

Brief Notes on Cultivation of Apple Sponge Gourd

Cultivation Environment	Warm and sunny weather is preferred. Grow well between 20°C and 30°C in thick and humus-rich loam with good drainage, and a pH value between 5.5 and 6.8.
Planting and Spacing	<p>Transplantation of seedlings is preferred. Germinate seeds in nursery and transplant seedlings to the field once 3 to 5 true leaves emerge.</p> <p>Adopt single-row planting with a spacing of about 90 cm and 120 cm in a row and between the rows respectively.</p>
Fertiliser Application and Management	<p>Basal Dressing: Apply about 1 000 kg of compost or 90 kg of both peanut cake and bone meal to each d.c.</p> <p>Top Dressing: 2 weeks after transplantation, apply 50 g of organic fertiliser (N:P:K=4:3:3) to each plant. During the harvesting period, apply 50 g of organic fertiliser (N:P:K=4:2:10) once every 2 to 3 weeks until the plant withers.</p>
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 the growth period, maintain a suitable soil moisture level and conduct light ploughing, earthing-up and weeding. During the fruit-bearing period, conduct thinning to remove weaker vines as appropriate if side vines are overgrown, in order to facilitate light penetration and ventilation.
Harvesting	Ready for harvest when the fruits have grown to about 15 cm to 20 cm in length. It takes about 50 to 60 days from sowing to first harvesting. The harvesting period may last for 3 months.

(1 d.c. (dau chung) = 674 square metres or 7 260 square feet)