SPROUTING ENERGY OF CHILLI SEEDS EXTRACTED FROM PODS OF DIFFERENT PICKS

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Chilli (Capsicum annum L.) is one of the important commercial crops in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka. Experience with this crop indicated that seed germination and seedling emergence were low in the field nurseries which prompted to investigate the sprouting energy of chilli seeds obtained from different picks of a crop of chilli cultivar 'MI-2', grown during Maha 1987/88 at the Regional Agricultural Research Centre in Maha Illuppallama. Results showed a significant reduction in sprouting energy, expressed as germination percentage, after the 4th pick. The germination of seeds from 1st - 4th picks ranged from 87.6% to 94.0% but it was only 67.2% and 39.8% in the 5th and 6th picks, respectively. Sprouting energy was found to be positively correlated with pod weight, pod length, pod breadth and number and weight of seeds per pod but a negative correlation did exist with seed size. The results of this study suggest that chilli seeds for planting purposes need to be extracted from the first 4 picks.

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