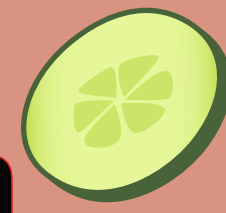




Drip Irrigation **Highly Impactive for Cucumber Cultivation**



PIPIP
Feature Story

While exploring high value crops growers in district Toba Tek Singh, Water Management team met a forty years old gentleman, wearing a cap and sweater to protect himself from cold weather, oblivious to his surroundings, picking fresh green cucumbers from his own tunnel farm during a peak season of off-season vegetables. He was owner of the farm and harvesting the cucumbers with daily wages laborers. Mr. Abdul Shakoor belongs to Kamalia: a very famous town for growing off-season vegetables in tunnels.

He has a versatile experience of growing vegetables especially cucumbers under tunnels with drip irrigation system. While sharing his vast experience he told that “I am growing cucumbers for more than 10 years. Initially, I used to grow it with traditional flood irrigation method under weak woody tunnel structures. Those poor structures and outdated irrigation method were very problematic in terms of crop damage and less production. During 2012-13, I came to know about a modern irrigation method which saves precious agricultural inputs and doubles yield. So, I contacted the On Farm Water Management staff for installation of drip irrigation system on 15 acres”. He added that “honestly, I found this system the best intervention and highly useful for cucumber cultivation. I get two-times more yield of cucumber with drip irrigation as compared to flood irrigation”.

According to nutritionists, cucumber has calcium, iron, zinc, magnesium, potassium, phosphorous and vitamins C, B1, B2, B3, B5 and B6 alongwith folic acid. A single medium-sized cucumber is enough to meet daily human requirements of these essential nutrients.

Mr. Abdul Shakoor indicated that “drip irrigation provides only required quantity of water & fertilizers to the plants resulting in utilization of precious agricultural inputs very efficiently, providing conducive environment for plant growth. It also saves time because almost 70% less time is required for irrigation as compared to flood irrigation method. It is also very helpful in minimizing the weeds in all vegetables grown in rows leading to cutting down the cost on weedicides to almost half. Agricultural experts have recommended drip irrigation as future of the developing countries where water resources are shrinking day by day.

Malik Muhammad Akram, Director General Agriculture (Water Management), Punjab highlighted that “Water Management wing of the Agriculture Department has successfully introduced high efficacy irrigation systems to the farmers of the Punjab under the PIPIP. This project is highly impactive as growing vegetables under drip irrigation provides more economic returns than conventional irrigation methods due to reduction in production cost and better crop yields. Drip irrigation with tunnel farming is helping the farmers to increase the area under vegetables as well as their production”.



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