Nutrition Garden

It is one of the easiest ways of ensuring access to a healthy diet that contains adequate macro- and micronutrients by producing many different kinds of foods in the home garden by utilizing household areas.

Importance of Nutrition Garden

- direct access to a diversity of nutritionally-rich foods.
- increased purchasing power from savings on food bills and income from sales of garden products.
- fall-back food provision during seasonal lean periods.
- can avoid eating pesticide-tainted vegetables often sold in the market.

Types of Nutrition Gardens

i. Large size gardens

Size: at least 500 sq m

- Almost all types of vegetables can be grown in a large garden, including one or two large fruit plants, such as papaya, guava, lemon or dwarf mango.

ii. Medium size gardens

Size: 150 to 200 sq m

- Any one from tomato, egg plant, fenugreek, chilli), french bean, bitter gourd, cucumber, spinach, amaranthus, radish, turnip, carrot, lettuce, cauliflower, cabbage, summer squash, okra, cowpea, or cluster bean.

iii. Small size gardens

Size: less than 100 sq m

- Any one from amaranthus, spinach, fenugreek, radish, turnip, tomato, egg plant, chilli), lettuce, mint, or coriander.

Garden Layout

Important points to be considered for laying out and planning of nutrition garden:

- Select an area which receives plenty of sunlight
- Rectangular gardens are better than square gardens, but any shape will do.
- Avoid the shade of big trees.
- Locate near a water source if possible.
- Vegetables which lose their quality and freshness rapidly after harvest, such as spinach, amaranthus, fenugreek, mint, and radish, should be given priority in the garden.
- Plant root crops along the ridges which separate plant beds.
- Climbing vegetables make good use of space. Grow them near the fences or walls.
- Dig one or two compost pits in a shady, unused corner of the plot.

Nutrition Garden Management

- Sow or transplant seedlings in rows or lines with proper spacing.
- Remove some seedlings if plants are crowded where seeds are sown in the direct field.
- If seedlings die in the main field, replace them with new healthy seedlings.
- Irrigate after transplanting.
- Remove weeds between the rows and between plants.
- Vegetables need regular watering for good growth and yield.
- Farm yard manure and compost are great fertilizers for vegetable gardens.

Mix them in the soil about a week before sowing or transplanting.

- Apply a nitrogenous fertilizer, such as urea, in small quantities in standing crops for higher plant growth and yield. Apply urea only when the soil is moist; otherwise, give a light irrigation after application.

Nutritious Vegetables

Vegetables supply vitamins, essential amino acids, carbohydrates, and proteins for good health. Dieticians say that adults require about 300 g of vegetables, 125 g of green leafy vegetables, 100 g of roots and tubers, and 75 g of some other vegetables. But most people eat less than these amounts. The following matches important nutrients with their vegetable sources.

Carbohydrates: potato, sweet potato, colocasia, beetroot
Protein: peas, carpet legume, french bean, cowpea, clusterbean, amaranth, broadbean
Vitamin A: carrot (yellow type), spinach, turnip, amaranthus, sweet potato (yellow-fleshed), pumpkin (yellow fleshed), cabbage, fenugreek, tomato, coriander, broccoli, parsley
Vitamin B: peas, carpet legume, garlic, colocasia
Vitamin C: tomato, turnip, green chillies, cauliflower, knol-khol, bitter gourd, radish leaves, amaranthus, Brussels-sprouts, parsley
Calcium: beetroot, amaranthus, fenugreek, turnip leaves, coriander, pumpkin, onion, tomato
Potassium: sweet potato, potato, bitter gourd, radish, carpet legume
Phosphorus: garlic, peas, bitter gourd
Iron: bitter gourd, amaranth, fenugreek, mint, Indian spinach, spinach

KVK Intervention

Considering the importance of nutrition in health and its management, KVK Hailakandi has emphasized in utilization of household areas by each individual through Nutrition Garden. To popularize this technology of food and nutrition security, several numbers of demonstrations (FLDs) were given to the farmers. Seeds of different vegetables and pulses were also distributed under TSP for its large scale dissemination. One same demonstration unit has also been maintained in the office premises to showcase the technology. Several awareness camps, group discussions, trainings were organized. Field day was also conducted at the harvesting time of crops to motivate farmers for its large scale adoption.

Crop calendar

SEASON	CROP
Winter (Oct - Feb)	Potato, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Knol-khol, Broccoli, Carrots, Tomato, Sprouts, Radish, Turnip, French bean, Beetroot, Onion, Garlic, Broad bean, Peas, Coriander , Spinach Fenugreek and Mustard
Summer (Mar - June)	Okra, Cowpea, Cluster bean, Eggplant, Chilli, Pumpkin, Bottle gourd, Bitter gourd, Ridge gourd, Ginger, Turmeric, Cucumber, Amaranthus and Colocasia
Rainy (July - Oct)	Okra, Cowpea, Clusterbean, Chilli, Eggplant, Cucurbit vegetables (except melons) and Sweet potato

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
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