Staking tomato plants

FACT SHEET

Loss of tomatoes in the field

Tomatoes are grown across the world and provide food and income to millions of people. When the plants are not staked, they fall over due to the weight of the growing tomatoes. When fruits touch the soil, they get diseases and easily spoil.

Importance of staking

Staking keeps the fruits above the ground and prevents them from getting diseases from germs that live in soil. By allowing aeration and sunlight, staking enables healthy, large-sized, uniform fruits. Staked tomatoes are easier to weed, to spray organic solutions and to harvest.



Staking plants helps to prevent attack by pests and diseases

How to stake tomato plants

Before staking the plants, put dried plant materials as mulch in between the rows. Stake your plants from the time they start flowering and before the fruit sets. You can stake plants with bamboo or wooden sticks and jute string. For each plant you need one stick.

Keep 5 to 10 cm distance between the plant stem and the stick. Fix a stick of about 2 m high near each tomato plant. Simply press the stick in the soil without digging a hole. Use jute string to tie the plant's main stem and one or two branches to the stick.

Make a loop around the stem to prevent the string from sliding down the stem. Keep 1 to 2 cm distance between the stick and the stem. Every two weeks, tie the new growth of the stem to the stick about every 20 cm. Also tie new large branches that bear flowers.

There is also another way of staking without sticks. Sharpen one end of two-meter long bamboo or wooden poles and insert them in the soil at both ends of each row. To fix the wire, cut a bamboo or wooden peg of about 60 cm. Fix the peg in the ground about 30 cm behind each pole and make a notch to hold the metal wire.

In the row, every 3 m, insert a bamboo stick of about 2 m height to support the metal wire. Tie a metal wire to the poles from one end of the row to the other, as per the height of the variety you use. Make a loop with the metal wire around the poles and fix it to the peg. Within the row, attach the metal wire to each bamboo stick with a nylon string or wire.

Do not make a loop of the metal wire around the bamboo sticks. Loosely tie one end of a jute string to the middle part of each main stem and branches. Attach the other end to the metal wire with a firm knot. Don't stretch the string too much. Whenever new branches start flowering, loosely tie one end of jute string to the branches and tightly attach the other end to the metal wire. You can re-use the poles and metal wire in the next season.

Watch a full video on this topic at www.accessagriculture.org or contact one of the people below.

Authors: Atul Pagar, Sachin Wagh, Santosh Chaudhari, Mahesh Shelke, Ganesh Shinde and Nilakanth Shinde	
A. Pagar, 2022 email: atulpagar@gmail.com Mobile: +91 81808 87280	Local contact: Mobile:

Edited by Jonas Wanvoeke and Paul Van Mele