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Urban Farming - A Sustainable Smart Farming Approach

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Abstract

As rural-urban migration is increasing, the urbanisation poses a number challenges viz., food insecurity, environmental pollution, unequal distribution of resources, etc. Among the many challenges, food provision is gaining importance but omitted or neglected for long period. The pressure on agricultural land to meet the present food demand is increasing. With the increasing urban population, there is an urgent need for feeding those people in a sustainable manner. Urban farming, the cultivation of crops in and around urban areas, is the complementary to rural agriculture. This practice provides much benefits like food provision, nutrition security, productive usage of waste water, reducing pollution and increased green cover, etc. This can be used as an effective tool for achieving the urban food security and leads to a positive future for urban agriculture.

Introduction

Urban farming which has its origin in household kitchen waste management is not a new concept. But presently this concept has gained significance due to growing urban population. By the end of 2030 it is estimated that 60 percent of the world population will live in cities [1]. Urban growth is increasing and cities are becoming main habitat of human population. In India urban to rural migration is increasing. The absolute increase in population is more in urban than rural areas since independence. There is an urgent need for feeding people in a sustainable manner. Urban farming or urban agriculture, the practice of growing food in and around urban areas and related activities of farming such as marketing, processing of services, is an alternative way of farming and can act as a complementary to rural agriculture [2]. This practice provides much benefit like food provision, nutrition security, productive usage of waste water, reducing pollution and increased green cover, etc. This can be used as an effective tool for achieving the urban food security and leads to a positive future for urban agriculture. Urban farming helps to achieve the sustainable urban food system.

Advantages of Urban Farming

- Homestead gardening modifies micro climate and thus reduces global warming.
- Reduce urban warming and maintain good health.
- Gardening will relief stress.
- Increases availability of oxygen.
- Eco friendly and pollution free environment.
- The producer gets fresh, pesticides residual free vegetables for consumption.
- Tasty, highly nutritious, superior quality vegetables.

- By growing greens an ambient temperature will be maintained in surroundings.
- Helps to utilise the recycled household waste efficiently for cultivation of crop through vermicomposting.
- Inexpensive way to grow fresh vegetables.

Urban Horticulture Development Scheme (Do It Yourself Kit Programme) -Tamil Nadu

The state department of Horticulture and Plantation crops has announced the urban horticulture development scheme (do-it-yourself kit program) for the promotion of roof top vegetable garden in Chennai and Coimbatore. The kit containing seeds of bhendi, cluster bean, bush lab-lab, radish, amaranthus, brinjal, tomato, chilli and coriander will be provided to the beneficiaries.

Haritha Nagari – A Programme Of Government Of Kerala

Haritha Nagari is one of the project of *Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council Keralam (VFPC)*, specially meant for city dwellers. This programme aims to produce fresh vegetables in terraces in order to promote organic vegetables cultivation and make each household self-sufficient. Each household will be given pots with vegetables of their choice along with manure and implements at the cost of Rs. 3,750.00.



Courtesy - <http://horticulture.tg.nic.in>

Urban Farming – A Programme of Government of Telangana

The state department of horticulture initiated a scheme “urban farming” to promote vegetable and fruit cultivation on terraces and balconies (rooftop gardening) in towns and cities. A kit worth Rs. 3,000.00 on 50% subsidy will be provided to the residents. The kit contain sand, seed, trellis, rose can, hand sprayer and other materials. Vegetables such as brinjal, tomato, ladyfinger, chilli, bitter gourd, ridge gourd and many leafy vegetables can be cultivated.

Conclusion

Urban farming has an important role in sustainability of urban areas and can make cities self-reliant and sustainable. It is essential to give importance to urban farming with the increasing rate of urban population. It helps in alleviating urban food insecurity and urban poverty. Urban policies if properly implemented helps to develop the urban agriculture in a productive way. Before implementing urban farming in cities, a preliminary survey can be conducted in order to assess the interest and need of the urban residence. Need and interest along with effective institutional support results in successful farming in urban areas. Urban farming if done safely and properly, it can be used as an effective income generating farming system and seen as an integral part of urban food system.



Courtesy: City Farmer News

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