

OCTOBER MONTH FARMING OPERATIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Every month in a year has its own essence and importance in Agriculture. October is no way different from this. Since October is the beginning of the Autumn season, therefore farmers have lot of work to carry out in these days. Like any other months of the year, farming operations must go on to serve the feeding necessities of the World. Farming operation means the activities associated with a farm viz, growing and harvesting of crops, animal husbandry and fishing. Farming activities don't include the processing or distribution of crops or fowl. In the month of October, monsoon rains are almost over. Therefore, soil is filled with enough moisture. Farmers take advantage of that moisture and grow a variety of crops with or without irrigation. The cool nights and warm days of October are good for seed germination. Spring crops and flowers start appear so, October is the time to plant more to ensure a continuous supply of delicious vegetables, juicy fruit and fragrant floral that will last the summer months. Some farming operations carried out in October month are cited below:

CULTIVATION PRACTICES:

Rabi Maize : Optimum sowing time of Rabi maize is middle of September to middle of October. For cultivation of rabi maize a well drained, sandy loam soil free from any kind of water stagnation should be selected. The field should be ploughed thoroughly for deep and fine tith followed by laddering. Before sowing, seeds should be treated with captan @3g/kg of seed or carbendazim @2g/kg of seed. Generally a seed rate of 22.5 kg/ha is required for the purpose of line sowing. Optimum spacing of 60cm*25 cm is followed and a seeding depth of 3 cm is maintained. Sowing of two bold seeds per hill is useful. During the time of field preparation, organic fertilizers or organic manure application is carried out. Farm Yard Manure @4.5t/ha, along with half of the recommended N, full dose of P₂O₅ and K₂O should be applied in the furrows before sowing. Remaining half of N should be top dressed at 30 days after emergence of seedlings. Top dressing of fertilizers should be done alongside hoeing and earthing up so that the fertilizer can be incorporated into the soil. Trench hoe or wheel hoe is used by farmers for hoeing and earthing up.

- Flat bed planting of Sugarcane in North India commences.
- Land preparation and sowing of lentil starts in low altitude regions.
- Preparation of land and sowing of Ragi, Buckwheat and Oat seeds.
- Land preparation practices for sowing of rabi groundnut.
- Land preparation and sowing of rapeseed & mustard. Application of fertilizers (organic as well as inorganic), pre sowing irrigation, hoeing, weeding, thinning are the October month farm operations for this crop.
- Preparation of land for sowing of sunflower and safflower. Since, sunflower is photo insensitive, therefore, it can be successfully grown as a rabi crop.
- Land preparation for sowing of castor after harvest of paddy or recession of flood water.
- Land preparation, seed treatment, sowing, application of fertilizer and intercropping of linseed in the districts of Orissa.
- Growing of Potato : Land is ploughed to a fine tith for the development of tubers. At the time of final land preparation, FYM or compost @20t/ha is applied and mixed with the soil. Before planting of tubers, farmers apply bleaching powder and phorate each @10kg/ha to soil. Potato can be planted whole or cut. If bigger

sized tubers are used, then it is cut into pieces leaving at least two eyes. The tubers are dipped in vitavax powder for 15 minutes followed by shade drying to check microbial growth. Seed potato kept in cold storage are taken out and spread on the floor of a well ventilated room in dark condition for proper sprouting. Besides, earthing up, fertilizing and application of first irrigation are also carried out in the month of October.

- Preparation of land and sowing of Garden pea, French bean, runner bean, capsicum etc.
- Seed bed preparation for Cauliflower, cabbage, knol khol, broccoli, celery commences.
- Seed bed preparation and sowing of Amaranthus.
- Sowing, Fertilizer application, weeding and intercultural operations in Radish, carrot, beets.
- Land preparation and raising of seedlings for transplanting of onion and garlic.
- Planting of Spinach, lettuce and kale begins.
- Weeding, top dressing and earthing up for winter potato and root crops in high altitude areas completes.
- Earthing up of Brussels sprouts, cabbages to give them support as they become increasingly top heavy. Cutting down of any yellow leaf is also practiced.
- Curing of Pumpkin & Squashes.
- Mulching of Celeriac and parsnips with straw.
- Drying out of beans for storage purpose. When they are dried completely, pudding and storing them in airtight container is carried out.
- Pruning of blackberries and summer raspberries completes.
- Filling of soils in polythene sleeves and planting of tea cutting, seed bed preparation for planting tea seed commences.
- Pruning and plucking of tea completes.
- Cultivation of Oyster mushroom completes. Preparation of compost for Button mushroom cultivation commences.
- Cultivation of fruits like gooseberry, grapevine, strawberry, peach, blackcurrant, white currant etc.
- Planting of ornamental crops like gladiolus, daffodil bulbs, tulip bulbs begins.
- Greenhouses and Cold Frames : In Green houses, a lot of veggies can be grown or readied for planting in spring. For instance, Peas and winter salad vegetables, cauliflower etc. Herbs such as basil, parsley can be sown in October and grown throughout the winter.

HARVESTING PRACTICES:

October month is the harvesting period of so many vegetables and fruits. Examples include : Beetroot, Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Carrots, Cabbage, Peppers, French bean, Kohl rabi, Leek, Marrows, Pumpkin, Spinach, Summer squash, Sweet potatoes, Turnips, Winter Radish, Winter Squash, Celery, Chicory, Lettuce, Tomato, Grapes, Melons, Pears, Plums, Raspberry etc. Some of them are specifically mentioned in the following ;

- During October, Harvesting of cabbage, knol-khol, radish, chilli, brinjal, tomato, cauliflower commences in high altitude region areas. Also, early planted root crops are harvested in this month.
- Harvesting of lady's finger, cucurbits begins and jute, mesta completes in low altitude regions.
- Harvesting of early transplanted kharif paddy starts in high and medium altitude regions.
- Harvesting of ginger and turmic begins in high and medium altitude regions.
- Harvesting of Apples completes by about the middle of the month.

PRACTICES IN ANIMAL FARMS:

Since, weather changes from the month of October, therefore, arrangements are made by the animal farmers to protect the animals from cold.

- Shearing of sheeps is carried out. 21 days after the sheep have been sheared, their bodies should be drenched with disinfectants to protect against ecto parasites.
- Vaccination of animals against various diseases.
- Deworming is done in the October month.
- Drying off cows. Drying off in batches of 10 is recommended.
- Sowing of improved varieties of fodder must be done to ensure continuous supply of food during the winter months.

PRACTICES IN THE FISH FARMS :

- Selective harvesting of fishes.
- Recording of physical and chemical parameters of pond water.
- Daily recording of behavioral changes of brood fish.
- Maintenance of livestock and repair of equipments.
- Exchanging of water and trial netting practices.
- Harvesting of blue clawed pawn in Haryana.

OTHER FARMING PRACTICES:

- This includes Preparation of Organic manures like Compost, Vermicompost, green manuring; Digging of trenches for winter crops; Hydroponics; Aeroponics etc.
- Clearing out old vegetations.
- Removal of plant supports like bean poles, pea sticks, tomato stacks etc and store them in other places under the farm. Leaving them in the cultivation field itself will cause rotting of the plant supports and in the next year Farmers need to make them again.
- Loosening of any hard or compacted soil and weeding.
- Covering of seed beds with polythene sheets or other mulch materials. This practice conserves moisture, suppresses any weed growth and keeps off worst of the rain.
- Ordering of new fruit trees and bushes from nurseries for planting in the next month.
- October is the ideal time to take soil samples of the farm.

CONCLUSION:

Farming is something that solely depends on nature. (Of course, now-a days techniques are available to grow crops in the off season also. But this will require some time for getting popular in a country like India.) If a farmer knows how to take benefit of nature and natural resources, farming for him will be remunerative. October's crisp autumnal days bring changing colours, shorter days and the occasional frost. While most vegetables don't have enough time to grow before frost sets in, some crops actually prefer the cooler months of October. This month indicates the mid spring, therefore plenty of things have to do in the garden also. So, it can be concluded that October is equally important for the farmers than any other months in a year. It is the month of Harvest, Glory, Ripeness and new sowing.

