BEST FARMER PRACTICES

CABBAGES

Inputi

07 CABBAGES

REQUIREMENTS

They grow best in well drained sandy or silty loams with a high organic matter content.

1. RAISING SEEDLINGS

Cabbage seeds should first be planted in a well set up nursery bed. Farmers can either raise the seedlings themselves or acquire them from **certified nursery operators**

If raised, farmers need to water regularly and manage the insects and diseases through sprays where necessary.

Avoid setting up nurseries in fields that previously had cabbages.

The seedlings should be exposed to direct sunlight in about **1-2 weeks** prior to transplanting to enable their hardening.

2. FIELD PREPARATION

The field should be set for transplanting prior to the introduction of seedlings from the nursery. Manure or compost can be applied **1-2 weeks** to transplanting to enable its complete breakdown.

3. TRANSPLANTING SEEDS

It is done after a period of **30 days** in the nursery bed.

It should be done in the morning or in the late evening.

The recommended spacing is **60cm** between the rows and **45 - 60cm** between plants.

2-3 handfuls of manure or compost should be placed in the planting hole (80 tonnes per acre) and **2 bottle tops** (10g) of **DAP** at a rate of **80kg** per acre.

If the soils are acidic, **TSP**, **DSP** or **NPK** should be used instead of DAP

The DAP should be well mixed with the soil to avoid scorching of the seedlings.

4. WEED MANAGEMENT

Weeds should be kept out of the field since they can hinder the growth of the crops through outcompeting them for water, nutrients and light.

5. TOP DRESSING

The crop should be top dressed with **CAN fertiliser** in 2 splits to avoid nutrient loss through leaching.

The first split is applied at a rate of 10g per plant (100kg/acre) **2-3 weeks** after transplanting

The second one is applied at a rate of **20g per plant** (200kg/acre) at the onset of the head formation.

PEST

DIAMONDBACK MOTH

The eggs are laid on the upper surface of the leaves. Infestations are usually serious during drier months

MANAGEMENT

Spray with bio insecticides such as ***bacillus thuringiensis***

Wrap the fruits with eco bags

Use synthetic pesticides like deltamethrin containing pesticides like ***Trust Delta***, ***General*** and ***Allied Agro deltrin***

PEST

CABBAGE SAWFLY

- *The grayish green larvae feed on the blade of the leaves leaving only the main veins and the midrib*

MANAGEMENT

Destruction of the wild plants of the brassicaceae family

Spray with pesticides like ***Ramida,***

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MANAGEMENT

- Spray with azadirachtin containing pesticides like ***nimbecidine***
- Spray with synthetic insecticides like ***Ramida***

DISEASE

CUT WORMS

They are grayish black larvae that partially or completely bite the stem at ground level causing the plant to fall over

MANAGEMENT

- Early weeding destroys sites for egg laying
- Ploughing exposes the pests to predators and desiccation
- Hand removal since they are easily found near the damaged plants
- Spray using insecticides like ***Striker***

PEST

DAMPING OFF

The disease is caused by fungi and it is very common at the nursery stage. It is more common during the rainy season.

Symptoms include the rotting of the seedlings at the base of the stem thus falling over the ground.

MANAGEMENT

- Avoid excessive watering and fertilisation especially with nitrates
- Practice crop rotation
- Avoid fields that have a history of the disease
- Use certified disease free seeds
- Spray with fungicides like ***Victory***, ***Winner*** among others

DISEASE

BLACK ROT

It is caused by fungus and affects the leaves, vines and the fruits.

- *Symptoms include **V shaped** lesions on the leaf margins which later turn brow as the leaf veins in the affected area turn black.*

MANAGEMENT

- Ensure that there is field sanitation in the field
- Plant clean seeds from certified operators
- Crop rotation (at least 3 years)
- Use of copper based fungicides like ***Copper oxychloride, Nordox***

PEST

BACTERIAL SOFT ROT

It is a soil borne disease which is spread by rain splash on the lower leaves

Symptoms include the head becoming soft and developing a watery rot that has an offensive smell. When the stem of the affected plant is cut, a very bad smell is generated.

MANAGEMENT

- Crop rotation with legumes and cereals
- Maintain field hygiene
- Avoid harvesting when it is wet
- Spray with copper based fungicides like ***copper oxychloride***

HARVESTING & POST HARVEST HANDLING

- Harvesting

  Mature melons can be identified from;

  - Cabbages attain maturity 2.5 - 4 months after transplanting depending on the variety and location.
  - The cabbages are ready for harvest when the head becomes firm
  - Cut the head from the base and leave the outer leaves to protect it and keep it fresh.
  - Brushing of the head should be avoided since it may lead to rotting

- Post harvest handling

  - The cabbages should be kept in clean well ventilated containers or crates and transported to the market in c

FOR FURTHER ADVICE AND INFOMATION **DIAL *284*68#**

REFERENCES | SHEP PLUS, 2019c. Cabbage Production.

CREDITS | Cover Photo by Melanin Goddess: (https://www.pexels.com/photo/green-cabbage-4767199/)
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