

Poster

**OFF SEASON FRUIT PRODUCTION OF DRAGON FRUIT
(*HYLOCEREUS UNDATUS*) IN SRI LANKA**

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ABSTRACT

Under natural conditions, dragon fruits produced flowers and fruits only during the long-day months from April to October. When day length increases, it starts flowering, and at the peak day length period gives maximum production of flowers, and again reduces and stops. Although, Dragon fruit is photoperiodism sensitive plant it can produce fruits almost all year round in Sri Lanka. At the short day period night interruption using artificial lighting gave positive results for flower induction. Twenty watts of compact fluorescent bulbs (CFL) were used for artificial lighting in short day period and supplying four hours light during 7.00 pm to 11.00 pm. Bulbs were positioned at the centre of four posts with one foot above the canopy that are planted in tribal row cultivation. The plants in the middle row that received light from sides produced an average of 45 fruits/plant and plants on either side that received light from one side produced an average of 22 fruits/plant in off season only. In addition to off season production, all plants have produced fruit during long day length period and plants in control did not produce fruits in off season. Total cost of material and installation was Rs. 280,100.00 that is without including Rs 60,330.00 maintenance cost/year after five years old 1 ac cultivation. Total income in off season was Rs. 704,000.00 and net profit is about 363,570.00 that were calculated using 22 fruits/vine. It may be increased due to high demand and price of off season production.