

Vegetable Gardening- A Boom to Growers

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INTRODUCTION

In view of the rapid development of industry and growth of the cities and towns various types of vegetable gardening have immense scope for providing food, promoting health and efficiency of individuals, solving unemployment and enhancing the economic status of the people. Different types of vegetable farming have been developed depending on the area occupied and objective sought for the disposal of the produce. Depending on the mode of disposal of the produce, vegetable farming is broadly divided into:

- Home scale or kitchen gardening/farming
- Commercial gardening/farming

1. HOME SCALE OR KITCHEN GARDENING

Kitchen gardening is the growing of vegetables in the residential area to meet the requirement of a family year the round. The main aim of kitchen gardening is to use wasteland located close to the house and to provide the family with fresh vegetables continuously throughout the year as per the seasonal requirement.

Advantages of kitchen gardening

- 1) It is the best means of recreation and exercise particularly for old persons of the family.
- 2) It is an excellent hobby and healthy occupation for children in spare time.
- 3) It is an ideal medium for training children through kitchen gardening
- 4) It helps in lowering down the vegetable bill because it saves transportation charges also.
- 5) Fresh vegetables, which are comparatively rich in nutrients, can be obtained from kitchen gardens.
- 6) Housewives in absence of male can find vegetables at any time in emergency even during night hours.
- 7) It is a year round agent for supplying fresh vegetables readily, which are essential for good health.

Kinds of kitchen garden

- A combined flower and vegetable kitchen garden
 - Exclusive vegetable kitchen garden
- a) **Small size kitchen garden:** The area is very small, not enough to grow sufficient vegetables to meet the entire demand of a family of five members.
 - b) **Medium size kitchen garden:** Area is no doubt small, not enough to grow all kinds of vegetable but enough to supply sufficient vegetables of limited kind. It can supply vegetables to a family of five members but not more than five members.
 - c) **Large size kitchen garden:** The area is large enough to grow all kinds of vegetable to meet out the entire demand of a family of five members or more. Certain fruit plants may also be grown due to large/big area.
 - d) **Terrace gardening:** In cities or towns, where open area for growing vegetables is not available near the house, the vegetables can be grown in pots, drums or in other containers or on terraces, which should be made completely waterproofed to avoid any kind of seepage. It should be in open where enough sunshine is available. Avoid contact of plants with coal gas/fumes prevalent in industrial areas.

Growing of vegetables in pots or in beds on terraces

- 1) **Growing in boxes or pots:** Ordinary earthen pots having diameter of 30-35 cm are ideal for growing vegetables. The wooden boxes should be 75cm long, 45cm broad and 50cm high. The inner and outer sides of the pots or boxes must be painted with some waterproof paint. They should be provided legs and handles to handle them easily.
- 2) **Growing in beds:** On painted roof, small narrow rectangular cemented beds may be constructed along the wall. The beds should be at least 45-60 cm high and more than 75 cm wide to allow you to work easily in the beds. The entire roof should not be covered

with soil for the frequent watering and other cultural operations.

Choice of vegetables for kitchen garden:

It is advisable to grow only those vegetables, which cannot be obtained fresh from the market such as beet leaf, coriander, fenugreek, mint etc. If one has to grow vegetables in pots and boxes preference should be given to such vegetables, which produce more number of fruits per plant, like tomato, brinjal, chilli, beans and cucurbits.

2. COMMERCIAL VEGETABLE GARDENING

Growing vegetables on large scale for sale purposes is divided into following categories:

Market gardening: The objective of this kind of gardening is to produce vegetables for supplying to the consumers in the local market. It is one of the most intensive types of gardening where the most skilful methods of growing vegetables for commercial purposes are employed. Formerly the market gardens were located near cities within a radius of 16-24 km but now the area has been extended because of road and transport facilities, and now the consumers can get vegetables even from a distance of at least 500 km. In off-season, this type of gardening supplies almost all kinds of vegetable. For market gardening crops, like cauliflower, cabbage, cucurbits, solanaceous and all the leafy vegetables are used for planting.

Truck gardening: This is an extensive type of gardening where the grower is specialized in one or two crops, and he produces only special crops in large quantity for distant markets. Production site being away from market, cost of land & labour is usually low. On large holding, mostly mechanized farming is practiced that reduces the cost of production. With the development of national highways and other transport facilities, the distance of such farming has further increased. Now Nasik onions are available in every part of the country, and Punjab potatoes are being made available in extremes of South India, A few

vegetables, which can sustain long distance transport without any serious damage, i.e., potato, onion, chillies, pumpkin etc. are suitable for growing in truck gardens.

Vegetable forcing gardening: It is the method of growing vegetables out of their normal season by using low tunnels, polyhouse, shade net houses, cold frames, and under other artificial growing conditions. It is the most intensive type of vegetable gardening. Vegetables produced through forcing give very high return. In Indian conditions, growing of summer vegetables in the riverbeds during winter months with the help of organic manure and windbreaks of dry grass is also a type of forcing. Under protected structures, all types of vegetable can be grown round the year.

Vegetable gardening for processing:

Canned, dehydrated, or frozen vegetables, pickling and fermented products are prepared in processing industries. For these purposes, suitable cultivars are grown. This type of farming, which produces vegetables with a sole objective of supplying them to processing industries, is termed as vegetable gardening for processing. It may be located at any place easily connected with rail or road but not far away from the processing industry. Limited number of vegetables with their specific cultivars suited to different processing, like canning, freezing, dehydration etc. are grown. The growing of vegetables and their selection are made in such a way that there may be continuous supply of raw materials to the processing industries.