

Brief Notes on Cultivation

	Bitter Gourd and Hairy Gourd
Cultivation Environment:	Warm and sunny weather is preferred. Grow well between 25°C and 30°C in thick and humus-rich loam with good drainage, and a pH value between 6.0 and 6.8.
Planting and Spacing:	Transplantation of seedlings is preferred to start cultivation. Germinate seeds in nursery and transplant seedlings once they have 3 to 5 true leaves. Plant spacing should be about 60 cm x 120 cm. Set the plants in a single row.
Fertiliser Application and Management:	Basal Dressing: Apply about 1,000 kg of compost or 90 kg of both peanut cake and bone meal to each d.c. farming area. Top Dressing: Two weeks after transplantation, apply 50 g of organic fertiliser (N:P:K=4:3:3) near the base for each plant. When the female flowers of the plants bloom, double the amount to 100 g and re-apply once every 2 weeks until the plant stops growing. (1 d.c. is 7,260 square feet)
Plant Adjustment:	Erect a trellis to support the vines once the plant reaches 40 cm in height. Pluck all side vines and fruits from the lower portion of the main stem to encourage growth. During growth period, maintain a suitable level of wetness in the soil, conduct light ploughing, earthing-up, weeding and thinning to allow the young fruits to grow straight. When the female flowers wither and the first fruits (about the size of a fingertip) appear, bagging should be done immediately for protection against melon flies, thereby enhancing the market value.
Harvesting:	Bitter Gourd - It takes about 75 days from sowing to first harvesting, with a harvesting period of 70 days. Hairy Gourd - It takes about 60 days from sowing to first harvesting, with a harvesting period of 60 days.