

ABSTRACT

There have been ongoing concerns with the use of peat moss based growing media due to its cost and environmental implications. Damping off is a disease caused by *Pythium spp.* known to cause significant economic losses to farmers. The objectives of this study were to evaluate the characteristics of compost as a potting media and disease suppressor of damping off. A complete randomized design was used to carry out research and a standard bioassay used to assess seedling emergence. Two parameters, autoclaved inoculated and inoculated was done for each treatment in three replications. The germination percentage, physical, chemical and microbial composition of compost was evaluated. Various ratios of compost and promix were used to carry out the experiment. Ratios included Grass compost 100%, Banana compost 100%, banana or grass and promix 4:1 and banana or grass and promix 50:50. Germination percentage was highest in the promix (86%) and (93%). Banana and grass compost recorded lower germination percentages of (0%) and (3.3%) respectively. This can be attributed to the chemical composition of the compost rather than its physical characteristics. The evaluation of compost as a disease suppressor showed no significance between days or treatments.