

Bitter Gourd

Planting

Land Preparation:

The land is ploughed and brought to a fine tilth by 1-2 crosswise ploughing and levelled. Furrows are opened at a distance of 1.5-2.5 m depending on the support system to be adopted.

Method of Planting:

In the plains, the summer season crop is sown from January to February, whereas the rainy season crop is sown in the month of May. For planting one hectare area 4-5 kg of seed is required. Before planting the seed is treated with Thiram (3 g/kg of seed).

Plant Support:

Bitter gourd being a weak climber needs support for its growth. The plants trailed on the support (bower) continues to give yield for 6-7 months as against 3-4 months when trailed on the ground without support. Such vines are less susceptible to pest and diseases as they do not come in direct contact with the soil. In bower system, planting is done at a spacing of 2.5 x 1m. Furrows are opened up at 2.5 m and irrigation channels are laid out at 5-6 m distance. Wooden poles (3 m in height) are pitched on both the ends of alternate furrows at a distance of 5 m. these poles are connected with wires. The wires along the furrows are further connected with cross wires fastened at 45cm distance so as to form a network of wires. Seeds are dibbled at distance of 1 m along the furrow and covered lightly with soil. The vines take about 1.5-2 months to reach the bower height, hence the vines during the initial stages of growth are trailed on ropes till they reach the bower. Once the vines reach the bower height, the new tendrils are then trailed on the bower.