

Litchi

Harvesting

Litchi tree comes to bearing at the age of 3 to 4 years with proper care and management. The flowering starts from later part of January or early February and fruits ripen in April and May when the atmospheric temperature is high. Harvesting in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab is usually done in May and June, however in Bihar it is harvested in early May.

Maturity of the fruits is indicated by the red colour with a fruit size of minimum 25mm diameter. Besides colour the maturity of the fruit is indicated when tubercles become somewhat flattened and the shells become smooth. Litchi fruits should be harvested fully-ripe because they do not continue to ripen after harvest. The fruits for local market should be harvested at the full ripe stage as indicated by the attractive skin colour while for distant market the fruit is harvested slightly early, when they have just started turning reddish or pinkish. Litchi fruits, like other fruits, are not harvested individually, but they are harvested in bunches along with a portion of the branch and a few leaves as it prolongs the storage life of fruits. If the individual fruit is harvested, the skin at the stem end is ruptured and the fruit rots quickly. Dipping of fruits in Etherel at 250 ppm markedly improves the fruit colour and fruit ripening is accelerated by 24 to 36 hours.

Yield



A full-grown litchi tree on an average bears about 80-150 kg of fruits/tree/year, depending on cultivar grown agro-climatic conditions and orchard management.