

STANDARD CULTIVATION PROCEDURE FOR TULSHI

INTRODUCTION:→ OCIMUM SANCTUM (TULSHI) belongs to FAMILY – LAMIACEAE. It is an annual plant, 30-60cm high, much branched; stem and branches usually purplish, sub-quadrangular; 2.5-5 by 1.6-3.2cm. elliptic oblong obtuse, pubescent on both sides and minutely gland-dotted. Flowers in racemes.

CULTIVATION:

SOIL AND CLIMATE:→ Thrives well on variety of soils. Rich loam to poor laterite, saline and alkaline to moderately acidic soils are well suited for its cultivation. Well-drained soil helps better vegetative growth. Water logged condition can cause root-rot and result in stunted growth. The plant can be grown under partially shaded conditions but with low oil contents. It flourishes well under fairly high rainfall and humid conditions. Long days and high temperatures have been found favourable for plant growth and oil production. Topical and sub-topical climate (at altitudes upto 900m.) is suited for its cultivation.

LAND AND PREPARATION:→ The land is brought to fine tilth and laid out into plots of convenient sizes for irrigation. It is preferable to add 15 tonnes of farm yard manure per hectare during the preparation of land and mixed well in the soil.

NURSERY RAISING AND PLANTING:→ The nursery can be raised in the third week of February and transplanting is generally started in the middle of April. The plant is propagated by seeds. Raised seed bags of 15" x 4'9" size should be thoroughly prepared and well manured by addition of farm yard manure. About 200-300g seeds are enough to raise the seedlings for planting one hectare of land. The seed should be sown 2cm below in the nursery beds. The seeds germinates in 8-12 days and the seedlings are ready for transplanting in about 6 weeks time 4-5 leaf stage. The seedlings are transplanted at 40 x 40cm and 40 x 50cm to get high herbage and oil yield per hectare.

WEEDING AND HOEING:→ First weeding is done one month after planting and the second 4weeks after the first. One hoeing after two months of planting is sufficient.

MANURES, FERTILISERS AND PESTICIDES:→ The medicinal plants have to be grown without chemical fertilizers and use of pesticides. Organic manures like, Farm Yard Manure (FYM), Vermi-Compost, Green Manure etc. may be used as per requirement of the species. To prevent diseases, bio-pesticides could be prepared (either single or mixture) from Neem (kernel, seeds & leaves), Chitrakmool, Dhatura, Cow's urine etc.

IRRIGATION:→ Irrigation depends upon the moisture content of soil. In summer 3 irrigation per month are necessary, in rainy season no irrigation is required. About 12-15 irrigation are enough during the year.

HARVESTING/POST HARVESTING OPERATION:→ The crop is harvested at full bloom stage. The first harvest is obtained at 90-95 days of planting. Then it may be harvested every 65-75 days interval. Harvesting is done usually on bright sunny days for good oil yield and its quality. It is not desirable to harvest the crop if there was a rain in the previous day.

YIELD:→ About 5 tonnes of fresh herbage can be obtained twice or thrice a year per hectare.