



—By—
**Namida B.
Chandrasekara**

Home gardening for a secure future

“Garden” is a familiar word to us. It is the small ecosystem in which we live on the earth. It is adjacent to the house. It can be simply described as the environment in which we live and which we use for our daily activities.

Though the word “garden” is a familiar word to us, the word “home gardening” is a bit far from us. But the past two years have seen a growing interest in home gardening. The main reason for this was the coronavirus epidemic.

Most people started cultivating at home as they had to stay at home. Whether in urban or rural areas, people are tempted to cultivate even the smallest of spaces. Although not on a large scale, people were encouraged to cultivate in such a way that they could harvest to supplement their daily meal. But due to the economic problems in the country today, the problem of fertiliser and the food crisis that seems to be arising due to this, people have become accustomed to cultivating a variety of crops in their backyards. It can be seen as a good trend.

Starting home gardening through the re-establishment of the *Divi Neguma* project to create a poison-free Sri Lanka can be considered an appropriate action. People can get food in their backyards through home gardening.

A variety of gardens

One person’s garden is not the same as another person’s garden. It mainly depends on the climatic zone and cultivation pattern of the garden, as well as the village or town, and the social background. The climatic zones can be classified as wet zone gardens and dry zone gardens.

Wet zone home gardens are areas that receive more than 2,500 mm of annual rainfall. There is more rain from the Southwest monsoon. Wet zone home gardens have more crop diversity and more plants. Areas with an annual rainfall of less than 1,750 mm are known as “dry zones.” The re-



gion receives most of its rainfall from the Northeast monsoon. In dry zone home gardens, low crop diversity and fewer plants can be seen. It is advisable to grow crops that are naturally suitable for dry conditions.

In terms of classification according to village, city, land, and social background, home gardens that are located in non-urbanised rural areas are classified as rural home gardens. These are large gardens. Many crops can be seen here, and animals can be easily raised. Home gardens in less urbanised areas are called semi-urban backyards.

Although not as spacious as rural areas, these gardens often have more space than urban gardens. Home gardens, which are found in most urbanised areas, are called urban gardens. There is very little, limited space here. Apartments, apartment complexes, and houses with very limited space fall into this category.

There are many benefits to gardening. The most important benefit of home gardening is the availability of non-toxic, nutritious new products for everyday meals. Home gardening can help you prepare a balanced, whole-

some meal for the whole family.

MAINTAINING A HOME GARDEN AND BEING ABLE TO INVOLVE YOUR CHILDREN IN HOME GARDENING WILL GIVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO GAIN A BETTER PRACTICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH THEY LIVE AND TO CREATE AN AGRICULTURAL COMMUNITY IN THE FUTURE

One of the major benefits of a well-designed garden is that the number of market transactions is gradually reduced. Therefore, nutrition, as well as the economic situation, will improve to some extent. Garbage management in the backyard and kitchen keep the garden clean and produce high quality synthetic organic manure “compost”.

Physical and mental health

Home gardening reduces the cost of buying vegetables and fruits and helps save money by selling surplus produce. They can maintain physical



and mental health through the exer-

cise that comes from working in the garden on a daily basis, and people get an opportunity to use their time productively by engaging in home gardening as a hobby. Maintaining a home garden and being able to involve your children in home gardening will give them the opportunity to gain a better practical understanding of the environment in which they live and to create an agricultural community in the future. It develops agricultural knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Through this, we can see the birth of a healthy population in the country as a whole in

all respects. We can also use some plants in the garden as firewood. This will save you money on gas and fuel and can save you time in gas and oil queues. Home gardening provides mental relief for adults and for all family members, regardless of age. Positives in home gardening can be obtained only if it occurs without poisons. Otherwise, home gardening using chemical fertiliser, herbicides, and pesticides will not produce any healthy food. And so a problem arises: how can people grow a poison-free crop? Is it something that can be done?

Organic fertiliser should be used for a hygienic and healthy garden. It is also more effective and cost-effective if we make organic fertiliser from garden and kitchen waste. There are several benefits to using organic fertiliser at home.

Those are the ability to keep the garden clean by using the leaves that accumulate in the garden; having the opportunity to manage kitchen waste; and at the same time, all can save money on purchasing organic fertiliser for home gardening; reducing the huge cost and time incurred

by the local authorities for garbage disposal and the ability to have a healthy diet free of toxins.

“Edible landscaping”

Instead of decorating the garden with ornamental flowers and plants, landscaping with a variety of edible crops can have both the benefit of being beautiful and the ability to eat. This is now known as “edible landscaping.”

Evidence suggests that in the past, crops and ornamental plants were used in Persian gardening. During the 1100s and 1500s AD, medieval monastic gardens were decorated with vegetables, fruits, and herbs. Vegetables and fruits have also been used for landscaping around estate bungalows. Benefits include being able to eat fresh vegetables and fruits. These include high-cost consumption of vegetables and fruits that are not often found on the market and ensuring food security at home.

Plant a useful tree instead of an unwanted tree to start landscaping with crops. Instead of arches made of vines, plant vines such as snake gourd and bitter gourds. Instead of flowers planted in pots, plant fruits. Grow crops in straight rigifoam boxes, pots filled with coir, as a soilless crop.

Arrange pots like this to decorate the house rather than planting flowers everywhere in the garden. Crops can be planted in boxes / hanging baskets or containers near the windows of the living room. Arrange beds in different shapes as per the space and plant the crop. Different crops can be planted and harvested at different times of the year. All it takes is a creative mind.

With free sunlight, a little water at home, and with organic manure, you can grow as little crop as you can to satisfy your hunger at some point. This is a good alternative to the food crisis. This will be a good experience for the farmer who complains that there is no fertiliser and cannot cultivate. Realising that home gardening is a key step towards achieving economic goals can prove that the country as a whole can contribute to a secure future.