



Consolation Award

Plant Variety: New variety of hyacinth bean



Shri Jitabhai Kodarbhai Patel

New variety of hyacinth bean

It was in 1987 that Jitabhai started his search for developing a high yielding variety of Hyacinth bean. The area had been hit by severe drought due to the failure of monsoon. The productivity of grazing land was very poor and the stored stock of fodder was exhausted. Fodder for cattle had to be bought from about 40 km away.

Jitabhai chanced upon attractive 'valol' beans on vines included in the fodder brought from village Limbhoi. Some of the vines had young pods. Jitabhai got quite impressed by the size, appearance, flavour and taste of the young tender pods of 'valol'. Being a connoisseur of the vegetable, he immediately collected as many ripe pods of the legume as he could from the vines in the fodder. He sun-dried them and carefully preserved the seeds.

Jitabhai sowed the 'valol' crop next year in his fields and closely monitored the plants from the seeds obtained from the 'limbhoi' fodder. The family had vast quantities of 'valol' *shak* (vegetable) that year and liked the taste. The rest of the crop was sent to the market.



Jita Kodar Patel (55 years), owns 65 acres of land in village Vetla.

Twenty years ago at the age of 20, he inherited ancestral agricultural land following partition of family property among brothers. He had got married at the age of 10. He had dropped out of studies early, just after completing primary school.

Jitabhai resides in a semi-permanent house along with his wife, daughter and son-in-law. The attached cattle shed houses one bullock and three buffaloes. He grows cotton, wheat, sesame castor and pigeon pea. These crops are rotated depending upon agronomic conditions prevalent in that year. However, he always keeps aside a portion of about 0.5 ha of the field for growing *valol* (*Hyacinth bean*), the famous vegetable of Patel household and Jitabhai's favourite.

Village: Vetla,
Taluka: Vadali,
District: Sabarkantha, Gujarat

Scout: SRISTI, Gujarat



Jitabhai marked a few of the healthier vines. Around 20% vines flowered early. Pods of these vines were left to mature and harvested seeds were preserved by proper sun drying for sowing in next season.

In the next season 50% of the vines showed early flowering. Healthy vines from among the lot were again marked and collected. The same process of selection was gone through again, and the entire crop of 1990 after few years of selection turned out to be early flowering.

Over a period of four years of meticulous observation and selection, Jitabhai thus developed a *valol* variety that had early-flowering property, disease resistance, and good yield of large pods.

Farmers of 15 nearby villages have now started growing the new variety of *valol* developed by Jitabhai. He shares his experience with the farmers to enable them to harvest their own seeds. The process requires keen observation, skill and immense patience if one is not to be burdened by sub-optimal yields or unproductive crop from the seeds. All the selected vines are observed for growth parameters on a daily basis. The chosen creepers are twirled anticlockwise once they reach a height of about 1.3 m. During periodic harvesting, pods from the anticlock-twirled creepers are retained, so as to turn into seed stock after drying.

Jitabhai sells dried 'valol' seeds at Rs 30 per Kg. The special characters of this variety are that it starts flowering after 40 days. The green beans are brighter, have good luster, yielding about 5000 kg per acre fetching a price of about Rs.10-15 per Kg.