

## Supper from your terrace

In present scenario of growing health concern, soil and water pollution, and heavy load of pesticides, availability of safe, nutritious and quality food is limited. Terrace vegetable gardening is an ideal choice in which vegetables are grown in environmental friendly way in ones surrounding so as to enjoy them in aesthetic way, adding value to the life. It is high time to start terrace vegetable gardening in urban areas for leading quality and healthy life linked to urban agriculture. This besides providing quality fresh product from the terrace, provides aesthetic value, alternative to exercise and above all it contributes in reducing city waste as it offers the recycling of the kitchen wastes by composting to convert them in useful manure to partly sustain own terrace garden. The rain water harvesting structures could also be linked to the rooftop gardening. There is need to intensify education and training programs for city dwellers on sustainable terrace vegetable gardening practices.

**V**EGETABLES are vital constituent in human diet, as they are rich in minerals, vitamins, dietary fibers and antioxidants which are usually lacking in major food items. Vegetables consists of more than 80% of water, so they are highly perishable. Therefore, the localized production and consumption of fresh and green vegetable is need of hour. In cities, vegetable comes from distance market and therefore to consume fresh one should have a terrace vegetable garden, which not only provide clean environment but also help to cut down the intake of pesticides laden vegetables. In metropolises, due to ever burgeoning population and closely spaced houses, backyard space has shrunken for growing vegetables. Therefore, the only option left is to grow plants on the rooftop which is referred as rooftop gardening or terrace gardening. In true sense, there is not much difference in kitchen garden either on a ground or the rooftop. Despite shortage of space, time and water, many of the city folks are getting into terrace vegetable gardening (TVG).

### Is terrace vegetable gardening beneficial?

In TVG, vegetables are grown in environmental friendly and organic way which add value to the

garden. The aim of terrace gardening is not for making profits or securing livelihood, but to ensure the availability of fresh vegetable for family consumption. Even, if the production of vegetable grown is not up to the mark, the other complementary benefits are always assured. Substantial yield can be obtained by proper planning and management as it saves the spending on the vegetables.

### Benefits of roof top gardening

- Great opportunity for senior citizens to spend time and maintain their good health.
- City children get exposure to the world of plants and it creates interests and curiosity in them about plants, insects, birds and the nature.
- It is an interesting recreational activity for employed youth during the weekends.
- Improves human well-being through the provision of both ecosystem services and food supply to the city dwellers.
- Reduces a city's ecological footprint by absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and the control of the urban heat island effect by shading.

### Myths about terrace vegetable garden

The terrace of the house can easily bear the weight of plants and containers used. The leakage of water from the roof, clogging the drainage pipes should not arise if these problems are not there in rainy season. The investment on containers and irrigation system etc. is minimal which is worth

investing. In fact, the containers used for TVG are not necessarily systematic and attractive ones which are costly, but the locally available low cost materials or containers of different sizes can also be used. Containers will occupy 50-60% of terrace area and a terrace of 50 × 30 feet size will accommodate 100-150 pots and would weigh roughly 1 to 1.5 tons. The grow bags can be used for growing vegetables in soil less media which are light in weight. However, it is always better to go for water proofing before