

Harvesting



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What is harvesting?

Harvesting is the process of collecting the mature rice crop from the field. Harvesting consists of cutting, threshing, cleaning, hauling and bagging. Field drying and stacking or piling are optional. Harvesting can be performed manually using sickles and knives, or mechanically with threshers or combine harvesters.

Why is proper harvesting important?

Harvesting at the right time and in the right way maximizes grain yield and minimizes grain losses and quality deterioration.

When to harvest

Harvest according to the grains' moisture content. This is critical for a good harvest.

Operation Desired	Desired moisture content (%)*	Primary cause of losses
Harvesting	20-25	Shattering if grain is too dry
Mechanical threshing	20-25	Incomplete threshing, spillage, grain damage and cracking
Hand threshing	<20	
Drying	<14 for grains <13 for seeds <9 for long term Storage 14 for milling	If drying is delayed: spoilage, fungal damage, Discoloration, smell, loss of vigor

* these moisture contents are tropical, humid climates typical for most varieties and rice growing countries in Asia

Harvesting systems

Manual harvesting: Manual harvesting makes use of traditional threshing tools such as threshing racks, simple treadle threshers and animals for trampling.

Manual harvesting and machine threshing : Rice is manually threshed, then cleaned with a machine thresher.

Machine reaping and machine threshing: A reaper cuts and lays the crop in a line. Threshing and cleaning can then be performed manually or by machine.

Combine harvesting: The combine harvester combines all operations: cutting, handling, threshing and cleaning.

Other ways to decide when to harvest:

Grains should be firm but not brittle when squeezed between the teeth.

When 80- 85% of the grains are straw colored (yellow in color).

In the dry season, harvest 28- 35 days after heading. In the wet season, harvest 32-38 days after heading.



Assam Agribusiness and Rural Transformation Project (APART)

The World Bank is the funding agency of APART
Department of Agriculture, Assam is the nodal department for implementation of APART
ARIAS Society is the State Level coordinating and monitoring agency for APART
Assam Agricultural University is the leading Agricultural University of the State and implementing agency of APART, imparting research and scientific support.
International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) is the rice global leader providing technical and hand-holding support in the implementation of APART