It is a deciduous tree, 6.0 to 10 m in height and 0.9 to 1.2 m in girth, with straight, sharp, axillary thorns and trifoliate aromatic leaves. The stem bark is bluish grey, 4-8 mm thick, shallowly furrowed and corky. Flowers 3 cm in diam., greyish-white, sweet scented, stalked. Fruit large about 15 cm diam., globose, ovoid and 8-15 celled.

COMMON NAMES: Bilva, Holy fruit tree, Bel, Shirphal.

DISTRIBUTION:
The tree is a native of India and is found wild throughout the Indian Peninsula, in dry hilly places ascending to 1200 m in the western Himalaya.

PART USED: Fruit, Root, Leaves.

CULTIVATION:

SOIL AND CLIMATE
Good sandy loam soil, sunny situation, warm humid climate are suitable for cultivation of this plant.

NURSERY RAISING AND PLANTING
Bael is generally propagated by seeds. Sowing is done in June or July. The development of seedlings is very slow. They require at least a year in the nursery to be fit for transplanting. They should be transplanted in rainy season, the stem is ordinarily 5-7 cm tall with 3-5 leaves, and the taproot, 20-25 cm long. It is also propagated by root cuttings and stem cuttings treating with IBA (4000 ppm) using quick dip method. Seedlings or budded plants are transplanted in the field at a spacing of 10-12 m. Budded plants start bearing fruits at the age of 4-5 years, whereas seedling trees require 7-8 years.

THINNING AND WEEDING
It requires attention during first year when they are well manured and weeded after the rains.

MANURES, FERTILISERS AND PESTICIDES
The medicinal plants have to be grown without chemical fertilizers and use of pesticides. Organic manures like, Farm Yard Manure (FYM), Vermi-Compost, Green Manure etc. may be used as per requirement of the species. To prevent diseases, bio-pesticides could be prepared (either single or mixture) from Neem (kernel, seeds & leaves), Chitrakmool, Dhatura, Cow's urine etc.
IRRIGATION

The field after plantation should be irrigated periodically as and when required weekly or fortnightly.

Bael

*Angle Marmelos Correa Ex Roxb.* Family - Rutaceae

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**HARVESTING/POST HARVESTING OPERATION**

The fruits are deep green initially and become yellow gradually at ripening. The fruits are harvested along with it's a portion of fruiting stalk as it serves as a signal of ripening as it is easily detached only in the ripe fruits. The fruits require about a year for ripening.

**YIELD**

The average yield is 300-400 fruits per tree. The quality of fruits is greatly associated with the weight and size of the seed-sacs. The larger and heavier the seed sacs, the greater is the amount of mucilage and poorer the quality.

**ECONOMICS**

The rate for a kg. of fruit pulp ranges from Rs. 60-80. (YEAR-2001)

**NOTE:** MARKET FOR MEDICINAL PLANTS IS VOLATILE AND THE ECONOMICS MAY VARY.

**INSTITUTE TO BE CONTACTED:**

NARENDRA DEV UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY, KUMARGANJ, FAIZABAD (UTTAR PRADESH)