

## New Emerging Fruit Crops for Haryana and North India: Opportunities and Challenges

**Bhawna<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Horticulture Development  
Officer, Department of  
Horticulture, Haryana



Open Access

\*Corresponding Author

**Bhawna\***

**Available online at**

[www.sunshineagriculture.vitalbiotech.org](http://www.sunshineagriculture.vitalbiotech.org)

### Article History

Received: 15. 2.2026

Revised: 20. 2.2026

Accepted: 25. 2.2026

This article is published under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

### INTRODUCTION

Fruit cultivation in Haryana and North India has traditionally been dominated by mango, guava, citrus, ber and pomegranate. However, in recent years, farmers have shown growing interest in new and emerging fruit crops that offer higher market prices, require less space, and provide better adaptability under changing climate conditions. These crops—such as dragon fruit, kiwi, phalsa, jamun and fig—are gaining popularity because they can be grown successfully in semi-arid and subtropical regions with proper care. Many progressive farmers, start-ups and young entrepreneurs are now adopting these non-traditional fruits due to increasing consumer demand and attractive income potential.

#### **Dragon Fruit: A High-Income Crop for Semi-Arid Areas**

Dragon fruit, also called pitaya, has become one of the most promising emerging fruits in North India. It requires less water than many traditional crops and grows well in the semi-arid climate of Haryana, Rajasthan and Punjab. The plant is cactus-like, heat tolerant and begins fruiting within 12–15 months after planting. Dragon fruit fetches good prices in urban markets due to its attractive appearance and health benefits.

Farmers prefer the crop because it can be grown on small land using concrete or wooden pillars. Once established, the plant produces fruits for 15–20 years. However, dragon fruit cultivation requires proper training of vines, good drainage and protection from winter frost. In North India, young plantations must be protected during December–January. Though the crop offers high profit, initial investment in support structures and planting material can be a challenge for small farmers.

### **Kiwi: A Premium Fruit with Growing Market Demand**

Kiwi is well known as a temperate fruit, but new varieties and improved cultivation techniques have now made its cultivation possible in parts of North India, especially in cooler pockets of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand plains. Kiwi fruits have excellent nutritional value and high market price, making them attractive for farmers and home gardeners.

The plant requires proper trellising, regular irrigation and fertile soil rich in organic matter. Kiwi vines grow vigorously and need both male and female plants for fruiting. While the crop has good income potential, it is sensitive to high summer heat. Shade nets or partial canopy cover is required in some regions during extreme summer. For farmers with access to assured irrigation and mild winter frost, kiwi can become a valuable long-term crop.

### **Phalsa: A Hardy Fruit for Hot, Dry Conditions**

Phalsa is one of the most suitable fruit crops for hot and dry areas of North India. It is hardy, drought-tolerant and grows well even on marginal soils. Phalsa fruits are small but nutritionally rich and have medicinal properties. The fruiting season begins early in summer (May–June), when market availability of other fruits is limited, helping farmers earn good returns.

The plant grows quickly and requires minimal care. It is ideal for boundary plantations, small farms and kitchen gardens. Farmers appreciate phalsa because it needs very few inputs, withstands high temperatures, and is easy to prune. The main challenge is that fruits ripen gradually and require frequent harvesting. Since phalsa is highly perishable, quick marketing is essential to avoid losses.

### **Jamun: A Long-Lived Tree with Nutritional and Medicinal Value**

Jamun is an indigenous fruit crop with excellent adaptability and long life. Its deep root system allows it to survive in drought-prone areas. Jamun trees tolerate high temperatures, irregular rainfall and a wide range of soil types, making

them suitable for Haryana and adjoining states. The fruits have high demand due to their health benefits, especially for diabetic patients.

Improved varieties such as Thai Jamun and seedless Jamun have become popular because of larger fruit size and better taste. The tree requires minimal inputs and maintenance once established. However, jamun has a long juvenile period and takes 4–6 years to start fruiting. It is best suited for farmers with long-term landholding or for integration into agroforestry systems. Though not suitable for small terrace gardens, jamun is excellent for field plantations and rural homesteads.

### **Fig (Anjeer): A Low-Maintenance Crop with Growing Market Potential**

Fig is an upcoming fruit crop in North India and is becoming popular among progressive farmers. It performs well in warm, dry climates and tolerates saline soils better than many other fruit crops. Fig trees begin fruiting early, often within 1–1.5 years of planting, and require very little care. The fruits are highly nutritious and fetch good prices in fresh and dried form.

Figs require well-drained soil and regular pruning to maintain shape and vigour. The main challenge in North India is winter frost, which may damage young plants. Simple protection using straw, cloth or plastic covers is sufficient during harsh winters. With rising demand for dried anjeer in the health food market, farmers can get good profitability from small-scale fig orchards or even from a few plants in home gardens.

### **Opportunities for North Indian Farmers**

These emerging fruits offer several advantages:

- High income per unit area compared to traditional crops
- Low water requirements (dragon fruit, fig, phalsa)
- Growing consumer demand for exotic and healthy fruits
- Suitability for small farmers and entrepreneurs
- Good potential for processing (jamun, fig, phalsa)

- Year-round income when combined with traditional fruit crops
- Better resilience under climate change

Many young farmers in Haryana and Punjab are adopting dragon fruit and fig plantations because they require less water and yield high returns. Kiwi, though more management-intensive, is becoming popular among farmers with irrigation facilities and interest in premium markets.

#### **Challenges to Consider**

Along with opportunities, some challenges must be kept in mind:

- Need for initial investment in supports (dragon fruit, kiwi)
- Sensitivity to frost (dragon fruit, fig)
- Short shelf life (phalsa and jamun)
- Market awareness still developing
- Higher labour during harvesting (phalsa)
- Special varieties required for North India conditions

Farmers should start with a small area, learn the management practices and then expand gradually. Regular pruning, organic manure application, drip irrigation and protection from extreme weather improve success.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Emerging fruit crops like dragon fruit, kiwi, phalsa, jamun and fig offer exciting new opportunities for farmers in Haryana and North India. These crops are nutritious, climate-resilient and fetch attractive market prices. With proper selection of varieties, timely management and awareness of local climatic conditions, these fruits can provide farmers with higher income and diversified cropping options. As consumer demand continues to grow, these non-traditional fruits may become the next big trend in horticulture across North India.