

# **Sustainable vegetable growing for beginners**

Vegetable farming is a business with potential to generate income and profits all year round.

The demand for vegetables is high with most families consuming vegetables on a daily basis. This is because they are known to be rich in nutrients like vitamins and minerals. The common vegetables include pumpkins, tomato, pepper, okra, carrots, cabbages and others.

## **Starting vegetable business**

Before starting vegetable business, make good market research and a vegetable selection. Many vegetables are perishable and it is important to identify your market even before beginning to produce. Potential markets include supermarkets, whole sellers, retailers, agents or middle men, processors and exporters.

The choice and variety of vegetable chosen will help you choose a suitable site for production. Most vegetables require a lot of water hence site chosen should be close to a water source. Additional factors to consider include soil type, water quantity and quality, water retention capacity, drainage, accessibility to market and others.

## **Practices during production**

Vegetables can be cultivated in backyard gardens, small pieces of land as well as large land.

Irrigation can be done either manually or by use of drip irrigation.

Use of organic fertilizers like poultry manure is known to

increase yields. Proper use of fertilizers and pesticides is required.

## **Challenges**

Commercial vegetable production has a challenge of vegetable glut where vegetables of farmers mature and are brought to the market at the same time. This brings down the prices.

Use pesticides to overcome pest problems but only use safe ones to minimise the health risk to consumers and the environment.