



DRIP IRRIGATION A BLESSING FOR THE PAPAYA GROWERS

Papaya is a cerise-orange colored juicy fruit, which is a natural source of vitamins and minerals that are essential for normal functioning of the human body. Drip irrigation is a boon for the Papaya growers in the Punjab because the Papaya plants need less water at all growth stages and drip irrigation offers requisite control perfectly. The maximum water requirement is about 160 L/plant/week for irrigation through under-tree mini sprinklers and 50 L/plant/week by drip irrigation. It requires only two irrigations in a week during summer and one irrigation in winter for healthy crop and better produce. Excessive moisture affects the crop as well as fruit quality adversely. Adequate soil moisture should be maintained in soil during summer in order to avoid flower and fruit drop.

Mr. Mazhar Iqbal is a progressive grower of Chak Chot Dheran, tehsil Malikwal, district Mandi Bahauddin. He shared his experience about successful cultivation of Papaya orchard with the most efficient irrigation system (i.e. drip irrigation). He has sufficient knowledge regarding cultivation of Papaya and benefits of Papaya fruit especially for medicinal purpose. He shared some of its benefits as “Papaya leaves and fruits are used in herbal products. It contains vitamins A & C that help in boosting the immune power in human body. Its leaves help to treat the dengue fever. Latex derived from the raw papaya fruit is used as a meat tenderizer. It is low in calories and high in nutritional values. Hence, it is a good diet for losing weight”.

He shared that **“I have abjured traditional farming (growing sugarcane with flood irrigation) and adopted high value agriculture (growing Papaya with drip irrigation) for better farm returns. Before Papaya cultivation with drip irrigation, I used to grow Sugarcane crop which required 24 hours to irrigate only one acre of land through flood irrigation. Now, just 2 hours are enough to irrigate 6 acres of Papaya orchard”**. Moreover, irrigation with drip system gives significant improvement in plant height, stem diameter and number of leaves per plant. He added, **“Initially, I installed drip irrigation on 6 acres out of 7 acres of my land that facilitated to grow healthy Papaya orchard. Now, I have planned to cultivate Lemon with drip irrigation on remaining one acre”**.

While sharing his experience regarding drip irrigation benefits, he told that **“Before installation of drip irrigation, the electricity bill for operating tubewell was Rs. 35,000 per month which is now only Rs. 2,000 per month. Moreover, fertilizer efficiency has increased due to application through fertigation and less weeds grow because water is applied directly to the plant roots”**. He indicated that **“Papaya cultivation with drip irrigation also created livelihood opportunities for the people of nearby areas who are hired for different farm operations”**.

Mr. Mazhar always welcomes the visiting farmers and shares his experience of successful Papaya cultivation with drip irrigation open heartedly to motivate them for high value agriculture to earn better returns. He recommends cultivation of Papaya orchard to the farmers facing water scarcity issues because commercial cultivation of Papaya is very successful and highly profitable business due to its high yield (40,000 to 80,000 kg/acre), fast growth, long fruiting period and high nutritive & medicinal value.



MAZHAR IQBAL

M: 0346-6457582

CHAK CHOT DHERAN,
TEHSIL MALIKWAL,
DISTRICT MANDI BHAUDDIN

