



Drip Technology Changing Fortune of Punjab's Farmers



Guava, also called 'the apple of tropics' is one of the most common fruits in Pakistan. It is extensively grown in Sindh and Punjab. It adapts to most of the soil and climatic conditions in the country. This fruit occupies third position after citrus and mango in terms of area and production.

The guava plants grow healthy, vigorous and productive, if the nutritional and water needs of the plant are fulfilled timely and according to plant requirements. The **drip irrigation is the best system** to provide necessary nutrients according to requirement of the plants through fertigation.

Mr. Ayub, a progressive grower of Chak 26 (Begum da dera), tehsil Muridke, district Sheikhupura decided to get rid of **traditional farming and grow high density guava orchard** with drip irrigation. Actually, water shortage for irrigation, less economic returns from traditional crops and precious canal water compelled him to shift from traditional crops to high value agriculture with drip irrigation.

The Farm Manager of Ayub Zarai Model Farm shared that "We used to grow **rice and wheat crops before installation of drip irrigation**. As water was not enough to irrigate even half of the cultivated land, we decided to grow guava orchard with drip irrigation. Drip irrigation enabled us to cultivate the entire land with same quantity of the available irrigation water". He added that "Guava orchard requires less irrigation water and labor than rice and wheat crops. It provided more income (@ **Rs. 175,000 to 250,000 per acre** from a single fruit harvesting) than rice and wheat.

While responding to a question about effect of drip irrigation on guava orchard, he told that "guava cultivated with **drip irrigation provides healthy and vigorous plants, brings more fruit and matures one year earlier than the traditionally grown orchard leading to higher yield**. Moreover, it provides more economic returns in the local markets due to uniform size, shape and good color". Infact, drip technology is changing the fortune of farmers in the Punjab.

Director General Agriculture (Water Management) Punjab, Malik Muhammad Akram opined that Water Management wing of Agriculture Department is **promoting high efficiency (Drip & Sprinkler) irrigation systems to change the landscape of irrigated agriculture** in the Punjab. He advised the farmers to benefit from government facilities and shift towards high value agriculture as Punjab government is providing a comprehensive subsidy package for adoption of drip irrigation, solar system for operating high efficiency irrigation systems and tunnel technology to promote climate smart technologies in the province.

PIPIP IMPACT STORY

