

KITCHEN GARDENING

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Kitchen Garden at the backyard of the house

- It's importance
- How it is done

A kitchen garden is where herbs and vegetables are grown around the house for household use. Since early times a small plot near to the house has been used for growing a variety of vegetables according to the season.

Growing pesticide-free vegetables in the garden are now becoming a hobby for people. Kitchen gardening is affordable

and doesn't need a lot of space. You can even use your balconies or window sills for kitchen gardening. Local varieties such as radish, broad leaf mustard, chilli, beans, pumpkins, tomatoes etc. are can be grown.



Need of Kitchen Garden

For people to stay healthy it's very important to have a healthy diet. A healthy diet means a balanced mix of rice, bread, pulses, vegetables, herbs, fruit etc. For energy and protection against disease, vegetables play an essential role. Growing of vegetables without the use of chemical inputs, it is beneficial for health of the body.

1. Grow healthy, fresh vegetables yourself.
2. Cultivation in a small area facilitates the methods of controlling pests and diseases through the removal of affected parts and non-use of chemicals.
3. This will only facilitate successful production of our own requirement of vegetables.
4. To save the cost of buying vegetables and herbs.
5. Waste resources such as sweepings, kitchen scraps and dirty water can be recycled onto the garden.
6. Vegetables harvested from home garden taste better than those purchased from market.
7. Gardening gives dual benefits of food and income generation.
8. Gardens provide fodder for household animals and supplies for other household needs (handicrafts, fuel wood, furniture, baskets, etc.)

Beneficial Connections for Making Kitchen Garden

1. Collecting waste water
2. Sweepings pit
3. Living fence
4. Vegetable beds
5. Liquid manure

Main Points While Making Kitchen Garden

1. **Site selection-** There will be limited choice for the selection of sites for kitchen gardens and the final choice is usually the backyard of the house. The area where sunlight come from, can be easily accessed from the house. This is convenient as the members of the family can give a constant care to the vegetables during leisure .When these are kept in mind, site selection can be done and making garden is easier.
2. **Protection-** The kitchen garden area needs protection .It should not be possible for livestock to enter the area. A permanent fence should be made. Thorny plants can be cut

and used to make a fence, but the best method is to plant a living fence to protect the garden.

3. **Land preparation-** Getting the right mix of soil is an important step as the nutrients in the soil determine how healthy the plants would grow. Use cow dung to keep all organic. Sweeping pit, liquid manure, mulching, Green manure must be used for fertility of the soil. Firstly a through spade digging is made to a depth of 30-40 cm.

- Stones, bushes and perennial weeds are removed.
 - 100 kg of well decomposed farmyard manure or vermicompost is applied and mixed with the soil.
 - Ridges and furrows are formed at a spacing of 45 cm or 60 cm as per the requirement.
 - Flat beds can also be formed instead of ridges and furrows.
- **Sowing and planting-** The main objective of a kitchen garden is the maximum output and a continuous supply of vegetables throughout the year. Direct sown crops like bhendi, cluster beans and cowpea can be sown on one side of the ridges . Amaranthus (meant for whole plant pull out and clipping) can be sown by broadcasting in the plots. Small onion, mint and coriander can be planted/sown along the bunds of plots.

Seeds of transplanted crops like tomato, brinjal and chilli can be sown in nursery beds or pots one month in advance After sowing and covering with top soil and then dusting with 250 grams neem cake so as to save the seeds from ants.

- The perennial plants should be located on one side of the garden, usually on the rear end of the garden so that they may not shade other crops, compete for nutrition with the other vegetable crops.
 - If seeds and seedlings are planted too wide apart, much of the space in between goes to waste, where weeds will grow . Weeds use precious water and compost, and cause extra work to keep clear.
- **Irrigation management-** It is important to provide enough moisture for the kitchen garden. To make sure your plants get optimum water, check the moisture of the soil by pressing it with your fingers and then water the plant as per requirement. if there is no irrigation for main food crops, it is likely that there is also not enough water to irrigate the

kitchen garden. But if the water conservation methods that is saving rain water are used, then more water is conserved and so less is needed. Collecting and using waste water from the kitchen can be enough to water the garden. In the hot season, irrigate in the evening or at night, and not in the daytime.

Check plants regularly and prevent insects from breeding You can rotate crops to grow different crops one after the other. Top up with fertiliser once a month. Spray neem oil to keep mosquitos and other insects away. Take part in regular weeding to keep your plants' growth stable. Aerate soil by loosening the top layer. Take part in regular weeding to keep your plants' growth stable. Practice organic means to grow crops which will be good for health.

Be Organic Stay Healthy.....!!!!

Conclusion

Thus , Kitchen Gardening is an eco-friendly sustainable agricultural practice to improve food security and enhance economic growth. In the wake of a global food crisis and the soaring food prices, kitchen gardening comes out the better way for enhancing and building local food systems.

Reference

Essence of Horticulture by M.S. Patil

The Old Farmer's Almanac Vegetable Gardener's Handbook