

Fundamentals of Vegetable Crop Production

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PREFACE

In the recent scenario, horticulture has emerged as one of the most expectant and favoured aspirant promoting diversification, and combating climate change. The growing demand of horticultural crops for internal consumption as well as for exports has highlighted the need for escalating the production and enhancing the efficiency of these crops. Several superior and high-yielding varieties and F_1 hybrids are now available for large-scale adoption.

Olericulture deals with a major prospect of Indian farming. As in nature, in vegetable gardens as well, a variety of plants rope a variety of wildlife. Diversified planting often promotes a healthy stability between the organisms that benefit crop production. By providing natural pest control, these techniques uphold biodiversity and along with variety, they add colour, beauty and flavour to the home garden.

Even though the archetypical image of a vegetable garden is based on orderly rows of the plants marked by seed packets on stakes, vegetable gardens can be as inimitable and personalized as ornamental plantings, designed to suit the garden site and the aesthetic and culinary tastes of the gardener. As long as crops can be weeded, watered and harvested, vegetables can be grouped in all sorts of symbiotic arrangements, with other vegetables or other types of plants, either in one central location or in fertile pockets here and there.

Vegetables play crucial role in health maintenance as well as in dietary supplements. These are so common in human diet that a meal without a vegetable is supposed to be incomplete in any part of the world. An improved diet should have about 400 gm of vegetables per day per person, but in India the average per capita consumption of vegetables per day is reported to be less than 45 grams. Particularly among the rural people, this minimum requirement is even low. The production of vegetables must be increased to meet the requirement of the vegetables in our country. According to the data of National Accounts Statistics, fruits and vegetables together account for more than 27 per cent of the total value of output from agriculture. The share is increasing over the years from around 25 per cent during 2004-05 to 27.49 per cent during 2011-12. Vegetables alone contribute 10.61 per cent of the total value of output from agriculture, and it is on increasing trends over the years.

The vegetable growers in India also are now more educated and know how to utilize land in a better way by using improved varieties and by adopting suitable cultivation practices. The home gardening or kitchen gardening is also developing rapidly and is an important part of vegetable production. Quality and tasty fresh vegetables can be grown in the home garden. A good garden planning can produce vegetables for the family round the year. Home gardening not only saves money, but for the family it is a pleasure, fun and pride.

To promote the vegetables in the country, the availability of informative literature in simple language is a prime requirement. This book discusses and covers all the basics of vegetable production in a precise manner. The latest area, production and recent scenario of vegetables in the world market are also detailed. It covers nearly all the aspects of vegetables starting from the classification, nitty-gritty, detailed agronomic practices to the harvest indices. The role of various nutrients along with their deficiency symptoms is also included in the book. The book can be very useful for students of graduate level, post graduate level, doctorate level, and for the ones preparing and appearing in various competitive examinations. The book contains a question bank at the end which could be extremely helpful for the students. The main purpose behind the book is to assemble together versatile aspects of vegetable crop production. Nowadays, it is very difficult for the students to come across matter related to

multifarious aspects in a single book. Hence, this book could be an answer for their questions. The book carries diverse aspects of vegetable crop production in a simplified form.

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