitory effect of botanical extracts and essential oil on the mycelial growth of *Alternaria brassicae* in Completely Randomized Design (CRD) with five replications in each treatment.

### 2.1 Isolation and Maintenance of Pure Culture

Pathogenic *Alternaria brassicae* was isolated from infected leaf of mustard collected from Central Research Field of SHUATS. Infected portions with concentric rings were cut out from leaves for microscopic examination to check the

presence of pathogenic fungus. After confirming the presence of *Alternaria brassicae*, leaves were cut into small pieces (1-1.5cm) with sterile blade. These pieces were disinfected with 0.5% sodium hypochlorite (NaOCl) solution for two minutes followed by three washings with distilled water and excessive moisture was removed using sterile blotter paper. The surface sterilized leaf pieces were aseptically transferred into petri dishes containing potato dextrose agar medium using sterilized forceps and incubated at  $25\pm 2$  °C for 7 days.

Microscopic observation confirmed the presence of *Alternaria brassicae*. Pathogen pure culture was performed on PDA slants and petri plates under aseptic condition by single spore technique. The plates were incubated at 25°C for 1 week until full growth obtained and pathogen subculture was done aseptically for further study.

### 2.2 Preparation of Plant Extracts

Matured leaves of neem and lantana were collected and sterilized with distilled water, the leaves were homogenized in a pre-chilled pestle and mortar using chilled and sterilized distilled water. Aqueous extract of this neem and lantana (1% w/v) was prepared by mixing 100g fresh leaves of plant with 100 ml of sterile distilled water and crushing in waring blender. The extract was filtered through four layers of moisture muslin cloth. The filtrate thus obtained was considered as 100% concentration. Aqueous extracts (5, 10 and 15%) were prepared according to the treatments and mixed with 100ml potato dextrose agar medium respectively in separate 250ml conical flask. The media in conical flask was sterilized in an autoclave at temperature of 121°C for 20 minutes.

### 2.3 Poison Food Technique

#### 2.3.1 Evaluation of plant extracts on the colony growth of test fungus

The procedure of the experiment was done according to [7]. An appropriate quantity of garlic bulb extract, neem leaf extract and lantana leaf extract at desired concentrations were mixed

thoroughly, autoclaved and cooled (40°C) PDA medium in conical flasks (250ml cap) to obtain desired concentrations (5, 10 and 15%). Sterilized and cooled PDA medium amended with plant extracts was then poured (15 to 20 ml/plate) into sterile glass petri plates (90mm) and allowed to solidify at room temperature. The plant extracts and its respective concentrations were replicated five times. The plates containing PDA without any plant extract were maintained as control. Upon solidification of PDA, the treated and control plates were aseptically inoculated by placing a 5mm mycelial disc in the centre obtained from a week old actively growing pure culture of *A. brassicae*. All these plates were then incubated at 25±1°C temperature till the treated control plates were fully covered with mycelial growth of the test fungus. Per cent inhibition of growth (mm) of *A. brassicae* in petri plate was recorded at 7<sup>th</sup> day. The radial growth of mycelium of each plate was measured by taking average of the two diameters taken at right angles for each colony.

### 2.3.2 Evaluation of essential oils on the colony growth of test fungus

The evaluation of antifungal activity of the essential oils using the poisoned food technique was done according to [7], required amount of the stock solutions from eucalyptus oil and neem oil (1ml, 2ml and 3ml) mixed with Tween 20 were incorporated to enhance oil solubility into the sterile PDA medium and then poured in the petri dishes (90 mm) at 45°C and the control plates were carried out only in PDA without adding the oil. Essential oils and its respective concentrations were replicated five times.

### 2.3.3 Evaluation of fungicide on the colony growth of test fungus

Mancozeb (Dithane M-45) @ 0.2% was dissolved in 100 ml of sterilized molten PDA prior to inoculation of *Alternaria brassicae*. PDA plates without chemical but inoculated with *Alternaria brassicae* were served as control. Five replications were maintained for all the treatments and plates were incubated in BOD incubator at a temperature of 25±1°C. The colony diameter of the fungus was measured on 7<sup>th</sup> day of incubation and compared with the colony growth of the fungus in control. The experiment was conducted in Completely Randomized Design (CRD) with five replications in each treatment.

The inhibition percentage was calculated using the formula:

$$I = \frac{C - T}{C} \times 100$$

where,

I = Per cent inhibition

C = Growth (mm) of test fungus in untreated control plates (average of both diagonals),

T = Growth (mm) of test fungus in treated plates (average of both diagonals).

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Three botanical extracts, viz., garlic bulb extract, neem leaf extract and *Lantana* leaf extract @ 5%, 10%, 15% concentrations and two essential oils, viz., eucalyptus oil and neem oil @ 1%, 2%, 3% concentrations were evaluated on *Alternaria brassicae* *in vitro* and the results are presented on Table 1, Fig. 1 and plate 1, 2, 3.

### 3.1 Effect of Botanical Extracts and Essential Oils on the Mycelial Growth of *Alternaria brassicae*

The data presented in Table 1, depicted in Fig. 1 and plate 1 reveal that all the treatments significantly inhibited the radial growth of *Alternaria brassicae* when compared to untreated control. Among plant extracts @ 5% concentration, garlic bulb extract showed maximum inhibition of radial growth (74.22%), followed by neem leaf extract (3.11%), *Lantana* leaf extract (4.66%). Among essential oils @ 1% concentration, eucalyptus oil showed maximum inhibition of radial growth (77.11%), followed by neem oil (22.22%) as compared to mancozeb (treated check) @ 0.2% (100%) and untreated control (0%).

The data presented in Table 1, depicted in Fig. 1 and plate 2 reveal that all the treatments significantly inhibited the radial growth of *Alternaria brassicae* when compared to untreated control. Among plant extracts @ 10% concentration, garlic bulb extract showed maximum inhibition of radial growth (87.33%), followed by neem leaf extract (46.22%), *Lantana* leaf extract (10.66%). Among essential oils @ 2% concentration, eucalyptus oil showed maximum inhibition of radial growth (88.22%), followed by neem oil (31.33%) as compared to mancozeb (treated check) @ 0.2% (100%) and untreated control (0%).

The data presented in Table 1, depicted in Fig. 1 and plate 3 reveal that all the treatments significantly inhibited the radial growth of *Alternaria brassicae* when compared to untreated control. Among plant extracts @ 15% concentration, garlic bulb extract showed maximum inhibition of radial growth (93.11%), followed by neem leaf extract (71.55%), *Lantana* leaf extract (17.11%). Among essential oils @ 3% concentration, eucalyptus oil showed maximum inhibition of radial growth (95.77%), followed by neem oil (37.77%) as compared to mancozeb (treated check) @ 0.2% (100%) and untreated control (0%).

All the treatments are statistically significant over control. Among the treatments, eucalyptus oil @ 2% and garlic bulb extract @ 10%, *Lantana* leaf extract and neem leaf extract @ 5% were statistically at par.

From the study, it was evident that mycelial growth inhibition of the pathogen increased linearly with an increase in concentration of botanical extracts and essential oils. Among the

botanical extracts, the highest mycelial growth inhibition was found in garlic bulb extract @ 15% (93.11%), followed by garlic bulb extract @ 10% (87.33%). Among essential oils, the maximum mycelial growth inhibition per cent was observed in eucalyptus oil @ 3% (95.77%), followed by eucalyptus oil @ 2% (88.22%).

Concurrent with present findings, [8] have reported maximum inhibition of mycelial growth with different concentration of garlic bulb extracts. The effectiveness of garlic bulb extract in inhibition of mycelial growth of the pathogen might be due to the presence of antimicrobial properties like diallyl-disulfide and diallyl-trisulfide in *Allium sativum* [9]. Similar results were earlier reported by [10] and [11,12] reported maximum inhibition of mycelial growth of eucalyptus oil. Probable reasons may be due to the main constituents of eucalyptus oil like isoborneol, linalool,  $\alpha$ -terpineol, 1,8-cineole,  $\alpha$ -pinene and camphene which have known antimicrobial properties [13]. Similar results were also reported by [14 and 15].

**Table 1. Effect of botanical extracts and essential oils on the mycelial growth of *Alternaria brassicae***

Tr. No	Treatments	Concentrations	Radial growth of the pathogen(mm)	Per cent inhibition
T <sub>0</sub>	Control (untreated check)	-	90	0
T <sub>1</sub>	Garlic bulb extract	5%	23.20	74.22
		10%	11.40 <sup>a</sup>	87.33
		15%	6.20	93.11
T <sub>2</sub>	Neem leaf extract	5%	87.20 <sup>b</sup>	3.11
		10%	48.40	46.22
		15%	25.60	71.55
T <sub>3</sub>	<i>Lantana</i> leaf extract	5%	85.80 <sup>b</sup>	4.66
		10%	80.40	10.66
		15%	74.60	17.11
T <sub>4</sub>	Eucalyptus oil	1%	20.60	77.11
		2%	10.60 <sup>a</sup>	88.22
		3%	3.80	95.77
T <sub>5</sub>	Neem oil	1%	70.00	22.22
		2%	61.80	31.33
		3%	56.00	37.77
T <sub>6</sub>	Mancozeb (treated check)	0.2%	0	100
		<b>S. Em (±)</b>	<b>C.D. (P=0.05)</b>	
Treatments		0.40	1.07	
Concentrations		0.24	0.70	
T×C		0.73	1.85	

\*Average of five replications.

Values in the same column followed with similar alphabet are non-significant to each other at (p=0.05)

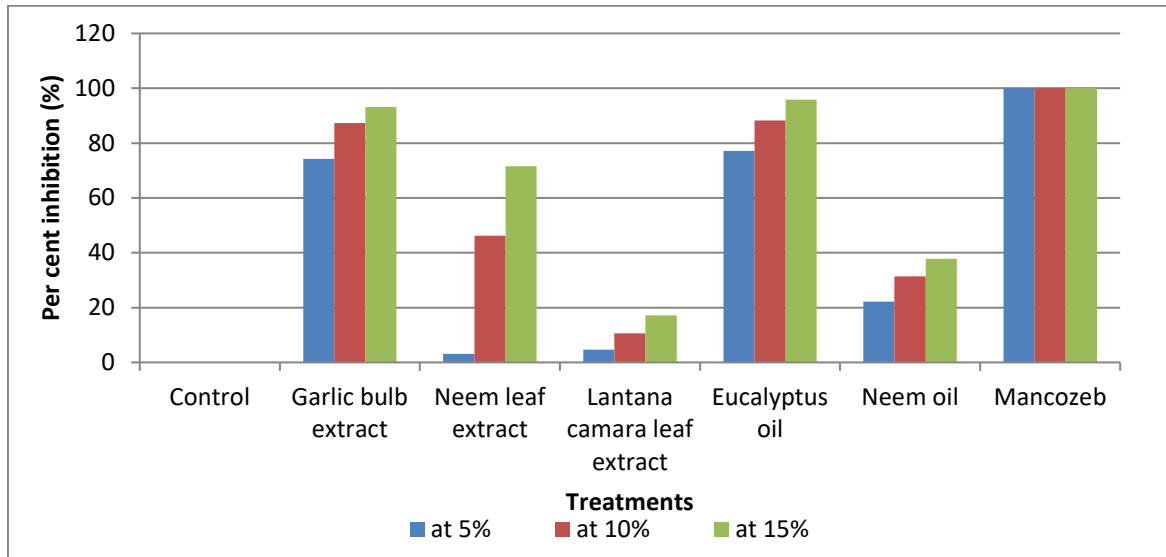


Fig. 1. Effect of botanical extracts and essential oils on the mycelial growth inhibition per cent of *Alternaria brassicae*

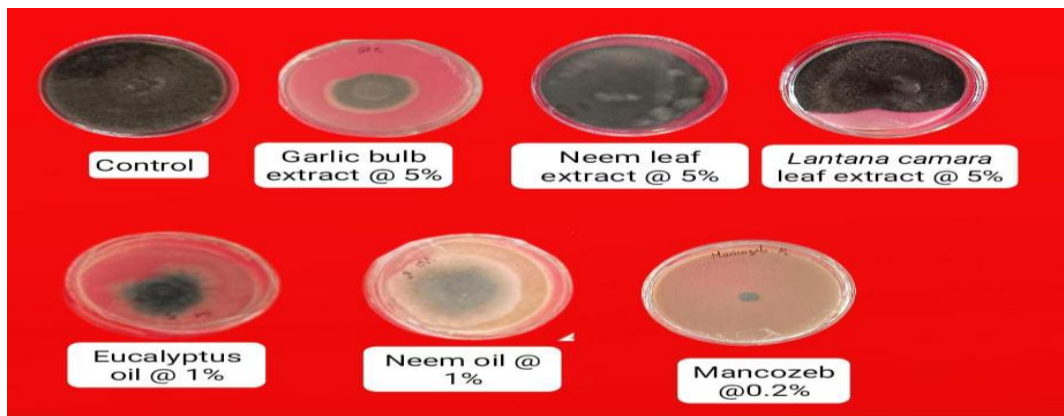


Plate 1. Effect of botanical extracts (5%) and essential oils (1%) on the radial growth of *Alternaria brassicae*

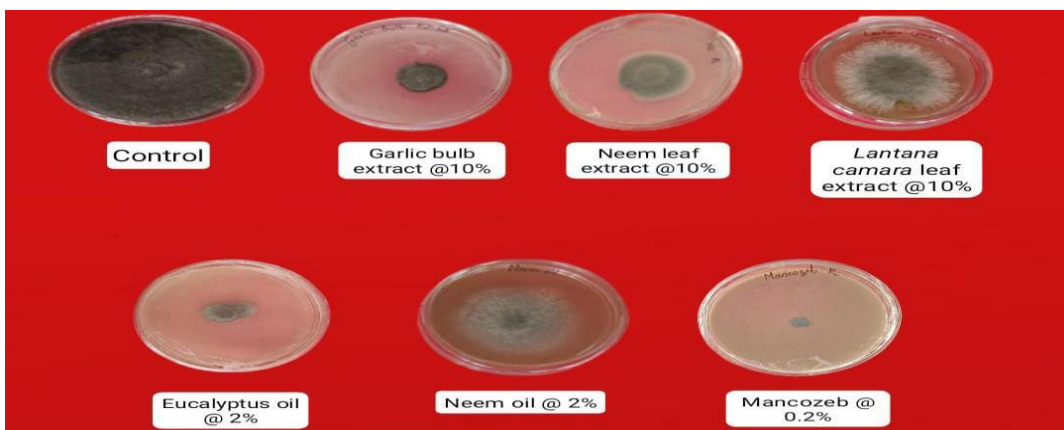
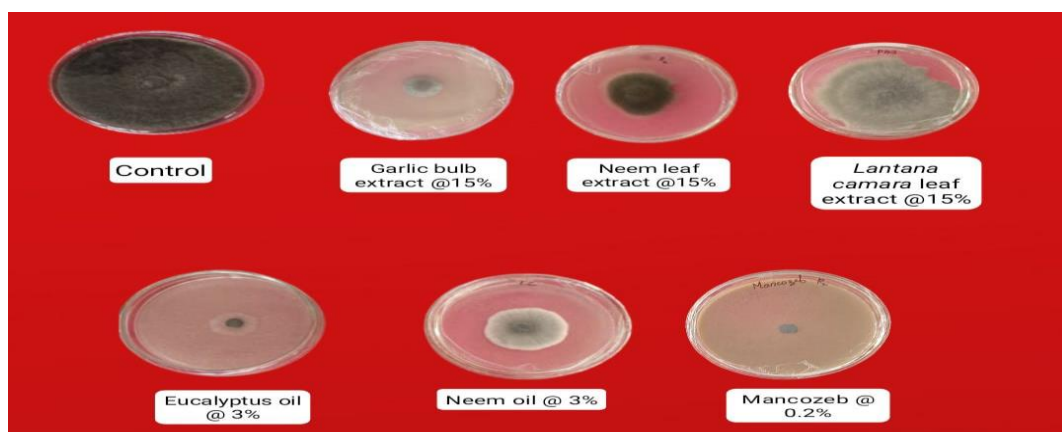


Plate 2. Effect of botanical extracts (10%) and essential oils (2%) on the radial growth of *Alternaria brassicae*



**Plate 3. Effect of botanical extracts (15%) and essential oils (3%) on the radial growth of *Alternaria brassicae***

#### 4. CONCLUSION

It was concluded that both eucalyptus oil as well as garlic bulb extract effectively inhibited the growth of *Alternaria brassicae* in mustard. Botanical extracts and essential oils are environmentally non pollutants, non-phytotoxic, cost effective and having antifungal properties which inhibited the pathogen growth. For substantiation of current result, more trials should be conducted in future for further recommendations.

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#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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