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## The magic plant Aloevera: Boon for farmers

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The National Commission on Agriculture (NCA), reincarnated as the National Commission on Farmers (NCF), implies that farmers are the center of our agriculture. Their success is our success, the success of the nation. Most of the farmers used the traditional crops like Rice and Wheat because they are not attentive to cultivation, marketing of the economic products like medicinal plants. Due to the blooming stage of Indian Herbal Industry and export potential, commercial cultivation of *Aloe vera* is a rewarding business in India which is most relevant and applicable for farmers. *Aloe barbadensis* Miller is an important medicine plant from Liliaceae family with African origin. About 300 species have been described in the genus *Aloe*. Among them, *Aloe vera* is the most commonly grown in the world and considered as an important medicinal plant. *Aloe vera* consist two words “Aloeh” Arabic word of “Bitter substances” and “Vera” is a Latin word of “Truth”.

*Aloe vera* has crop diversification in agriculture and known as “Nature’s Tonic”, “Wonder Plant” and “Miracle Plant” because chemicals in *Aloe vera* extract produce a sedative reaction, kills bacteria and increase local microcirculation and used in wound healing. *Aloe vera* has 99 per cent of water and contains polysaccharides which act as moisturizers so it is also useful for making many beauty products. It is Farmer’s friendly crop as it easy to cultivate and hardy nature of leaves show resistance against many insect pest and readily available in the market. Due to minimal quantity of water so it is also called “Lily of Desert”. The current global turnover of raw *Aloe vera* leaves amount up to US\$ 70-90 million dollars, which is expected to grow at a rate of 35 percent in the next five years. The current global trade of processed derivatives of *Aloe vera* is estimated at around US\$ 1 billion and is steadily increasing. Finish products of *Aloe vera* containing \$65-80 million raw material. USA dominates the market (65%) while India and China have a share of 10 % each, enhanced by its commercial cultivation.

*Aloe vera* presents the finest commercial opportunity among the various medicinal plants. India is among the few countries gifted with the unique geographical features essential for its cultivation which expanding day by day but farmers are not using any recommended farming practices due to improper scientific knowledge about the medicinal plants. There is need to organize various training programmes and also offers the market and infrastructure facilities like transport, storage facilities, information technology to the farmers. Strengthening of extension network for adoption of improved practices and scientific research is based on comprehensive, biochemical and clinical studies which opened up new areas in grass root sector. These have been established after painstaking efforts. This is said that cause of next world war is water so this crop is for this as it requires minimal quantity of water so *Aloe vera* is also the crop for future.

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