

Mango

Intercultural Operations

Training and Pruning :

Normally, mango trees do not require frequent pruning. However, the training of the plants in the initial stages is very essential to give them proper shape. Training becomes very important especially when the branches are placed at a low level. Therefore at least 75 cm of the main stem should be kept free from branches and the first leader/main branch is allowed to grow. The main branches should be spaced in such a way that they grow in different directions and are at least 20-25 cm apart. The branches, which exhibit tendency of crossing and rubbing each other, should be removed in the pencil thickness stage. Subsequently pruning is done only to remove the diseased and dead branches.

Weed Control :

Immediately after planting the mango, the weed problem may not exist, but it is advisable to break the crust with hand hoe each time after 10-15 irrigations. However, subsequent hoeing may be done depending on weed growth in the basin. If the intercrops are not being raised in the pre-bearing stage due to some reasons, the area between the basins should be ploughed at least three times a year, i.e., pre-monsoon, post-monsoon and in the last week of November.

Interculture operations are equally important for the bearing mango orchards. First ploughing should be done before the onset of rains. This will help in checking run-off losses and facilitate maximum retention of water in the soil. Orchard may be ploughed again after the rainy season in order to suppress weed growth and to break capillaries. Third ploughing may be done in the last week of November or first week of December with a view to check the population of mealy bugs.

The young mango grafts often come to flowering soon after planting or even in the nursery bed. This is detrimental to their health and vigour, particularly when such flowers are allowed to set fruits. All inflorescences that may appear during the first four years should be removed immediately after their emergence.

Intercropping :

Mango orchard provides an opportunity for utilizing the land space to its maximum during initial years of establishment. Crops like green gram, black gram, vegetable crops such as cabbage, cauliflower, potato, brinjal, cucumber, pumpkin, tinda etc. and spices like chilies can successfully be grown as intercrops. The partial shade loving crops like pineapple, ginger, turmeric, etc. can be grown in fully-grown orchards. In addition to field crops, some short duration, less exhaustive and dwarf type inter-fillers like papaya, guava etc. can also be grown till these do not interfere with the main mango crop.