

TRANSPORT IN PLANTS

Long distance transport occurs through vascular system, xylem and phloem called translocation through mass flow-

The direction of translocation may be unidirectional as in case of water and multidirectional as in minerals and organic solutes_

Simple Diffusion-

- Movement by diffusion is passive and flows along the concentration gradient through permeable membrane.
- No energy expenditure takes place_ It occurs in liquid and gases_
- Rate of diffusion are affected by gradient of concentration, permeability of membrane, temperature and pressure.

Facilitated Diffusion-

- * Lipid soluble molecules easily pass through cell membrane but the hydrophilic solutes movement is facilitated_
- For facilitated diffusion, membrane possesses aquaporins or water channels. Aquaporins are membrane proteins for passive transport of water soluble substances without utilization of energy_
- The porins are proteins that form huge pores in the outer membrane of the plastids, mitochondria etc.

Symport, Antiport and Uniport-

- In Symport, both molecules cross the membrane in the same direction-
- In Antiport, both molecules move in opposite direction_
- * When a molecule moves across a membrane independent of other molecules, the process is called

Active Transport

- Uses energy to pump molecules against the concentration gradient. It is carried out by membrane proteins_
- In active transport, movable carrier proteins are called 'Carriers'.
- The pumps can transport substance from low concentration to high concentration. The carrier proteins are very specific in what they carry across the membrane.

Plant Water Relationship

Terrestrial plants take up water and release most of it in form of water vapour by the process of transpiration.

Water Potential (ψ_w). Water potential is determined by solute potential (ψ_s) and pressure potential (ψ_p)

- Water molecules possess kinetic energy. The greater the concentration of water in the system, the greater is its kinetic energy or water potential_ So pure water has greatest water potential_
- Water potential is denoted by Greek symbol Psi (ψ) and is expressed in pressure unit Pascal (Pa).
- Water pressure of pure water is taken as zero at standard temperature and pressure. A solution has less water potential due to less water concentration.
- The magnitude of lowering of water potential due to dissolution of solute is called solute potential (ψ_s). Solute potential is always negative. More the solute molecules in the solution, lesser the solute potential, _.
- If a pressure greater than atmospheric pressure is applied to pure water or solution, its water potential increases_ Pressure potential is usually positive. Pressure potential is denoted by (ψ_p)
- Water potential of a cell is affected by both solute and pressure potential. The relationship is as follows.

Water Potential

OSMOSIS is the diffusion of water across a semipermeable membrane. The net direction and rate of osmosis depends upon the pressure gradient and concentration gradient. Water will move from a region of higher concentration to a region of lower concentration until equilibrium is reached.

Osmotic potential is the pressure required to prevent water from diffusing. If the solute concentration is greater, it will be the pressure required to prevent water from diffusing it.

Numerically osmotic pressure is equal to osmotic potential but sign is opposite. Osmotic pressure is the positive pressure while osmotic potential is negative.

If the surrounding solution balances the osmotic pressure of cytoplasm, the solution is called **isotonic**.

If the external solution is more dilute than cytoplasm, it is **hypotonic**. The cells swell up when placed in hypotonic solution.

If the external solution is more concentrated than cytoplasm, it is **hypertonic**. Cell will shrink in hypertonic solution.

Plasmolysis is the shrinkage of the cytoplasm of the cell from its cell wall under the influence of hypertonic solution. The process of plasmolysis is usually reversible when the cell is placed in hypotonic solution.

The pressure build up against the wall due to movement of water inside is called **turgor pressure**. It is responsible for enlargement and extension growth of cells.

Imbibition is a special form of diffusion when water is absorbed by solid colloids causing them to increase in volume. For example absorption of water by seeds and dry woods. Imbibition is also a kind of diffusion because movement of water is from higher concentration to lower concentration.

Water potential gradient between the absorbent and liquid imbibed is essential for imbibition.

- Long distance transport of water in plants takes place by mass or bulk flow system. It is the movement of substance in bulk from one point to another as a result of pressure difference between two points. The bulk movement of substances through the conducting or vascular tissue of plants is called **translocation**. Xylem is associated with translocation of water and mineral salts, some organic nitrogen and hormone from roots to aerial parts of plants.
- Phloem transport organic and inorganic solutes from leaves to other parts of plants.

Absorption of water by plants

* Water is absorbed along with mineral solutes by root hairs by diffusion. The absorbed water passes to deeper layers by two pathways.

Apoplast pathway and Symplast pathway

Apoplast pathway consists of nonliving parts of plant body such as cell wall and intercellular spaces. Whereas

Symplast pathway consists of living parts of plant body such as protoplast connected to plasmodesmata.

* Most of the water flows in roots via a symplast pathway because cortical cells are loosely packed and offers no resistance to water movement.

* The inner boundary of cortex, endodermis is impervious to water due to suberized matrix, called **Casparian strip**. Water molecules are directed through wall regions that are not suberized.

* Water flows through the different layers of roots to reach the xylem tissues as follows.

* **Mycorrhiza** is the symbiotic association between a fungus and a angiospermic roots. The fungal filaments form a network around the young root to have large surface area that 'mineral ions and water from the soil. The fungus provides minerals and water and roots in turn provide organic and nitrogen containing compounds.

Ascent of sap (Translocation of water)

The upward movement of water from main towards the tips of stem branches and their leaves is called ascent of sap.

Theories of Ascent of Sap

- I. **Vital** force theory was forwarded by J.C. Bose in 1923. This theory believes that the innermost cortical cells of the root absorb water from the cuticle and pump the same into xylem channels.
- Root pressure theory was forwarded by Priestley in 1916, Root pressure is positive pressure that develops in the xylem sap of the root of plants. It can be responsible for pushing up water to small heights in plants.
- Loss of water in liquid phase by herbaceous plants from the tips of leaf blades is known as guttation.
- X Water rises in tall plants of small diameters, kept in vessels having water due to force of surface tension. Similarly water rises up in the walls of xylem channels due to adhesion and cohesion. This theory is called The cohesion-tension theory.

Tension theory was put forward by Dixon and Joly in 1924. According to this theory water is mostly pulled due to driving force of transpiration from the leaves. The water molecules remain attached with one another by cohesion force. The water molecule does not break in vessels and tracheids due to adhesive force between their walls and water molecules. On account of tension created by transpiration, the water column of plant is pulled up passively from roots to great heights.

Transpiration is the loss of water in form of water vapour from aerial parts of plants.

Phloem transport; Flow from Source to Sink

Food (sucrose) is transported by phloem from source to sink. The part of plant that synthesizes the food is called source and part where food is used or stored.

The source and sink can be reversed by the plants depending upon the season or plant's need. So, the direction of movement in the phloem is bi-directional.

- > Phloem sap is mainly water and sucrose and other sugars, hormones and amino acids are also translocated through it.

Pressure Flow or Mass Flow hypothesis

- It is the most accepted theory for the translocation of sugar from source to sink. Glucose is prepared at source by photosynthesis which is converted into disaccharides sucrose. Sucrose moves into companion cells and then into sieve tube cells by active transport.
- Loading of phloem at source creates a water potential gradient that facilitates the mass movement in the phloem.
- Sieve tube cells of phloem form a long column with holes in their wall called sieve plates. Cytoplasmic strands pass through the whole in the sieve plates to form continuous filament. Hydrostatic pressure developed in sieve tube cells moves the sap in the phloem.

At sink incoming sugar is actively moved out of the phloem as complex carbohydrates. The loss of solute produces high water potential in the phloem and water passes out and returning into xylem.