Eggplant growing. 2/2

Being an important and highly nutritious vegetable, the quality and quantity of eggplant is much more determined by the level of technology used in its production.

Aubergine (eggplant/ solanum melongena) planting in green houses is carried with seedlings taken from seed bed and transplanting to permanent soils takes lace 45-50 days after seeds are sown in seedbed and when it has 4-6 leaves and 10-12 cm of height.

Crop management

First, before planting, holes are made in soil and once seedlings are placed, they are covered and watered. Plant setting is done depending upon requirements of the variety being cultivated, crop cycle and a number of stems to be left.

Not only the above also at the beginning of fruit formation, irrigation points are situated far away from plant as this may encourage root penetration leaving vegetative growth which affects the flowering and fertilization of the flowers. At 40-50 days after planting, pruning takes place leaving 2-3 or 4 shoots on the plant. Staking and tying of plants maintains them in upright position and improve aeration of the plants.

Similarly, Remove sessile leaves to improve fruit colour and aeration. Cull out fruit to ensure elimination of any fruit damaged or deformed due to plague or disease. First inflorescence normally appears at 20-30 days after transplanting and in this, bee hives are placed in the green house to improve on pollination of the flowers.

After fertilization ovaries grow into fruits and watering is adjusted according to crop requirements and depending on evapo -transpiration rate. Take care with regard to N fertilizer amounts used to provide excess vegetative growth.

Furthermore white flies and thrips are the main plagues that affect the crop. However, the release of axillary fauna is undertaken for biological control of plagues. Growth period from flowering to harvest ranges from 10-40 days depending on the crop and temperatures.

Finally, fruit picking is done before fruit reaches physiological maturity and fruit are examined for any humidity or wetness in morning and pruning shears are used to avoid tearing of the fruit and ensure 1cm of stock is left.