

Insight into Undergraduate Courses of Horticulture in Higher Agriculture Education Institutions of Nepal

Kishor Chandra Dahal^{1*}, Puspa Raj Poudel¹ and Arjun Kumar Shrestha²

¹*Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science, Tribhuvan University, Nepal*

²*Agriculture and Forestry University, Rampur, Nepal*

*Corresponding author's email: kishor.dahal@iaas.tu.edu.np

*ORCID iD: 0000-0001-5147-8037

Abstract

Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS), Tribhuvan University is the pioneer institution for higher agriculture education in Nepal. Bachelor of Science in Agriculture (B.Sc.Ag) was started in 1972 AD and thereafter Purbanchal University had started B.Sc.Ag. in 2000 AD. Later, IAAS, Rampur Campus located in Rampur was upgraded to Agriculture and Forestry University (AFU) to lead higher education in Agriculture in 2010 AD. Other universities like Far-western University (FWU) and Mid-west University (MWU) have started B.Sc.Ag program in 2019 and 2022 AD, respectively. This study compare the subjects related to horticulture in four universities i.e. IAAS/TU, AFU, PU and FWU. Horticulture is one of the major departments in all universities as 13-20% of total course load belongs to horticulture department. Introductory horticulture, olericulture, floriculture, pomology, postharvest horticulture and agro-forestry are the common courses in all universities while protected and/or precision horticulture is the newly introduced course at IAAS and FWU since 2020. Plant propagation and nursery management and plantation/spice crop production are the separate courses at PU while other universities amended these course in introductory horticulture and other courses like olericulture and pomology. Interdisciplinary courses are common in all universities to introduce the research and/or enterprise for the student in the name of Learning Entrepreneurial Experiences (LEE) at AFU, research practices and seminar (RPS) at IAAS/TU and FWU and internship program at PU. In addition, IAAS offer an enterprise learning project to horticultural crop. About 50%, 35% and 20% of the total credits of horticulture department covered from LEE, internship and RPS at AFU, PU and IAAS and FWU, respectively. All universities offer molecular genetics, biotechnology and breeding as fundamental courses only. Similarly, high density planting, soilless culture, specific crop cultivation have not been offered in all universities. It is suggested to identify the core courses of horticulture to set up the minimum standard along with optional courses that can be offered to specialize the student in different discipline of horticulture including molecular level studies.

Keywords: horticulture, curricula, agriculture, subjects, universities.