

CAPSICUM (*Capsicum annuum*)

Capsicum or Bell Pepper is one of the most popular and widely grown vegetable crops in north eastern region especially in hilly areas. It is highly suitable and economical under poly house conditions. Its cultivation in the rice fallow has been commercialized in the region. It contains many food additives and adds flavour, colour, vitamin C and pungency to world food industries.



Varieties

Open pollinated varieties: California Wonder, Hungarian Yellow Wax TMR-23 (long)
Hybrids: Mahabharata, Bharat, Indame-3

Soil and climate

It requires sandy loam soil rich in organic matter. Heavy rains during flowering and fruit set are detrimental to the crop. It is a cool season crop.

Field Preparation

For preparation of field, soil is ploughed 2-3 times with power tiller or with spade. Planking is done during the last ploughing to make friable soil bed for transplanting. Raised beds (30 cm high) of 1 m width and 4-5 m length are prepared.

Seed rate

650g/ ha for open pollinated varieties and for hybrids the seed rate is 350g/ha

Sowing time

Seeds are sown in the month of November-December and transplanted during January - February.

Nursery raising: As in brinjal

Transplanting and spacing

The seedlings are ready for transplanting 35 - 40 days after seed sowing when they attain a height of 15 cm with 4-5 leaves. For open pollinated varieties the spacing should be 45 cm x 30cm and for hybrids 60cm x 45cm. Transplanting is done preferably in the evening. Irrigation is done immediately after transplanting

Manures and fertilizers

FYM or compost @ 20-25 t/ha and NPK (@ 100:80:60 kg/ha for open pollinated varieties and 150: 100: 100 kg/ha for hybrids are incorporated in the soil during soil preparation. Half dose of nitrogen and full dose of phosphorus and potash are applied at the time of sowing or

transplanting. Remaining amount of nitrogen is applied in two equal splits, first 30 days and second 50-60 days after transplanting. After application of fertilizer, it is mixed in soil by light hoeing followed by light irrigation in the field.

Off-season production

Since capsicum is a high value crop, the off-season production under low cost polyhouse is found economical due to higher productivity, generally two to three times higher than open conditions. In off-season, it fetches premium prices. For off-season cultivation seedlings are raised as well as transplanted under polyhouse during winter and rainy seasons to protect from the adverse effect of weather.

Plant Protection Measures

Anthracnose or fruit rot: The diseases symptoms appear mostly on ripen fruits. Usually circular and sunken with black margin spots are found on the fruits. Two to three sprays of DithaneM-45 (Mencozeb) @ 2g/l of water or Bordeaux mixture @ 1 % or Copper oxychloride @ 3g/l of water at 8-10 days interval is found effective to control the disease.

Aphids and Thrips: Nymphs and adults suck the sap from tender leaves and flower buds causing curling of the leaves and flower drop, respectively. Two to three sprays of Rigors (Dimethoate) @ 1 ml/l of water are used at 8-10 days interval for control.

Harvesting and Yield

Fruits are picked up at proper stage of maturity when they are fully mature and tender. The average yield of capsicum is 100-150 q/ha in open pollinated varieties and 300 q/ha in hybrids.