

Cauliflower

Propagation

Nursery Bed Preparation

The seeds are generally sown in a seed bed and 4-6 week old seedlings are transplanting to the field. Cabbage seeds are sown on nursery beds to raise seedlings for transplanting in the field. Raised beds of size 3 x 0.6 m and 10-15 cm in height are prepared. About 70 cm distance is kept between two beds to carry out intercultural operations such as watering, weeding, etc. The surface of beds should be smooth and well levelled. Well-decomposed FYM @ 8-10 kg/m² is added at the time of bed preparation. Raised beds are necessary to avoid problem of water logging in heavy soils. To avoid mortality of seedlings due to damping off, drenching of the beds three weeks before sowing with Bavistin (15-20g/10 litres of water) is recommended.

Season of Planting

The optimum time of seed sowing in the nursery varies greatly depending upon climate, varieties and their temperature requirement for curd formation. Normally early varieties of cauliflower are sown during May-June, mid season varieties in July, mid late season varieties in August and late varieties in September-October.

Raising of Seedlings

About 300-500 g of seed are sufficient for raising nursery required to plant one hectare. Prior to sowing seeds are treated with fungal culture of *Trichoderma viride* (4 g/ kg of seed) or Thiram (3g/ kg of seed) to avoid damage from damping-off disease. Sowing should be done thinly in lines spaced at 5-7 cm distance. Seeds are sown at a depth of 1-2 cm and covered with a fine layer of soil followed by light watering by water can. The beds should then be covered with dry straw or grass or sugarcane leaves to maintain required temperature and moisture. The watering should be done by water can as per the need till germination is completed. The cover of dry straw or grass is removed immediately after emergence of seed sprout. If there is over crowding of seedling due to thick sowing, the extra seedlings should be thinned out

Normally the seedlings should be transplanted within 4-6 weeks of sowing. In case of early crop 5-6 weeks old seedlings have better establishment and less mortality in the field while in mid-season and late varieties 3-4 weeks old seedlings may be transplanted.