

BOTTLE GOURD (*Lagenaria siceraria*)

Bottle gourd is an important crop grown throughout in north eastern region. The plant has a trailing habit. The fruit in green stage and leaves with stem are used as vegetables. The tribal community uses hard shells as utensils and for preparation of some musical instrument. Fruit pulp is a good source of fibre free carbohydrates.

Cultivars

Pusa aveen, Pusa Hybrid-3 and Pusa Meghdoot are the recommended varieties for this region.

Climate and Soil

Hot and moist climate is favorable for its cultivation. Night and day temperature of 18- 22°C and 30-35 QC respectively is optimum for its proper growth and high fruit set. It cannot with stand frost.

Sandy loam soil is most suitable for its cultivation. The soil should be rich in organic matter with good drainage.

Field Preparation

Same as in cucumber.

Seed Rate

3 to 6kg/ha

Time of Sowing

The seed is sown from January to February for summer crop and June to July for rainy season crop. In hills seeds are sown in April.

Spacing

2.0 to 3.0 m (row to row) x 1 to 1.5 m (plant to plant).

Manure and Fertilizer

Add FYM manure @ 10-15t/ha at the time of field preparation. PK @100:60:60 kg/ha should be applied at the time of planting.

Intercultural Operation

Weeding: Two to three hoeing is given to keep down the weeds during early stages of growth.



Training: The vines are trained to spread on bowers made from thin coconut rope and bamboo sticks particularly in rainy season to prevent the fruit from rotting and allowing the vines and foliage for better exposure to light and air.

Irrigation

The summer crop requires frequent irrigation at an interval of 4-5 days. No irrigation is given in rainy season crop.

Plant protection

Same as in Cucumber.

Harvesting and Yield

Bottle gourd may be harvested 55-75 days after sowing. The fruit should be harvested when the rind of the fruit is very tender and green. Delay in harvesting causes the fruit to become unfit for marketing. The average yield is 100-150q/ha.