

Impact of the entomopathogenic fungus, *Beauveria bassiana* on promoting strawberry plant growth

Surendra Dara

Strawberry and Vegetable Crops Advisor and Affiliated IPM Advisor

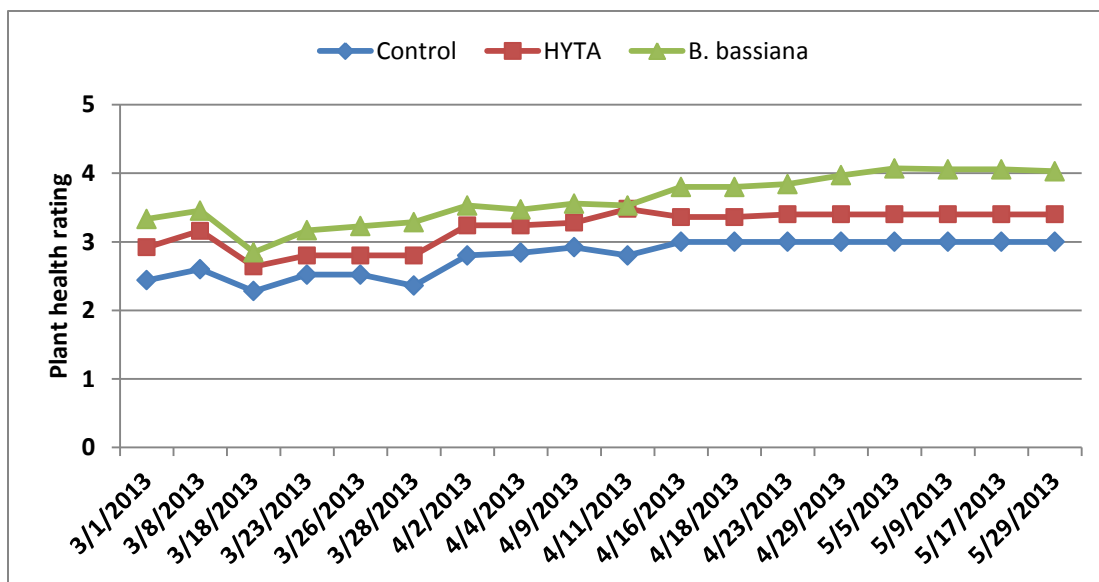
University of California Cooperative Extension

San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties

Entomopathogenic fungus, *Beauveria bassiana* is a soil fungus that is primarily used for pest management. However, it appears to promote plant growth and contribute to the overall health. Studies are conducted to investigate the potential of the fungus beyond pest management.

Raised bed study, 2013:

Treatments included untreated control, HYT A (contains soil-based microorganisms that fix atmospheric and applied nitrogen, solubilize nutrients, and build soil organic matter), and *Beauveria bassiana* (entomopathogenic fungus). Roots of the strawberry transplants were treated with HYT A and *B. bassiana* before planting. Plant health and growth were periodically monitored and rated on a 0 (dead) – 5 (very good) scale.



Average health rating was 2.8 for untreated control, 3.2 for HYT A, and 3.6 for *B. bassiana*.

Commercial field study 2013-2014:

BotaniGard ES (*B. bassiana*) suspension was prepared by mixing 0.64 fl oz of the formulation in 1 gal of water and 0.4 fl oz of suspension was applied at the base of each plant about 2 inches deep. Application started four days after planting on 12/2/13 and continued every week until 1/13/14 and every other week thereafter until 4/7/14. Plant canopy size was measured every month from January to March, 2014 and yield was monitored from March onwards.

