

**SOME FACTORS AFFECTING *IN VITRO*
PROPAGATION OF STRAWBERRY
(*Fragaria x ananassa*)**

By

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B.Sc. Agric. Sci. (Horticulture), Fac. Agric., Ain Shams Univ., 2006

THESIS

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of**

MASTER OF SCIENCE

In

**Agricultural Sciences
(Vegetable Crops)**

**Department of Vegetable Crops
Faculty of Agriculture
Cairo University
EGYPT**

2016

APPROVAL SHEET

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out during the period from 2010 to 2015 at the Tissue Culture Research Laboratory, Vegetable Research Departments, Horticulture Research Institute, Giza, Egypt. The aim of this work was to improvement of the performance of strawberry plants in tissue cultures. Also hardened the *in vitro* plantlets to the open field. To achieve optimal number of shoots per explant and cluster weight (g) cultured shoot tip on MS medium and Boxus (1974) medium supplemented with 1.0 mg/l BA and 0.1 mg/l IBA. Sweet Charlie cultivar producing more shoot number than Florida cultivar, shoot tip explant producing highest values of number of shoot and cluster weight, MS- medium and Cossio and Menin 1982- medium revealed similar values of number of shoot and cluster weight, the darkness conditions (24 h darkness for 15 days then later normal conditions) showed higher values of number of shoots and cluster weight, 3.0 mg/l TDZ producing highest values of number of shoot and cluster weight when meristem explant is used but when the shoot tip explant used 1.0 mg/l BA producing highest values of number of shoot and cluster weight. The third subculture obtained the best values of number of shoot and cluster weight. Sweet Charlie cultivar plantlets obtained maximum values of plantlet height on hormone free MS medium at half or double strength while Florida cultivar on MS-medium at half strength supplemented with 1.0 mg/l IBA. Elongated shoots of Sweet Charlie and Florida cultivars gave the maximum number of roots and root length on MS medium supplemented with 1.0 mg/l NAA and 30 g/l sucrose. Plantlets of Sweet Charlie cultivar which were produced on 1/10 strength MS solid medium as a pre- acclimatization were successfully hardened by growing in transplanting media consisted of soil: sand: compost (1:1:1 v/v/v).

Key words: *In vitro culture, Strawberry, Type of medium, Plant growth regulators, Cultivars, Subculture, Incubating condition, Acclimatization.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*First of all: Thanks to **Allah** for offering me the strength to fulfill this hard mission.*

*I wish to express my sincere appreciation and deep gratitude to late **Dr. Ahmed Hassan Khereba**, Professor of Vegetables, Vegetables Department, Cairo University for his valuable advices to me. I will always remember his generous help.*

*Also I wish to express my sincere appreciation and deep gratitude to **Dr. Yasser Mohamed Ahmed**, Associate Professor of Vegetables, Vegetables Department, Cairo University for his kind supervision and the facilities offered to me during the preparation of this work.*

*I feel deeply thanks to **Dr. Mohamed Safwat Saad El-Shabasi**, Head Researcher, Horticulture Research Institute, Agriculture Research Center for his kind supervision and the facilities offered to me during the preparation of this work and writing the manuscript.*

*Also I feel deeply thanks to **Dr. Sayed Mahmoud Ahmed**, Head Researcher, Horticulture Research Institute, Agriculture Research Center for his help during the preparation of this work and writing the manuscript.*

*Very special thanks to **Dr. Mohamed Mostafa, Mohamed Motawee** and all my colleges in Tissue Culture Lab for sincere help.*

*Very special thanks for my friends **Hossam Nassar** and **Shimaa Bayomi** for help and continuous encouragement.*

*Finally, very special thanks to my **family** for their continuous encouragement and praying for me.*

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Full name
BA	6-Benzyl adenine
BAP	Benzyl amino purine
cm	Centimeter
cv	Cultivar
g/l	Gram per liter
h	Hour
IAA	Indole-3-acetic acid
IBA	3-Indolebutyric acid
Kin	Kinetin; 6-furfurylaminopurine
mg/l	Milligram per liter
ml	Milliliter
MS	Murashige and Skoog medium
NAA	α -Naphthalene acetic acid
TDZ	Thidiazuron; N-Phenyl-N-1,2,3-thidiazol-5 ylurea
v/v	Volume to Volume
W	Watt
μM	Micromolar

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INTRODUCTION

Strawberry (*Fragaria* × *ananassa* Duch.) is a natural hybrid of *Fragaria chiloensis* and *Fragaria virginiana*. It is a perennial herb belonging to the *Rosaceae* family. Strawberry is a traditionally popular delicious fruit for its flavor and taste. It can be consumed fresh, frozen or processed. According to **The Nutrient Database for Standard Reference (1999)** strawberry fruits are rich of vitamins C, B1, B2, proteins, calcium, potassium, copper and iron which are most essential for human being of the nutritious elements.

Strawberry cultivation is concentrated in the governorates of Ismailia, Qalyubia, Al Sharqia and Al Beheira. According to **FAO (2012)**, strawberry cultivated area in Egypt was 13888.1 Feddan with production of 242297 Tons, and this area is in increasing over the years. Also, in Egypt the exported quantity of strawberry was 74976 Tons and 58721 (1000\$), while the imported quantity was 348 Tons and 189 (1000\$). Also Egypt occupies fourth place of strawberry world production in 2012 by 5.5% of total world production.

Strawberry is propagated by runners therefore the health of daughter plants depends on their mother plants. On the other hand, Strawberry is affected by numerous viruses that greatly reduce the yield (**Pisi, 2008**). The viruses cause some viral diseases that cause smaller leaves, decreasing in the photosynthesis rate and eventually reducing fresh and dry weight. In complex infections (more than one virus infection), the rate of photosynthesis per unit area also was

profoundly reduced (**Kang *et al.* 1981**). The yield reduction caused by some viruses may be up to 80% (**Thompson and Jelkman, 2003**). Therefore the runners of strawberry are not always suitable for this type of cultivation due to their vulnerability and susceptibility to pathological agents. The use of meristem culture for virus elimination is employed for a number of species. Furthermore, meristem regenerated plants usually maintain the genetic characteristics of the parent plant (**Nehra and Kartha, 1994**). Meristems, generally obtained from runners of virus-free plants, are commonly used to establish *in vitro* cultures, which are employed for mass propagation or as a source of plant material for regeneration and transformation experiments (**Boxus, 1992**). The method for avoiding virus infections was using meristem culture from health mother stocks, as a propagation material, **Sim *et al.* (2007)**. Micro-propagated strawberry plants were comparatively better in different characters, i.e. crown size, number of runners, flowering time and yield of berries, than conventionally propagated runner plants (**Karhu and Hakala, 2007**). Strawberries can be propagated *in vitro* conditions by using tissue culture methods where as micro-propagation is a very useful technique for plant improvement. *In vitro* culture of meristem is a successfully method for mass propagation of strawberry plants in some countries. It was estimated that several millions of plants can be produced within a year from few number of mother plants by using tissue culture technique (**Boxus, 1983**). Micro-propagation was proved to be an alternative tool for rapid mass multiplication, disease free plant production and year around availability of strawberry planting

materials. In micro-propagation, it is desirable to produce plantlets that can grow better after transplanting into the soil. So that, acclimatization is the most crucial stage and process during micro-propagation as *in vitro* raised plantlets are not readily adapted for directly *in vivo* conditions.

The main purpose of this work was to improve the performance of strawberry plants in tissue culture by studying some of factors that affect the growth of strawberry *in vitro*.