

Plant lice

Apply 1.5 per cent fish oil soap. First dissolve soap in hot water and then make up the volume. Alternatively apply dimethoate 0.05 per cent.

Diseases**Downy mildew**

It is severe during rainy season. This can be checked by spraying mancozeb 0.2 per cent (waiting period of mancozeb is three days).

Powdery mildew

Can be controlled by spraying dinocap 0.05 per cent.

Mosaic

Control the vectors by spraying dimethoate 0.05 per cent. Uprooting and destruction of affected plants and collateral hosts should be done.

Harvesting can be done only after 10 days (at least) of insecticide / fungicide application. The fruits should be washed thoroughly in water before cooking.

SNAKE GOURD (*Trichosanthes cucumerina*)

Snake gourd is a common cucurbitaceous vegetable of Kerala.

Season

January-March and September – December are the main growing seasons.

Varieties : Kaumudi, Baby, TA-19 and Manusree

Seed rate: 3.0 – 4.0 kg ha⁻¹

Spacing : 2.0 m x 2.0 m

Sowing

Pits of 60 cm diameter and 30-45 cm depth are taken. Well rotten FYM and fertilizers are mixed with top soil in the pit and seeds are sown @ 4-5 per pit. After two weeks remove the unhealthy plants retaining three plants per pit.

Manuring

Apply FYM @ 20-25 t ha⁻¹ as basal dose along with half dose of N (35 kg) and full dose of P₂O₅ (25 kg) and K₂O (25 kg⁻¹). The remaining dose of N (35 kg) is applied

in several split doses at fortnightly intervals.

Aftercultivation

During the initial stages of growth irrigate at an interval of 3-4 days. Irrigate on alternate days during flowering and fruiting periods.

Erect pandals for trailing snake gourd. Conduct weeding and raking of the soil at the time of fertilizer application.

Pests

The important pests attacking snake gourd are fruit flies, epilachna beetle and red pumpkin beetle. Control measures recommended for bitter gourd can be followed in this case also.

Diseases

The important diseases are downy mildew and mosaic. The control measures as stated under bitter gourd can be adopted. Harvesting can be done only after 10 days (at least) of insecticide / fungicide application. The fruits should be washed thoroughly in water before cooking.