



Sustainable Development through Horticulture

S Ravichandran*

Professor in Chemistry, Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, Punjab, India

***Corresponding Author:** S Ravichandran, Professor in Chemistry, Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, Punjab, India.

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Ravichandran.



Horticulture has emerged as an indispensable part of agriculture providing a wide range of choices to the farmers for crop production and nutrition to the people. Horticulture include fruits, vegetables, flowers and spices which have grown steadily. Our Indian climate favors production of a range of horticultural crops. Despite a significant growth, the productivity of fruits and vegetables in India is very high. Application of advanced technologies, farm mechanization and stakeholders are the reasons to improve productivity. Horticultural production is relatively easy and it can play an important role in food security initiatives by providing work and income opportunities.

Keywords: Horticulture, biotechnology, food security, productivity, protected horticulture, sustainable development.

Introduction

Horticulture is the science of agriculture which plays significant role in economy, nutrition and employment. Horticultural production is climate and weather dependent. Conventionally, horticultural production is confined to the outdoors. The basic aim is to reduce the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers. The horticultural crops have diverse use in our daily life including food, medicine and for aesthetic value. The organically produced horticultural crops have positive effects on human health and for the surrounding environment. Generally, organic production involves processes close to nature and has sustainability. India has a wide variety of climate and soils on which a large number of horticultural crops such as fruits, vegetables, spices and mushroom, ornamental, medicinal and aromatic plants, plantation crops are grown. The horticulture includes a wide array of crops, ranging from fruits and

vegetables to orchids and nuts, mushrooms and honey which has been a driving force in a healthy growth trend in Indian agriculture. India is currently producing 260 million tons of horticulture crops. Horticultural crops produce quality and safety are a matter of concern. The growth and development of plants is structured by diverse procedure and training for improving plant features which can influence the biomass, yield and disease prevalence.

There are three major divisions of horticulture, i.e. pomology, olericulture and floriculture. Pomology is the production of fruit crops which includes the growing, harvesting and postharvest handling practices. Ornamental horticulture deals with the production and use of ornamental plants according to their aesthetic value. The ornamental plants are divided into two groups based on their usage

- Ornamental foliage plants, which are grown for the beauty of their leaves.
- Flowering plants which are grown for their flowers. The production of flowering plants is the prominent division of ornamental horticulture and known as floriculture.

Horticulturists apply their knowledge, skills, and technologies used to grow intensively produced plants for human food for personal or social needs. Horticulture encompasses a remarkable range of technologies to enrich their diet and income. Horticulture offers employment and advancement opportunities at all educational levels with ultimate transformation. Today, increasing production in horticulture through area expansion is gradually making way for concern like enhanced productivity, environmental friendly production, safety and nutritionally rich production, intellectual property issues, sustaining production under changing climate. Despite several challenges and constraints, there are great success in various field of horticulture.