For further information

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**Asparagus racemosus**

*(Sathavari)*

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**Kerala Forests and Wildlife Department**

**Kerala Forest Seed Centre**

**Kerala Forest Research Institute**
**Asparagus racemosus Willd.**
**Liliaceae**

**Common name(s)** - ‘Sathavari’ /Asparagus

**Habit** - Sathavari is a perennial climber with small thorns on the stem and green leaf-like cladodes. It grows along hedges, scrub jungles and wastelands. The plant makes use of nearby vegetation to climb on.

**Distribution** - It is common in Peninsular India, in the plains and is seen up to an elevation of 1200m in the Himalayas.

**Parts used** - Tuberous roots

**Major uses** - It is an excellent herbal medicine for antenatal care. In Ayurvedic literature it is prescribed as a coolant and uterine tonic. It contains anti-cancer “asparagus” which is useful against leukaemia.

**Flowering** - 2 to 3 times every year

**Seed collection** - December to January

**Method of collection** - Dark red ripe fruits are collected from the plants.

**Seed extraction** - Seeds are extracted by washing the fruits, and are dried in the sun.

**Seed Storage** - Seeds have only two months viability if stored in airtight plastic containers. The seeds can be stored up to four months in cold storage without losing viability.

**Propagation** - Mainly through seeds and tillers

**Pre-sowing treatment** - Seeds are to be soaked in water for twelve hours prior to sowing. Soaking seeds in cow’s urine for six hours enhances germination up to 90%.

**Nursery technique** - The plant produces 6 to 10 tillers in a year. The tillers are carefully separated from the mother plant and potted in 15 x 10cm polythene bags filled with 3:2:1 mixture of soil, sand and dried, farm yard manure. The bags after potting are kept in shade for a week, watered twice daily. Gradually they are to be shifted to open. The seedlings will be plantable in 90 to 120 days.

**Planting technique** - Open areas with well drained alluvial soil are ideal for planting. The area to be planted is ploughed and soil heaped in mounds or bunds. Planting is done at 1 m spacing; supports are to be provided for individual plants after two months. Weeding once in six months, along with application of bio-fertilizers or organic manures and watering as and when required during summer months boosts up growth.

**Harvesting method** - Depending on the growth, harvesting can be done in the first or second year. The area to be harvested is profusely watered, leaves and stem portions cut and the succulent tuberous rhizomatic root system gently pulled out from the moist soil.

**Annual consumption** - 400 to 600 tonnes