

## New method promises enhanced sugarcane yield

Bhiva P. Parab, The Navhind Times | February 24, 2014

**Story Summary:** *The sugarcane crop, which was raised using SSI method at a farm of the agriculture department at Dhuler, Mapusa.*

PANAJI: The agricultural department has been keen on promoting 'sustainable sugarcane initiative' to boost sugarcane production in the state.

The method necessitates use of less number of seeds, less water and optimum utilisation of fertilisers and farmland so as to achieve more yields.



Sources in the agriculture department said the SSI method is an alternative to conventional system of using seed, water and space for sugarcane cultivation.

This SSI method helps farmers increase the yield by two to three folds: the farmers have to use less number of seeds, less water but optimise utilisation of fertilisers and arable land.

There are various benefits of this method which include increase in the length and weight of each cane and reduction in plant mortality rate.

It could be also noted that under SSI method seed cost can be reduced up to 75 per cent. Also, it is easy to transport the saplings for long distances.

Another merit of this method is that intercultural operations can be carried out easily due to wider spacing.

The major principles that govern the SSI method are raising nursery using single budded chips, transplanting young seedlings (25-35 days old), maintaining wide space (5X2 feet) in the main field, providing sufficient moisture through water-saving efficient irrigation techniques – skip furrow, alternate furrow and subsurface drip irrigation – and practicing intercropping with effective utilisation of the land cultivated.

The sources said in case of delayed seed planting the particular method helps germinate seedlings faster.

It takes care of narrow spacing of saplings as the method is based on successful exploitation of sunlight and air by following wider spaces in the main field.

The sources said the method also addresses the problems caused by flooding.

There is significant reduction in seed requirement, as only the bud is used as seed material.

This SSI method was tested in a farm of the agriculture department at Dhuler, Mapusa, which gave good results. The yield was more than double when the sugarcane was cultivated by using SSI method as compared to traditional method of cultivation of sugarcane.

Moreover, the seeds used were also less in number, which consumed less water.

“To boost the agriculture in the state the government has provided the farmers with various schemes and the farmers, especially the younger generation, need to take interest in the farming,” said the sources.

Source: <http://www.navhindtimes.in/goa-news/new-method-promises-enhanced-sugarcane-yield>