

A Correspondent

Sylhet: Vegetable farming on floating beds made of water hyacinth and bamboo in waterbodies or ponds, has drawn huge response from farmers in different areas of Sylhet district.

This method of vegetable cultivation is gaining popularity among farmers as it requires less fertilizer and pesticides. Besides, the demand for these vegetables is higher in the markets as those are produced in organic way.

This new method is raising hopes among farmers and many of them are making good profits selling their vegetables produced on their floating gardens.

In Golapganj and Kathalpur areas of Sylhet district, vegetable cultivation has started on floating beds on a large scale.

Farmers said following the method it is possible to cultivate vegetables even during winter and monsoon.

During a visit to Kathalpur area beside Fenchuganj road in the district, it was found that a variety of vegetables are being cultivated on several floating beds in the water bodies on both sides of the road.

Scientists from the field research department of Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI) showed the farmers the technique of growing vegetables on floating beds.

They encouraged the farmers of the area to cultivate vegetables on floating beds in different ponds of Sylhet and gave them all the necessary advice. Vegetables are being cultivated on 150 beds in Golapganj and Kathalpur areas.

The farmers are cultivating different types of vegetables including cucumber, gourd, winter melon, spinach, water spinach and ladies finger in the beds to fulfill local demand.

According to district agriculture office, these vegetables are being cultivated on floating beds in water bodies under a project titled "Popularization and expansion of floating agriculture technology."

Farmers interested in this project are initially being provided with beds free of cost.

Farmer Bilal Ahmed said, "Floating bed vegetable cultivation is a new method. We are cultivating vegetables in this method in fallow ponds and water bodies. We are being benefited by producing pesticide-free vegetables and selling them in the market after meeting our demand."

Mahmudul Islam Nazrul, chief Scientific Officer of BARI, said that there is a shortage of vegetables in Sylhet and it depends on other districts for vegetables.

"This new technique will help Sylhet farmers to grow vegetables at low cost round the year," he said.

The official also said that they have taken an initiative to spread this new technique of vegetable production everywhere in the district.