

## Thar Sheetal fetches premium price

**Thar Sheetal, a high temperature tolerant variety of longmelon with moderate yield potential (130-140 q/ha), has been released by Central Institute for Arid Horticulture, Bikaner. It is recommended for hot arid region which set fruits at high temperature (up to 42°C) in summer. It is best adapted to low tunnel cultivation for early production, fetching premium prices.**

**L**ongmelon (*Cucumis melo* var. *utilissimus*), popularly known as *kakri* or *tar kakri*, is an important vegetable crop. It is widely cultivated in summer in tropical and subtropical zones. Fruits are used as salad, pickle and cooked as vegetable. Due to its cooling effect, it is very popular in hot arid region in summer months. However, high temperature in hot arid regions is major production constraint in summer. To harvest quality yield of longmelon under high temperature regime, a new variety Thar Sheetal has been identified.

### Thar Sheetal Longmelon

It is high temperature tolerant variety with moderate yield potential (130-140q/ha) and take 45-50 days in first harvesting from sowing. The fruits are 25-30 cm long, 2.0-2.3cm in diameter weighing 80-120g. It produced 18-22 marketable fruits/plant. Bear light green coloured and tender fruits at edible stage. Fruits are free from bitter principle. It is recommended for cultivation in hot arid region during summer under low tunnels. It set

fruits upto 42°C temperature.

### Cultivation

It is a warm season crop which cannot tolerate low temperature and frost. The optimum temperature for its cultivation is 25 - 35 °C (temperature below 16°C slows or stops its plant growth). Growth is virtually stopped at temperature below 10°C. Temperature above 42°C affects flowering and fruiting adversely. It can be grown on well-drained sandy or sandy loam soil rich in organic matter. It is also best adapted for low tunnel and river



Profuse fruiting in Thar Sheetal



Fruits of Thar Sheetal ready for marketing

bed cultivation to harvest early produce. About 1.0-1.2 kg seed is sufficient for one hectare. The best time of sowing is second fortnight of February under open field conditions and third to fourth week of December under low tunnels. The optimum plant spacing is 2.0m between rows and 50-60cm between plants.

### Aftercare

Sowing of 2-3 seeds/hill should be done to maintain optimum plant density.

