

## Kitchen Gardening

**Manisha Ankush Kharat and Baghele R. D.**

Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Horticulture, VNMKV, Parbhani  
Junior Vegetable Breeder, AICRP on Vegetable Crop, VNMKV, Parbhani

### SUMMARY

The study found that backyard kitchen gardening increases the availability of a variety of vegetables and green leafy vegetables in the diet, lowers the cost of vegetables, and strengthens community ties after starting a kitchen. There was an increase in gardening activity, vegetable production, and vegetable consumption of 218.25% and 95.40%, respectively. This resulted in an increased intake of iron (32.70%) and calcium (10.40%). Gardening must be done with virtually no economic resources, using locally available planting materials, green manures, “live” fencing and indigenous methods of pest control. Thus, home gardening at some level is a production system that the poor can easily enter.

### INTRODUCTION

With the help of technology, we can now produce healthy vegetables at home using clay flower pots, empty tins, and discarded utensils thanks to kitchen gardening. Not only may this activity save us money and time, but it can also provide the whole family a valuable, healthy, and environmentally responsible hobby. Cheema, K.J. (2011). Studies has shown that home gardens and kitchens can significantly increase food security for resource-poor rural households in developing nations (Asaduzzaman, 2011). Poor people typically spend more for food because they go farther to get it at a cheaper cost and buy it in expensive small quantities, eliminating the transportation advantage (Smit, 2001). The recommended daily intake of vegetables is approximately 300 g of vegetables and 100 g of fresh fruits (50 g of green leafy vegetables, 200 g of other vegetables, and 50 g of roots and tubers). Singh et al., 2018. A family can take vegetables from these kitchen gardens round the year. The nutritional home garden or kitchen garden is generally located close to the house and is used for growing vegetables, fruits, and other food crops for the family. t saves money and time, and it may offer the whole family an enjoyable, environmentally friendly, and healthful pastime. Home gardens can assist us in recycling garbage from the house, particularly if a compost pit is developed. Growing a wide variety of crops in your home garden is one of the simplest methods to guarantee that people have access to a nutritious diet with enough macro- and micronutrients.

### Importance of vegetable crop

- Vegetables occupy an important place in our daily life particularly for vegetarians
- Vegetables are the only source to increase not only the nutritive values of foods but also its palatability.
- For a balanced diet, an adult should have an intake of 85 g of fruits and 300 g of vegetables per day as per the dietary recommendation of nutrition specialists
- But the present level of production of vegetables in our country can permit a per capita consumption of only 120 g of vegetables per day

### Why kitchen garden

- Considering the importance of vegetables, to produce our own vegetable requirements in our backyards using the available fresh water as well as the kitchen concept has emerged.
- This will only facilitate successful production of our own requirement of vegetables.
- Cultivation in a small area facilitates the methods of controlling pests and diseases through the removal of affected parts and non-use of chemicals.
- This is a safe practice, which does not cause toxic residues of pesticides in the vegetables produced.

### Kitchen Garden site selection

- There will be limited choice for the selection of sites for kitchen gardens and the final choice is usually the backyard of the house.

- This is convenient as the members of the family can give a constant care to the vegetables during leisure and the wastewater from the bathrooms and kitchen can easily be diverted to the vegetable beds.
- The size of a kitchen garden depends upon the availability of land and number of persons for whom vegetables are to be provided.
- There is no restriction in the shape of the kitchen garden but wherever possible rectangular garden is preferred to a square one.
- With succession cropping and intercropping, five cents of land would be adequate to supply vegetables for an average family of four to five person

**Land Preparation**

- Firstly, a through spade digging is made to a depth of 30-40 cm.
- Stones, bushes and perennial weeds are removed.
- 100 kg of well decomposed farmyard manure or vermicompost is applied and mixed with the soil.
- Ridges and furrows are formed at a spacing of 45 cm or 60 cm as per the requirement.
- Flat beds can also be formed instead of ridges and furrows

**Sowing and Planting**

- Direct sown crops like bhindi, cluster beans and cowpea can be sown on one side of the ridges at a spacing of 30 cm. Amaranthus (meant for whole plant pull out and clipping) can be sown after mixing 1 part of seeds with 20 parts of fine sand by broadcasting in the plots. Small onion, mint and coriander can be planted/sown along the bunds of plots.
- Seeds of transplanted crops like tomato, brinjal and chilli can be sown in nursery beds or pots one month in advance by drawing lines. After sowing and covering with top soil and then dusting with 250 grams neem cake so as to save the seeds from ants. About 30 days after sowing for tomato and 40-45 days for brinjal and chilli and big onion the seedlings are removed from nursery and transplanted along one side of the ridges at spacing of 30-45 cm for tomato, brinjal and chilli and 10 cm on both the sides of the ridges for big onion. The plants should be irrigated immediately after planting and again on 3rd day. The seedlings can be watered once in two days in the earlier stages and then once in 4 days later.
- The perennial plants should be located on one side of the garden, usually on the rear end of the garden so that they may not shade other crops, compete for nutrition with the other vegetable crops.
- Adjacent to the foot path all around the garden and the central foot path may be utilised for growing different short duration green vegetables like Coriander, spinach, fenugreek, Alternanthera, Mint etc
- A cropping pattern, which may prove helpful for kitchen garden under Indian conditions (except hill stations), is given below.

Plot No.	Name of vegetable	Season
01.	Tomato, Onion, Radish, Beans, Okra	June-sept. oct-Nov. Dec-Feb. Mar- May
02.	Brinjal Amaranthus	June-sept. oct-Nov
03.	Chilli, Radish, Cow pea	Jun-Sep. Dec.-Feb. Mar.-May
04.	Cabbage, Cluster Bean	Jun.-Aug. Sep-Dec. Jan-Mar.
05.	Cluster Bean, Brinjal, Beet Root	Jun- Sep. Oct-Jan.

**Perennial Plot**

- Drumstick, Banana, Papaya, Tapioca, Curry leaf and Agathi.
- It may be observed from the above crop arrangements that throughout the year some crop is grown in each plot without break (Succession cropping) and where ever possible two crops (one long duration and the other a short duration one) are grown together in the same plot (companion cropping).

**Economic benefits of gardening**

sGardeners feed their families first and then sell, barter or give away surplus garden foods. In certain contexts, however, income generation may become the primary objective of the home garden. In any case, it is counterproductive to impose the nutrition objective to the exclusion of the income generation objective, since in

most contexts they are linked and compatible. The potential economic benefits of home gardening include the following:

- Gardening gives dual benefits of food and income generation;
- Gardens provide fodder for household animals and supplies for other household needs (handicrafts, fuel wood, furniture, baskets, etc.);
- Marketing of garden produce and animals is often the only source of independent income for women.

## **CONCLUSION**

The establishment of kitchen gardens played a significant part in addressing the issue of malnutrition and shortages in micronutrients in rural communities. The primary garden caretakers are women. The kitchen garden gives them more authority, guarantees better use of the money for food, and improves family welfare. Kitchen gardening can reduce food costs, increase the variety of vegetables available, diversify the crops grown, boost motivation and self-esteem, strengthen community ties once kitchen gardening activities begin, and improve social environments.

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