Fruit Rot and Dieback in Chillies

Recognize the problem
Chilli fruit rot and dieback is a fungal problem witnessed globally. This disease is observed at the flowering stage of chilli growth. Flowers dry up resulting in profuse shedding. The flower stalk shrivels. This drying up spreads from the flower stalks to the stem, resulting in dieback of the branches and stem. The fungus causes necrosis of tender twigs from the tip backwards, hence the name dieback. The branches wither. Partially affected plants bear a few fruits which are of low quality.

Background
This is a fungal disease which occurs on many vegetable crops but is most severe on chillies. If action is not taken, the farmer will end up with poor and marginal crops. Seed treatments are effective in eliminating the seed-borne inoculum. Chemicals like zineb, copper oxychloride and wettable sulphur not only reduce the disease incidence but also increase the yield of fruits.

Management
• Use disease free seeds
• Use a seed treatment with Trichoderma viride @10g/kg to manage the disease in a biological way
• Alternatively, use a chemical seed treatment of thiram or captan 4g/kg
• Good control of the disease has been reported by spraying ziram 0.25%, captan 0.2% or a combination of zineb and copper oxychloride (e.g. Milt Ox 0.2%) three times
• The first spraying should be given just before flowering and the second at the time of fruit formation. The third spraying may be given a fortnight after second spraying

The chemical control options above should be used as an alternative to biological seed treatment, not as well as, to avoid killing the biocontrol agent Trichoderma.

Scientific name(s) > Colletotrichum capsici

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: India

When using a pesticide, always wear protective clothing and follow the instructions on the product label, such as dosage, timing of application, and pre-harvest interval.