

# Litchi

## Planting

### Land Preparation

Before planting, the land is thoroughly ploughed and leveled. Young litchi plants are susceptible to hot winds and cold waves. Therefore suitable wind break trees like silver oak, sesbania, drumstick, etc. should be planted along the boundary of litchi plantation. Young plants can also be covered with thatch by the end of November to protect them from frost injury.

### Season of Planting

Planting is normally done during August-September after the monsoon has set in. Water is applied immediately after planting. Planting is not advisable when the weather is too dry or too wet.

### Spacing

Litchi trees are usually planted in a square system at 8 x 8 m where they need protection either from frost or from the desiccating winds. But in region where the spread of litchi tree is large, it is advisable to space the plants preferably 10 m apart.

### Pit Digging

Pits of size 1m<sup>3</sup> are dug at the desired points a few weeks before planting. These are then refilled with top-soil mixed with FYM (20-25 kg), bone-meal (2 kg) and sulphate of potash (400 g). After refilling the pits are immediately watered to set this mixture and remove the air gaps.

### Method of Planting

Only 6 to 9 months old healthy plants with fine roots should be selected for planting. The plants are planted by making a small hole in the centre of the pit sufficient to accommodate the soil ball. It is advisable that the new plants should be inoculated with mycorrhiza and after planting the land should not be allowed to dry completely. The soil around the plant is pressed gently. Planting should be immediately followed by irrigation. In case of high wind velocity the plants are tied to the stake.