Guidelines for Cabbage Production

IPM - Vegetable ICIPE / IDEA / KARl Project

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CABBAGE *(Brassica oleraecae)*

Varieties

Large headed: Drumhead, Glory, Sugar loaf.

Small headed: Red drumhead, Copenhagen, Chinese cabbage. Copenhagen and Sugar loaf are also early maturing and hence escape black rot disease.

Growth Environment

Cool moist conditions and altitudes of above 700 metres are favourable. In strong sunshine cabbages are damaged by sun scotch. In very hot areas, water once a day where possible. Loam soils with PH around 6 are desirable.

Planting Material

Grown from seed sown in raised bed nurseries and transplanted into the field at 3 to 4 weeks. Sugarloaf and Copenhagen are early maturing taking 2.5 months after transplanting.
Glory and Drumhead take 3.5 to 4 months from sowing to harvesting.

Planting

3 x 2ft (90 x 60cm) spacing (for Drumhead) and 2 x 2ft (60 x 60cm) for the smaller varieties. Seed rate of per acre is recommended.

Fertilizers

Put compost manure a month before planting or NPK 25:5:5 just before planting. Add 550kg/ha (275kg/acre) of Double Super Phosphate to each hole at planting. Top dress with 550kg/ha (275kg/acre) CAN when seedlings are 20cm high. However, soil should be tested to determine level of fertility before applying artificial fertilizers.

Weed Management

Keep cabbage crop free of weeds by hoe weeding or mulching until when heads are fully developed.

Insect Pests and Diseases

Diseases:

- Black rot: Plant early maturing varieties were acceptable. At early stages of infection, spray with Copper fungicides. At later stages, uproot and burn infected plants. Rotate gardens.

- Downy Mildew: Spray with Dithane M45 or Ridomil, practice crop rotation.

Insect Pests:

- Diamond back moth: Spray with Cypermethrin, Nurelle D and plant early. Be sure to cover the underside of the leaves where the larvae and pupa are found.
- Cabbage saw fly: Spray with Rogor (Dimethoate)
- Cabbage Aphid: Durban or Nurelle D.
- Cut worms and slugs Dust with malathion dust.

However, before spraying insecticides, first scout to make sure that pest populations have reached levels which can damage the crop significantly.

Harvesting

Cut heads with a knife when heads are fully developed. Delayed harvesting results into the head splitting.

Yield: 8 tons/acre (20 tons/ha)

For more information contact:

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