

INDIAN GOOSEBERRY: A FRUIT FOR FUTURE

Dr. Rakesh Kumar Meena
Assistant Professor,
Career Point University, Kota

INTRODUCTION

Aonla (*Emblca officinalis*) or Indian gooseberry is indigenous to Indian sub-continent. India ranks first in the world in area and production of this crop. Apart from India naturally growing trees are found in different parts of the world like Sri Lanka, Cuba, Puerto Rico, USA (Hawai & Florida), Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, China, Malaysia, Bhutan, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines, Trinidad, Panama and Japan.

Varieties

The most popular cultivable varieties of amla are Banarasi, NA 7, Krishna, Kanchan, Chakaiya, BSR 1.

Soil and climate

Amla is a subtropical plant and prefers dry climate. It is a hardy plant and can be grown in variable soil conditions. The crop can tolerate salinity and alkalinity.

Planting material

Seedlings, Grafts and Buddings are used for planting.

Planting

Planting is done during July-August with a spacing of 6 x 6 m in pits of 1x1m or 1.25 x 1.25m.

Irrigation

Irrigate the plants initially for establishment. No irrigation is required during rainy and winter season. Drip irrigation is appropriate which can save water upto 40-45%.

Manures and fertilizers (per plant/year)

Manures and Fertilizers	Bearing tree
FYM	10 kg
N	200 g
P	500 g
K	200 g

Manuring should be done immediately after pruning.

TRAINING AND PRUNING

The main branches should be allowed to appear at a height of 0.75-1 m above the ground level. Plants should be trained to modified central leader system. Two to four branches with wide crotch angle, appearing in the opposite directions should be encouraged in early years.

During March – April, prune and thin the crowded branches to provide maximum fruit bearing area in the tree.

Plant protection

Pests-

Gall caterpillar

Young caterpillars bore into the apical portion of the shoot during rainy season and make tunnel. Due to this, apical regrowth is checked, side shoots develop below the gall and subsequent growth in following season is greatly hampered. Cutting off the infected apices and prophylactic spray of systemic insecticide like Dimethoate 0.03 percent will control the pest.

Bark eating cater pillar

Damages the stem and branches of grown up trees by eating the bark. The affected portion should be cleared and few drops of kerosene should be applied in holes to keep this in control.

DISEASES-

Rust

Rust appears as circular reddish solitary or gregarious on leaves and also on fruits. Spray 0.2 per cent Mancozeb at an interval of 7 to 28 days during July to September.

Yield

The crop yields about 100 kg/tree annually.



MEDICINAL USES: OTHER USES:

Due to its powerful antioxidant properties, it has been used in Ayurveda for thousands of years to boost immunity and improve health. Emblic is of great importance in traditional Asiatic medicine, especially those associated with the digestive organs. The dried pulp of unripe fruits contains 18 - 35% tannin whereas content in ripe fruits is much lower. The dry stem bark contains 8 - 20% tannin. Bark of twigs is usually richer, containing 12 - 24% tannin on dry weight basis. The fruits are a rich source of pectin. Many of the medicinal applications of the fruits can be ascribed to the presence of ascorbic acid and to the astringent action of the tannins, but the fruits contain other active compounds as well.

Indian gooseberry is most commonly used for high cholesterol, abnormal levels of cholesterol or blood fats. Leaf extracts have shown inhibitory activity on human leukocytes and platelets. The fruits have diuretic, laxative and purgative activities and antimicrobial properties. The sour fruits are one of the ingredients of 'triphala', an Ayurvedic rejuvenating, laxative tonic. Triphala and other classic medicine in which Amla is being used since time immemorial. There are various classic Ayurvedic preparations, such as Chyawanprash in which Amla is used as a chief ingredient. It improves intelligence and memory power.

Aonla fruits are used to prepare black ink and hair dye. The dried fruits are said to have detergent properties. It is used for minor construction, making furniture and implements. Its wood is used as fuel and as a source of charcoal. It produces a good quality charcoal. The biggest hair problems that people face are hair fall and hair thinning. The vitamin C in Indian gooseberry has been clinically proven to promote hair growth and improve hair health. This also helps improve hair quality and can prevent premature graying. Consuming Indian gooseberry regularly helps improve vision health. It also makes the eye muscles stronger and provides relaxation to the eyes when they are tired and stressed. The Indian gooseberry is rich in polyphenols and other compounds like gallic acid, ellagic acid, pyrogallol, and terpenoids -all of which act as antioxidants and work in multiple ways to treat and prevent cancer. These are the ways the Indian gooseberry can benefit your health. The key is to include it in your diet on a regular basis

