

CHALLENGES IN SUNFLOWER CULTURE

Florin Gabriel ANTON^{1*}, Maria JOIȚA-PĂCUREANU^{1,2}, Emil GEORGESCU¹, Luxița RÎȘNOVEANU^{3,4}, Laura CONȚESCU¹, Mihaela ȘERBAN¹

e-mail : gabi22mai@yahoo.com

Abstract

Among the most important soil pests that attack sunflowers are the sow beetle (*Agrotis segetum*), the wireworm (*Agriotes* sp.) and the corn borer (*Tanymecus dilaticollis*) and in recent years they represent a big problem in the south-east of Romania. Other pests that cause great damage to the sunflower crop are the seeding crow (*Corvus frugilegus*), the collared pigeon (*Columba palumbus*) and house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*). Besides these pests, field rabbit (*Lepus europaeus*) represent another problem that causes significant damage to the sunflower crop. Among the pathogens that attack sunflower culture in Romania, the most important are *Plasmopara halstedii*, which causes downy mildew, *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*, which causes white mold and *Phomopsis helianthi*, which causes phomopsis stem canker of sunflower. In last years, we observed in sunflower culture in Romania, sunflower white rust (*Albugo tragopogonis*) but without important economic losses. Atmospheric and pedological drought cause significant damage to the sunflower culture even with irrigation systems because of the high temperatures recorded in the flowering phenophase which makes the pollen unreliable. Another problem in sunflower culture is represented by the high degree of infestation with weeds such as broomrape (*Orobancha cumana*), *Chenopodium album*, *Ambrosia artemisiifoli*, *Xanthium strumarium*, *Cirsium arvense*, *Atriplex littoralis*, *Setaria viridis* and *Sorghum halepense*.

Key words: *sunflower, soil pests, weeds, disease*
