



Organic Kitchen Garden : For Food, Nutrition, Health and Self Employment

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Home or Kitchen garden is a garden which accommodates wide range of vegetables, fruits, plantation crops, spices, herbs, ornamental & medicinal plants, fisheries, livestock in a proportion that ensure adequate nutrients and income to the family. If this garden is maintained organically without adding any chemical fertilizers and/or pesticide, it is known as Organic Kitchen Garden. Organic Kitchen Garden offers maximum output and a continuous supply of vegetables/fruits etc for the table purpose throughout the year with low capital input and simple technologies. It provides food values and supplies minerals, vitamins, carbohydrates and protein of high biological values. The product is fresh, hygienic and free from the harmful chemicals, therefore, are better for the health of entire family. Most of crops selected are grown for the short duration, fast growing and produce a very high yield per unit area. This is traditionally a part of Indian culture, social and religion activities, however, we have overlooked it in the pace of development. This is just an attempt to sensitize the issue so that the concept can be rejuvenated.

Organic Kitchen Garden effectively utilized natural resources viz., land, water, solar energy, etc and inculcates a healthy work and time management practice in the family. For the efficient utilization of space, especially in the urban area, the roof, terrace and side walls can also be utilized under the kitchen gardening. Vertical gardening blending the farm product required in routine e.g. coriander, fenugreek, mint, leafy vegetables, basil, garlic, onion, etc for the particular family can be prioritized. Vegetables and other crops grown in the kitchen garden have high aesthetic values. Kitchen and organic waste from the different sources can be collected and properly recycled for utilization. Organic manures, cow-dung, cow-urine, potting mixture, bio-compost, vermi-compost, organic cakes, recycled waste, herbal products, bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides, mulching, etc, are natural products and can be applied for nutrition, pest and disease management strategies. Low cost zero energy cool chambers, net-house, poly-house, etc may be promoted. Proper water harvesting and storing technology during the rainy season for subsequent utilization of water throughout the year need to popularize for the long term benefit. Mushroom cultivation, bee keeping, poultry, goatary, hydroponics, cow husbandry, etc can be well integrated in the farming.

Self Help Group (SHG) activities viz., organic food restaurant, masala making, local food preparation stalls and seasonal celebration of organic food fair /festival can greatly promote the agripreneurs. Therefore, agricultural universities/ICAR should develop modules which enhance public participatory programme for food security involving line departments. Pocket books may also be made available for guidance. Organic seeds and other organic inputs should be made available in small packing. Training especially to housewives, elders, handicap persons, unemployed mass, school teachers, anganwadi, mid day meal workers, labours, tribal peoples, etc should be given to promote the concept. Through this around 50 % population not involved in food production chain may contribute in total food production as well as the spare land /space can also be brought under cultivation. This may also prove great solution to provide food easily to increasing population without major efforts. Retired agricultural scientists may come forward and make state-wise group to serve the people with this programme. I wish Green Farming, Jodhpur may take leadership to make road map and to decide its modalities.

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