

“A loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge”.

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Kerala banned Hazardous Pesticides

The government is considering a ban on red (extremely toxic) and yellow (highly toxic) categories of pesticides on account of continuous protests by the people especially in Kasaragod and Idukki districts. The ban will apply to biodiversity rich areas and areas where pesticide use is intense.

Cardamom and tea plantations are exempted from this immediate ban. Prescription from the part of an agriculture officer might be made mandatory for the sale of pesticides.



In Idukki district, ban on use of red and yellow categories of pesticides is likely to come into effect for crops such as vegetables, banana and paddy. Agriculture Minister Mullakkara Ratnakaran has asked the Director of Agriculture to prepare detailed proposals in this regard.

“Nominee Gold” efficient against rice weeds

Weedicide, Nominee Gold is found efficient against all types weeds in rice field. This efficient weedicide is developed by research scientists from Japan. This is used mainly against *Cyperus* sp, *Ludvigia*, *Echinochloa* sp etc. This needs to be used only once against all the weeds in rice and in 4 leaf stage.



For 1 ha, 120 ml in 100 litres of water is the recommended dosage. Due to this environmental pollution is also drastically reduced. The field is to be properly drained before applying this weedicide. 2 days after application field is to be flooded for 4 days. With in 2 weeks complete destruction of weeds take place.

Financial assistance for apiculture

The rubber is providing financial assistance for apiculture activities in the rubber plantations. About 90 lakhs rupees has been allotted to this sector in the financial year 2010-2011. Small scale rubber manufacturers who are having an area of less than 2 ha under rubber cultivation. Financial Assistance will be given through agencies approved by rubber board.

More priority will be given to women SHG's. Each group will have 10-20 members. Each member will have 4 beehives and associated equipments will get Rs 3000 or they will be provided with 50% of total expenses. Each unit will be provided with Rs 30000 to 60000. For more information contact rubber Board field or Regional Offices.

New cabbage and cauliflower varieties released

Cabbage and cauliflower are vegetables traditionally grown in the winter season on the Northern plains and in the high altitude areas in the South. But, with the advent of tropical varieties which can form marketable 'heads and curds' even at temperatures as high as 35° C,

"The trials conducted in the last 5-6 years have been successful in identifying varieties of these vegetables which are suitable for cultivation in the November-February period in the state.

The Basant, NS-60 and Pusa Meghna genotypes of cauliflower and the NS-183, NS-160 and NS-43 genotypes of cabbage gave very good results. On an average, cauliflower curds weighing between 750 gm and 1 kg and cabbage heads of 1 to 1.5 kg could be harvested," The Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council, Kerala, had supplied around 14 lakh seedlings of these varieties to farmers in the current season.

Medicinal plant farms in schools by next year

"There is huge demand for medicinal plants, its production is not getting enough boost. Medicinal plant farms will be introduced in every school by next year. There will be another scheme in 100 selected panchayats to have at least one medicinal plant in every house,". This notification was issued by Mullanpally Ratnakaran, minister for agriculture.

The Minister announced two schemes for the promotion of medicinal plant farming and said that the environment in the State was suitable for the growth of medicinal plants. Mullanpally said that he would initiate the projects in schools as creating basic knowledge among children was essential since ayurveda is gaining more importance now a days, the cultivation of medicinal plants need to be encouraged.

Mushroom Cultivation - A Technical art for better profit generation

Mushroom cultivation is the one with less work and more income. Mushrooms were generally cultivated on wet wood and ground. It is nutritious and very tasty. Various types of mushrooms are there. They are edible mushroom, poisonous mushroom, medicinal mushroom, narcotic mushroom etc. During monsoon season many varieties of mushroom occur in surroundings and fields known as "Pavakoon, Arikoon, Perumkoon, Marakoon" etc. in Malayalam

Today we develop the technology or culturing the edible mushrooms vaiykoalkoon (hay mushroom), chippy koon (asyster mushroom), palkoon (milk mushroom) etc. Mushrooms were available in the market at the price of Rs. 200 and above. Ganodarma, mushroom species are having very good medicinal value. They are known as "king of barbs". Every year India will get more than 100 crore Rs. through this business. One kilograms of dried Ganodarma have 1 Lack Rupees in international market.



Spawn is the seed of mushroom. This consists of mycelium of the fungus grown on suitable substrate. This is the main input in mushroom cultivation. The mycelia of mushroom cannot propagate by itself, so it is to be mixed with main substrates of cultivation like straw or cereal grains. The mushrooms harvested lately after attaining full maturity cannot provide the whole food values. They should be used fresh or should be preserved for future use. The best mushrooms appear slippery when touched. The fruiting bodies should be uprooted from their base while harvesting.