

HOME GARDENING

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1. What is Home Gardening

It is the cultivation of the balance portion of your plot of land on which your house is built. Therefore the land size will vary from a few perches of land to larger extents.

In home gardening this available land should be cultivated with short term vegetables and other useful plants for the requirements of the family. In selecting crops priority should be given to leafy vegetables, short term fruity vegetables condiments etc. Planting a few Katurumurunga trees, rampe, Sera, lemonine or lime is a must. Bananas and papaw will meet the requirements of fruits for the family. A typical garden may have a few coconut palms, a few papaw or banana clumps and at ground level the annuals. Companion planting benefits the soil structure. The accumulation of organic matter and plants on the soil surface prevents erosion, leading to loss of nutrients. The gardens fertilize themselves through the steady incorporation of organic matter from the plants etc.

In some places no home garden is available eg. people living in flats, in such places planting can be done in pots, discarded battery cases, polythene pots, tins etc.

2. Establishing a Home Garden

Vegetable cultivation can be done along with a good flower garden. Flowers will provide the aesthetic beauty whilst the vegetables will provide you a healthy body. A plan should be drawn showing the location of the house and the available land space. Where the space is large the lay out should indicate the area for the fully grown trees. The drawing will help to locate space for plants that might otherwise be overlooked. It will also prevent overcrowding and ensure proper spacing and arrangement. The amount of

fruit trees and vegetable plants will depend on the size of the garden and needs of the family.

Fruit producing plants require full sunlight while others can tolerate shade. Watering is very essential, a good supply of water from a well or pipe borne water must be available right through the year if the home garden is to be a success.

3. Selecting Plants

Grow plants that are Nutriuous having high protein contents. Grow a variety of vegetables and fruits to ensure that the family obtains the different vitamins and a balanced diet all theyear round. Leafy vegetables should be given priority. The following varieties may be selected - Kankun, Gotukola, Thampala, Mukunuwenna, niviti, Katurumurunga, leafy cabbage, japan battu, other vegetables which should find a place in the home garden are - Beans, bushitavo, bandakka, brinjal, gourds, luffa, sweet potatoes, k. ol khol, raddish, beet-root, tomato etc., Other useful plants in a home garden are green chillies, capsicum chillies, onions, rampe, sera, Karapincha, ginger, Lemonine, Papaw etc.

4. Crop Sanitation

Avoid using toxic chemicals for controlling pests, home remedies are best. Handpick whenever any pest is noticed.

a. Snail Control

Adding meta round beds or placing bait check snails. Growing onions round the beds will also check snails.

b. Soap emulsion

A well mixed solution containing 30 g. of soap in 4½ litres of water 2 teaspoons of Kerosene oil is sprayed or sprinkled at the leaves. Stop using Kerosene mixture at least 2 weeks before picking produce.

c. Wood ash dusting

Sprinkle wood ash or a solution of wood ash in water to control pests.

d. Tobacco wash

Boil a black cigar or a tobacco leaf in about a bottle of water. Sprinkle the cooked mixture on both sides of the leaves.

Plants that may help repel insects.

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| Marigold | - Aphids weevils |
| Mint | - Nematode. |
| Petunia | - Aphids |
| Garlic | - Cabbage butterfly. |

4. Diseases

Proper sanitation and timely removal of affected parts will prevent the spread of disease.

5. Summary

Leafy vegetables are high in vitamins and mineral requirements. Green leaves grown in your own home garden are free of toxic agrochemicals are not contaminated by disease organisms. Supplement your home vegetables needs and reduces home budget. You can use your free time profitably.

6. composting

Quick method of making compost

From yard manure or compost is very essential for successful gardening. Collect your garden sweepings, kitchen scraps into a heap shallow box, metal drum with holes on both sides. If animal material is not available add a little urea, to the material to be composted Follow the normal procedure in making compost as given in the Agriculture Departmental leaflets.

Mixed fertilizers marked by reputed Agrochemical firms may also be used as per instructions given on the packs. Fertilizers should be applied about 6 cm. away from the base of the plants.