

# Staking tomato plants

## Crop management

As tomato diseases include anthracnose, root rot and blight, plants are attacked by pests which damage roots and plants. During dry season, mulch tomatoes in between rows to keep soils moist and save water and stake plants from time they start flowering and before fruit sets.

Similarly, stake individual plants with help of bamboo or wooden sticks and strings and use one stick for each plant. Keep 5-10cm distance between plant stem and staking sticks and fix a 2 metre high stick near each plant and tie 2 branches to the stick and make a loop around stem to prevent sliding.

Tie the new growth of stem to the stick every 2 weeks and also tie new large branches that bear flowers and in case of limited access to bamboo sticks, the farmer might use another staking method. Plant tomatoes in rows, use stick of 2 metres high, a string and metal wire.

Furthermore, sharpen one end of sticks and insert them in the soil at both ends of each row, cut stick to about 60cm to fix the wire and fix the peg in ground about 30cm behind each poll and make a notch to hold the metal wire. Insert a stick of 2m high for every 3 metre in the row to support the wire and tie the metal wire to polls from one row end to the another depending on the variety used.

Make a loop with metal wire around polls, fit to the peg in the notch, attach the metal wire to each stick and loosely tie one end of string to plant stem and branches. Attach other end to the metal wire with a firm knot and whenever new branches flower, loosely tie one end of string to branches and attach the other to the metal.

Finally, discard the string after the harvest of the season as it has lost its strength to be used in the next season.