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Title: Genetic Improvement and cultural practices in Betel (P. betel L)

SUMMARY

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Betel (Piper betel) is a crop which should be cultivated with closer attention to get substantial income. Fertilizer requirement of the crop is usually very high as the leaves are harvested continuously. To obtain higher yield with better quality leaves N.P.K and Mg are very important. Fertilizer experiments conducted for a period of three years have concluded that application of 90 gm N, 30 gm P₂O₅, 60 gm K₂O and 15 gm Mgo per hundred planting points, (200 plants per plot) per month is sufficient enough to obtain maximum yield with better quality leaves.

Planting two cuttings per point with one foot spacing between and within the rows in beds having 3.5 feet width is advisable. A considerable variation exists among the betel cultivars. Size and colour of the leaves, Pungency, growth habit and epidermal characteristics of the leaves vary considerably among these lines. Bacterial leaf spot disease caused by Xanthomonas betlecola is a major problem in betel cultivation and we were unable to find out any satisfactory control measure under field conditions. This disease has affected at various stages of our field experiments .

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