Brassica juncea (Mustard) Flowers to Attract Pollinators for Better Malus domestica (Apple) Yield

Sagar, Jaya

The quantity and quality of the apple crop mostly depends on the pollination in apple orchards during March-April, for that apple grower’s use many techniques to pollinate. They use pollinizers of different varieties which cost them a lot but sometimes they fail and don’t attract the insects and bees, resulting in low yield. Since apple crop is the livelihood for residents of the North Indian region like Manali, one would need a sure-shot solution for sufficient and healthy pollination. In the upper-valley, the flowering-period of apples and mustard-plant are the same i.e. March-April. One can purposely sow mustard-seeds around each apple tree. As the bright colour of mustard-flower attracts bees and insects and they have sufficient nectar so the insects don’t need to go far. They fly around the apple tree and the apple flowers are automatically benefited with the pollination. The purpose is solved, since mustard-plant is edible and doesn’t need much area, attention and finances to be invested. Odour of mustard plant and mustard oil itself deters the growth of fungus and nematodes. Later, the mustard plant also becomes the green manure which benefits the apple trees. Hence, by minimum efforts one can get good yield of apples without investing on pollination practices and can also get mustard seeds. This is more economical and eco-friendly as compared to artificial pollinizers as mustard has the same flowering period with apple. Many more combinations can be experimented to get an optimum yield of apples.

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