



Study on Off-season Performance of Some Vegetable Type Watermelon [*Citrullus lanatus* (Thunb.) Matsum and Nakai] Landraces

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Abstract: *Khero* or vegetable type watermelon is a minor cucurbitaceous vegetable cultivated during summer months in restricted areas under western laterite belt of West Bengal, India. This is the first-ever report of *khero* cultivation during offseason (post-monsoon) from the eastern part of India. Seven vegetable type watermelon landraces were experimented during the post-monsoon season in red and laterite zone of West Bengal. The observations revealed the significant diversity for the attributes like earliness in flowering, fruiting at lower nodes, average fruit weight, number of fruits per plant, desirable fruit dimension and total soluble solids. The genotype VC-3-6 was best for yield, earliness and total soluble solids, hence it was suggested for off-season cultivation. The maximum number of fruits per plant was produced by VC-12-2 followed by VC-3-6. Correlation study revealed the positive association between per plant fruit yield and fruit length, fruit circumference, average fruit weight and the number of fruits per plant. Thus, the landraces evaluated posed an ample potential and scope which will help to execute future breeding programmes as a source of desirable genes for higher yield, quality improvement and commercialising this crop during the off-season.

Keywords: *Khero*, *Citrullus lanatus*, Landraces, Genotypic variation
