

## Irrigation in Strawberries: Disease and Pest Management Perspective

Surendra Dara, Strawberry and Vegetable Crops Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension

Phone: 805-934-6240 Email: [skdara@ucdavis.edu](mailto:skdara@ucdavis.edu)

Many strawberry diseases prefer damp conditions. Irrigation or splashing water will also spread those diseases. Providing optimum irrigation and drainage are important in disease management. Drip irrigation reduces the risk of disease incidence and spread. If sprinklers are used, correct spacing and staggered rises are important for uniform watering. In the case of arthropod pests, water stress can worsen mite problem.

### Gray Mold or Botrytis Fruit Rot (*Botrytis cinerea*)

Infection occurs when fungal spores on the plant or fruit are exposed to free water and cool temperatures. Avoiding puddles of water on the plastic mulch and use drip irrigation to reduce infection.



### Angular Leaf Spot (*Xanthomonas fragariae*)

Can be a problem in fields irrigated with sprinklers. Use of drip irrigation is recommended because bacterial spores spread to other plants with sprinklers irrigation.



### Anthraxnose (*Colletotrichum acutatum*)

Wet and moderately warm weather favors disease development. Fungal spores spread by splashing water. Drip irrigation can help reduce the disease spread.



### Phytophthora Crown Rot (*Phytophthora* spp.)

Overhead irrigation and poor drainage can contribute to this fungal disease. But water stress increases symptom development. Avoiding poorly drained soils, making higher beds, proper irrigation practices help manage this disease.



### Two-spotted spider mite (*Tetranychus urticae*)

Vigorous plant growth is important to withstand mite damage. Water stress, dry and dusty conditions worsens the mite problem. Adequate irrigation helps promote vigorous and healthy plant growth.

