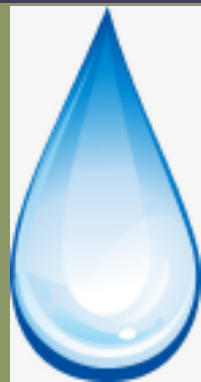




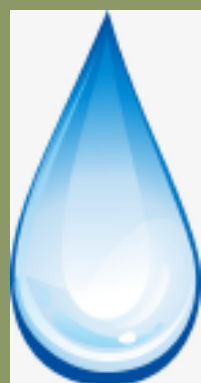
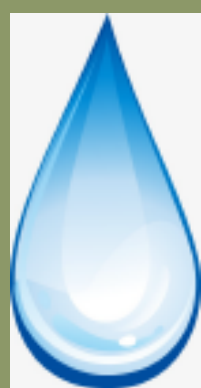
Olive Cultivation with Drip Irrigation: A Miracle in Potohar Region



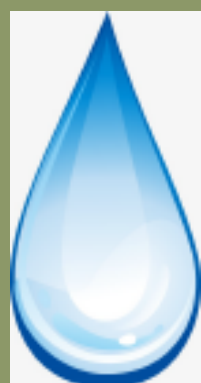
Olive can be grown successfully in marginal and waste lands where the soil is not suitable for other crops. It can, therefore, be very helpful in improving livelihood of the farmers of Potohar region and play a pivotal role in the economy of Pakistan. Actually, drip irrigation is the major contributor in making the olive cultivation possible in the Potohar region under undulated land conditions. The progressive growers of the region are very satisfied because they are converting their waste lands into productive by growing olive orchards with drip irrigation and getting good economic returns.



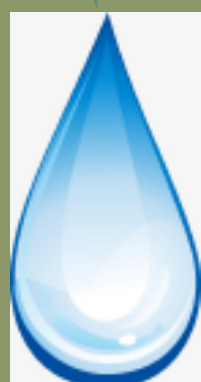
Mr. Yaqoob Tahir Izhar, a progressive olive grower of the Potohar region has installed drip irrigation system and established an **olive model farm**. The Farm Manager, Mr. Sabtain Abbas (Agronomist) shared his experiences about olive cultivation with drip irrigation. He told **“the climatic conditions of the Potohar region are very conducive for olive cultivation** but the limiting factor was shortage of water. This problem was resolved by the Punjab government with introduction of drip irrigation. In other words, it was not possible for the Potohar growers to cultivate any crop without drip irrigation because of undulated/ mountainous lands and water scarcity”. He proudly apprised that **“the olive plants of our orchard are very healthy and now we earn about Rs. 125,000 per acre annually”**.



While responding to a question about economic importance of olive cultivation, Dr. Azhar Iqbal, Olive Expert explained as **“Ripened olive fruits are rich in oil which is the best oil available in the world** for edible purpose. Olive products especially **olive honey, olive pickle, olive kehwa** etc. are helping to fulfil the nutritional needs of the people. It also contributes to establish agro-industries for manufacturing olive filter discs, olive crushers, packaging materials, etc.”. He added that **“Punjab government has also installed an olive oil extraction unit at Barani Agricultural Research Institute, Chakwal to provide facility to the olive growers for free oil extraction”**.



Mr. Sabtain highlighted an important benefit of the drip irrigation technology that **“the Potohar barren lands are converting into cultivable lands with drip irrigation which provides employment opportunities to the rural population and thus helps in poverty alleviation in the area”**.



Mr. Abdul Sattar, Deputy Director Agriculture (OFWM), Chakwal indicated that **“drip irrigation technology is getting more popular day by day amongst the progressive growers of Potohar region because of its huge benefits. In fact, it is the best advanced and suitable technology especially for orchard cultivation under water shortage and climate change scenario.**

