

# Large Cardamom (*Amomum subulatum*) – A Traditional Cash Crop of Sikkim

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## Abstract

*Sikkim is one of the richest biodiversity 'hotspots' with a great deal of floral and faunal diversity. Large cardamom, perhaps one of the oldest known spices of the world, is native to Sikkim. It has a huge demand in food and aroma industry. In India, Sikkim holds near monopoly in large cardamom business although it is also cultivated in other parts, viz., Darjeeling (West Bengal), Uttarakhand, and some other northeastern states. The Lepchas were the pioneers in this field who practiced the custom of collecting the capsules of large cardamom from the natural forests. Large cardamom thrives well in association with the Himalayan alder. There are mainly three popular cultivated clones in Sikkim, viz., Ramsey, Golsey, and Sawney. The recent trend of decreasing production in this state can be attributed to factors like poor management, resource inequity, accessibility, absence of quality planting material, etc. Future thrusts should emphasize provision of suitable growing environment, preservation and popularization of suitable genotypes, production of quality planting material, and good management along with upgradation of scientific and extension skills.*