

Prospects of kharif onion cultivation in India

Smaranika Mohanta

M.S. Swaminathan School of Agriculture, Centurion University of Technology and Management, Odisha, India

Corresponding email: smaranika.mohanta@cutm.ac.in

Abstract

Onion (*Allium cepa* L.) is important and indispensable item in worldwide kitchen as condiment & vegetable. Kharif onion production is a new technology in India. Production of onion in *kharif* and late *kharif* season is more important to have continuous supply of onion round the year. Importance of *Kharif* cultivation of onion to stabilize the prices. Eastern Indian states are depended upon Maharashtra and Western state in off season and stabilize the price in lean period. Research will be conducted in different dates of planting, varieties trial, agronomical trial and for crop improvement in different area of India. All varieties of kharif season are cultivated in rabi season but all rabi season varieties are not cultivated in kharif season. For increase economic returns manage the crop scientifically and professional strengthen the production and research for dehydration and suitable varieties for export to foreign.

Introduction: Onion (*Allium cepa* L.; $2n=16$) belongs to family *Alliaceae* is most widely grown in worldwide and popular vegetable crop as spice crop and leaves are used as leafy vegetable among the Alliums. After tomato, onion is the second most important among vegetable crop and it is known as “Queen of Kitchen” because of indispensable ingredient item in every Indian kitchen as a seasoning wide varieties of dishes. Pungency is the special characteristic of onion is due to the oil known as “Allyl propyl disulphide”. Due storage quality onion are withstand in hazard of long distance transport also. Onions have wider use in manufacture of soaps, ketchups, onion flakes (dehydrated) and food seasoning besides being used as salad and pickle. Also dehydrated white onion used as dehydrated product like flakes, rings, granules, powder etc and processed onion as onion in vinegar and brine are marketed worldwide and exported from India. The bulb is useful as diuretic and heart stimulant. Onion has many uses as folk medicine and recent reports suggests that onion plays an important role in preventing heart diseases and other ailments (Augusti, 1996). The problems of heart diseases, rheumatism, cancer, digestive disorders, blood sugar and prolonged cough as well as it lower the blood sugar are prevented by regular consumption of onion.

Area and Production: Among the onion producing countries, India is the second largest producer of onion after China with an area 1051.5 thousand hectares (11.4% of total vegetable cultivated area) with a production 16813.0 thousand MT (10.4% of total vegetable cultivated area) and productivity is 16.0 tones/ha (NHB, 2012-13). Among the states of India, Maharashtra stands first in area (2.60 lakh ha) and production (46.60 lakh tones) of onions with a productivity of 17.9 MT/ha (NHRDF, 2013). Karnataka and Rajasthan rank 2nd and 3rd in onion cultivated area (159.60 thousand hectare and 139.05 thousand hectare) and production wise Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka occupied 2nd and 3rd rank after Maharashtra. As per productivity, Gujarat rank 1st, with a productivity of 24.4 t/ha, followed by MP (24.1 t/ha) (NHB, 2012-13). The area has increased by 50.07% up to 2012-13(9.92 lakh ha) as compared to 2005-06 (6.61 lakh ha). Onion is an important export oriented crop. India exports 7.78 lakh MT fresh onions during