

A Beginner's Guide to Starting an Organic Kitchen Gardening

Vivek Yadav ¹, Ayushi Verma²

Introduction:

Kitchen Gardening is the growing of fruits and vegetables at the back-yard of house by using kitchen waste water. Kitchen gardening also called as Home garden or Nutrition garden or Kitchen gardening or Vegetable gardening. A kitchen garden ensures a regular supply of vegetables throughout the year, with most of the activities usually managed by family members. Climbing vegetables such as peas and cucurbits can be planted along the boundary where they can easily find support. Priority should be given to vegetables that mature quickly and are consumed fresh. Suitable crops for a kitchen garden include chilli, tomato, brinjal, okra, spinach, amaranth, radish, coriander, onion, cowpea, garlic, French beans, and cluster beans.

Why need for a Kitchen Garden

To maintain good health, it is essential to follow a nutritious diet that includes a balanced combination of staples like rice, bread, pulses, vegetables, herbs, and fruits. Vegetables, in particular, are vital for

providing energy and protecting the body against diseases. When vegetables are grown without chemical inputs, they contribute significantly to overall well-being.

1. One can grow fresh and healthy vegetables at home.
2. Cultivating crops in a small area makes it easier to manage pests and diseases by removing affected parts and avoiding chemical use.
3. It ensures the successful production of vegetables to meet household needs.
4. It helps reduce expenses on purchasing vegetables and herbs.
5. Household waste such as sweepings, kitchen scraps, and wastewater can be recycled for use in the garden.
6. Vegetables grown at home are tastier than those bought from the market.
7. Kitchen gardening provides the dual benefits of food security and additional income.
8. Besides vegetables, the garden also offers fodder for domestic animals and

Vivek Yadav ¹, Ayushi Verma²

¹M. Sc. (Horticulture) fruit Science, College of Horticulture

²M. Sc. Horticulture, Institute of Agriculture Science

¹Chandra Shekhar Azad University of Agriculture and Technology, Kanpur, (Uttar Pradesh)

²Bundelkhand University, Jhansi, (Uttar Pradesh)

raw materials for other household needs such as handicrafts, fuelwood, furniture, and baskets.

Principles of kitchen gardening

- ☞ In a new construction, it is wise to plan kitchen garden in Advance.
- ☞ Appropriate size and shape will depend on the family size. It is better to have a small size well maintained garden than a poorly maintained large one.
- ☞ Location is the fundamental principle and it should be close to the house
- ☞ Suitable and convenient layout
- ☞ Open and sunny site as sunlight is very important for proper Growth of plants
- ☞ Site should be free from shade trees, etc
- ☞ Close to well, water tap natural and any other source of Irrigation including kitchen water which can be profitably Utilized
- ☞ The ideal kitchen garden be established in a fairly highly level Area preferably on the southern site of the house, which can Be protected by a live fence from stray animals.
- ☞ Suitable and effective rotations should be followed to make best use of the available land.

Objective of Kitchen Gardening

- ☞ Supply fresh fruits and vegetables high in nutritive value & to supply the family the whole year round.
- ☞ Supply fruits and vegetables free from toxic chemicals.
- ☞ Help to save expenditure on purchase of vegetables.
- ☞ Vegetables harvested from home garden taste better than those purchased from market.
- ☞ Effective utilization of kitchen waste water and kitchen waste materials.
- ☞ Exercise to the body and mind.
- ☞ Proper utilization of land in the back side of the home.

Types of Kitchen Gardening:

- Vegetables Gardening
- Fruit Gardening
- Flowering Gardening
- Combined Vegetables, fruits and flowers Gardening.

Planning Criteria for Kitchen Garden

- ☞ A plot of about 200 sq. meters is generally enough to fulfill the vegetable needs of a family of 5–6 members.
- ☞ Before planting, prepare a clear sketch of the garden layout in a notebook.
- ☞ The plan should show plots, paths, irrigation channels, perennial plants, and permanent structures.

- ☞ The shape and size of plots should be designed according to the slope of the land.
- ☞ Choice of vegetables should depend on the season, local climate, available space, nutritional value, and the taste preferences of family members.
- ☞ Sowing and planting must be carried out in a systematic manner.
- ☞ Vegetables required in small amounts, such as lettuce, mint, and coriander, can be grown along ridges, paths, and water channels.
- ☞ Vegetables needed in bulk, like potato, onion, peas, and dwarf beans, should be given more space.
- ☞ Salad crops such as radish, carrot, and turnip should be sown on ridges at intervals to ensure a steady daily supply.
- ☞ Climbing crops such as cucurbits and French beans in summer/rainy season, and garden peas in winter, should be planted along the boundary wall to utilize vertical space.
- ☞ To maximize sunlight, tall-growing crops should be followed by medium and then dwarf varieties in the layout.
- ☞ Perennial vegetables like asparagus and chayote should be planted in one corner to avoid interference with annual beds and shading.
- ☞ Crop rotation practices should be followed to maintain soil health.
- ☞ Succession planting of quick-maturing vegetables should be adopted for continuous supply, along with companion cropping.
- ☞ Leguminous crops like beans and peas must be included in the rotation to enrich soil fertility.
- ☞ Ridges are ideal for root crops, while side paths can be used for crops like tomato or leafy greens such as celery.
- ☞ Early-maturing varieties should be planted together so the space becomes available for later crops once harvested.
- ☞ Slow-growing crops like cabbage, brinjal, cauliflower, and broccoli can be intercropped with quick-growing vegetables such as coriander, spinach, radish, or lettuce.
- ☞ Easy-to-grow and low-cost vegetables should be prioritized.
- ☞ A compost pit should be prepared in one corner to recycle kitchen waste and plant residues into organic manure.

Conclusion

A kitchen garden should be an integral part of every home and hobby, whether located in hills, plains, villages, or cities. The concept needs to be promoted widely, as it can play a



significant role in improving the health, well-being, and economy of every family.

