

Economic importance of Algae =

Useful or Positive Importance =

Algae as food = In coastal regions seaweeds are used for human food from ancient times. Researches in Japan, Germany and USA have shown that nutritive value and per unit area yield of algae is many times more than other traditional crops.

Porphyra is a red algae which grows in shallow sea water and important to rich protein (30-35%), Carbohydrates (40-45%) and vitamins B and C. It is common food of Japan. Food obtained from Laminaria spp. is known as kombu. It is rich in carbohydrate (57%).

Gelidium and Gracilaria are used in ice-cream and jelly.

Chlorella a green alga is more useful than porphyra in term of nutritive value. comparable to the mixture of soyabean and spinach.

Chlorella is useful in space flights and nuclear submarines as food and so also in recycling and oxygen regenerating system. It contains carbohydrate 30%, protein 30%

and lipid 15%.

Spirulina contains 60% protein and various vitamins with fatty acids (unsaturated).

Algae as fodder -

In many places seaweeds such as Fucus, Laminaria, Ascophyllum and Sargassum are used as fodder. The utility of sea weeds as fodder is due to their vitamins and micronutrient contents.

Cattle on diet supplemented by seaweeds meal, have increased fat contents in their milk.

Algae also provide food to human beings indirectly through food chain.

Many fresh water and marine animals are dependent upon algae for their food. Some of these aquatic animals serve as food for fish and in turn fish to human beings.