

Cabbage is basically a temperate vegetable that belongs to the cruciferae or mustard family, known botanically as *Brassica Oleracea* var. *capitata*. Some heat tolerant varieties can be produced under warm or tropical conditions.

Cabbage is an important cash crop and livelihood of about one-third of the people in Benguet. It can be grown the whole year in any place in Benguet, and some areas of Mountain Province, particularly Mt. Data, Bauko.

As food, cabbage is a source of Vitamins A, C and calcium. It is also a source of fiber in the diet.

Tips in Raising Cabbage

Choosing the right variety

Choose varieties that are suited in a particular place. Recommended varieties are the following:

Heat tolerant:

- *K.K. Cross*
- *K.Y. cross*

Cool Season Varieties (Traditional)

- *Marion market*
- *Pacifica*
- *Scorpio (dry season)*
- *Rare ball (wet season)*



Land Preparation

Remove debris from previous crop. Build or fix the drainage canal. When the land is being operated for the first time, it should be plowed twice at two weeks interval to minimize the growth of weeds.

Grow cabbage in a well drained soil and rich in organic matter. Ideally, cabbage grows best in soil with pH ranging from 6.0-6.8.

Apply agricultural lime when the soil is acidic or alkaline by broadcasting lime in the area two weeks before transplanting. The rate of lime application is between 4-5 kgs per 10 square meter plot. Mix lime thoroughly into the soil for better result. Lime can be incorporated before plowing the soil.

Sowing of Seeds

Use uncontaminated soil as nursery bed to produce healthy seedlings. This can be taken from newly cleaned forest. Compost can be added to the nursery bed.

Cabbage seeds can also be sown in plastic cups Individually and allowed to grow until transplanting stage. Wooden seed boxes with a dimension of 18 inches x 26 inches x 3 inches (length, width and height), may be also used. The size of the box may be reduced or increased depending on convenience.

Choose seedbeds that are free from soilborne diseases such as clubroot. This can infect the seedlings and consequently affect the crop's growth and yield.

Seeds may also be broadcasted or sown in small furrows in the seedbed. A space between furrowlets should be provided to allow easy circulation of air.

Provide covering (i.e. chopped grass) to the newly sown seeds especially during the rainy season.

Water the growing seedlings regularly.

Monitoring seedlings for the presence of pests and diseases.

Transplanting

Transplant when the seedlings are about one month old.

Water the grown-up seedlings before uprooting to minimize root injury.

Transplant seedlings early morning or in the afternoon to lessen transplanting shock. Transplant the seedlings immediately after uprooting to avoid further stress and damage, and to enhance early recovery.

Transplant 1 seedling per hill. Weak or undersize seedlings may require two plants per hill but this must be transplanted separately in strategic areas within the hill. These seedlings, when fully recovered, can be used to replace dead or damaged seedlings later on.

During transplanting, press the soil at the base of the newly transplanted seedlings. This will make the roots to have better contact with the soil. They are also better protected from strong winds and rain.

Soil should not cover the shoots of the newly trans-planted seedlings.

Water the seedlings sufficiently for the first two weeks until plants are fully established.

Fertilizer Application

Before planting, apply a mixture of organic and in-organic fertilizers as basal. A handful of processed chicken manure plus a spoonful of triple 14 is applied per hill.

Side dress 100kg/ha of nitrogen (46-0-0 or equivalent to 100 grams per 10 square meters plot at 25-30 days after transplanting. Apply the fertilizers at the center of the plot, then cover it with soil.

Foliar fertilizers may be sprayed to supply other nutrients needed by the plants.

Provide sufficient irrigation after fertilizer application to enhance better absorption of nutrients by the plants.

Crop Protection

Employ all possible remedies that protect, prevent or minimize pest infestation and diseases infection. It is suggested to use the Agro-Ecosystem Analysis (AESA) as a gauge when deciding to spray or not.

Head Size

Aside from its genetic characteristics, cabbage head size may be controlled or manipulated by the following techniques:

Spacing: Close spacing of plants at 25-30 cm on both ways, will encourage smaller or medium heads while wide spacing at 35-45 cm on both ways will encourage bigger heads.

Seedling ageing: Seedling that are allowed to stay for more than 40 days in the seedbed before transplanting tend to produce medium to small heads.

Delayed fertilization: delayed application of side dress fertilizers tend to enhance the production of medium or small heads. These occur when the crop is fertilized beyond one month.

Harvesting

Harvest the crop when the head is solid and firm. Maturity ranges from 75-100 days.

Trim 3-4 old leaves before packing and transporting. Cabbage heads can be packed in thick laced baskets which can accommodate about 60-100 kgs. or plastic cellophane can also be used in the absence of thick laced baskets.

When transporting cabbage to far market places, it is advisable to individually wrap the cabbage heads with old newspapers before packing them in plastic cellophane. This will minimize transfer of diseases during transport which will subsequently affect quality and self life of the heads. It will also absorb the excess moisture inside.

Avoid the heads to be exposed to too much sunlight. This will minimize severe wilting of the newly harvested heads.

Source:

- Growing Cabbage, retrieved from <https://bonnieplants.com/growing/growing-cabbage/>
- All About Growing Cabbage retrieved from <http://www.motherearthnews.com/organic-gardening/vegetables/growing-cabbage-zm0z12aszkon>
- Growing and Caring for Cabbage Plants retrieved from <https://www.thespruce.com/growing-and-caring-for-cabbage-plants-1402815>
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- Growing Cabbage: How To Grow Cabbage In Your Garden://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/cabbage/growing-cabbage.htm

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