

# Sesame

## Land Preparation

As the seeds of sesame are very small, the seed-bed should be fine, firm and compact. Usually, one ploughing followed by two to three harrowings and planking is essential.

## Seeds and Sowing

For broadcasting 3-4 kg and for line sowing 2.5-3 kg seeds are required to sow one acre area. February is the proper time of sowing. In case of line sowing, a row to row distance of 30 cm and plant to plant distance of 8-10 cm should be maintained.

## Water Management

The Sesame crop requires about 50 cm of water during the entire growth period. The first irrigation may be given after 25-40 days of sowing. Second and third irrigations may be given at flowering and pod development stages, i.e., 45-50 and 65-70 days after sowing. Light irrigation is recommended in the evening when there is no wind to avoid lodging. It is considered essential to irrigate. At maximum flowering phase, irrigation may be given to ensure the development of capsules fully.

## Weeding

Field should be kept weed free to get good yield. One hand weeding is given at 15 – 20 days after sowing.

## Harvesting

The optimum time for harvesting (physiological ripeness) has been reached when the first, lowest capsules turn brown and begin to pop open and the stem turns yellow. Harvesting can be done with serrated sickles leaving about 15 cm high stubbles in the field.

## Post Harvest Management

The harvested crop is dried and threshed by trampling animals or by running a tractor over dried plants spread on the threshing floor. Before storage, winnowing is done with natural air current by slowly dropping produce from a basket or by power operated cleaner. The seeds, after drying in sun, are stored in gunny bags or bins.