

Sclerotinia Stem Rot Disease Cycle

(Caused by the fungus *Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*)

3 Ascospore Distributes on Petals

The windborne ascospores adhere to flower petals and or other organic material.

4 Germination and Distribution of Infection

Ascospores germinate, infect the petal, and spread to adjacent tissues of healthy leaves and stems by direct contact.

5 Distribution of Fungal Lesion

The lesions progress up and down the stem. At this stage, wilted leaves can be visible.

6 Formation of New Sclerotia

The infected stem becomes bleached and brittle and forms new sclerotia. The sclerotia return to the soil at harvest and the cycle repeats.

1 Sclerotia Overwinter in Soil

The stem rot fungus (*Sclerotinia sclerotiorum*) overwinters as sclerotia in the soil or in stubble at the soil surface.

2 Formation of Apothecia

Spore-producing apothecia germinate from sclerotia under moist plant canopy and release ascospores.

