Pepper Production Training Video

To optimise yield and maximise profits, planning is important. Before planting, farmers should consider which market they are producing for. The market can be local or international.

Peppers grow best in sandy loam with lots of organic matter that is well drained with a gentle slope with a pH of between 5.0 to 5.7. Chilli requires sunny, semi tropical/ tropical conditions and annual rainfall of between 600 to 1250 mm. The ideal temperature required is 18 to 32 degrees.

Agronomic practices

Raise seedlings by sowing one seed per cell in trays or by broad casting the seeds slightly in a seed bed and cover with 1cm layer of soil. Cover the bed with mulch until seedlings emerge and cover with insect proof net. Upon emergence water regularly.

Clear the land of trees, grasses and root stamps and plough into the soil well decomposed manure at a rate of 3 to 10 kg per square metres 3 to 6 weeks before planting.

Transplant the seedlings at 5 true leaves in the morning or evening when temperatures are cool. The soil should be soft and of fine tilth and the spacing depends on the variety. At transplanting, water the seedlings with a starter solution of 5g/l NPK or 3g/l DAP. 2 weeks before transplanting, apply a mixture of 3g NPK and 3 g ammonium sulphate and side dress with 3g potassium nitrate at flowering repeated every after 2 weeks and foliar calcium rich in boron. After each harvest, apply 3g of potassium nitrate or ammonium sulphate to prolong the harvesting period.

Mulching should be done using either plastic or grasses and

the field should be kept weed free either using herbicides or by hoeing and hand picking.

Pepper is ready for harvest 6 to 8 weeks after transplanting and should be harvested either green or red depending on the market. The yield varies between 10 to 22 metric tonnes per hectare depending on the cultivar and management.

Major pests are aphids, termites, broad mites and thrips. The diseases are anthracnose that is controlled using pathogen free seed, rotation and fungicide. Bacterial spot controlled by rotation and spraying using copper based fungicide. Bacterial wilt controlled using pathogen free seed, seed bed fumigation, medium sterilization for container grown plants and phythopthora blight controlled using resistant varieties, crop rotation and fungicides.