

# Bajra (Pearl Millet) Cultivation Guide

## Introduction

Bajra (Pearl Millet) is one of the most widely grown millets in India and Africa. It is a drought-resistant crop and is primarily used for human consumption and animal fodder. It is rich in fiber, protein, and essential minerals, making it a highly nutritious grain. The crop is mostly grown in semi-arid regions with low rainfall and poor soil fertility.

## Step-by-Step Cultivation Process

### 1. Land Preparation

Plow the field properly to break hardpan and allow aeration. Prepare a fine tilth by harrowing.

### 2. Seed Selection

Use certified and disease-free seeds. Hybrid and high-yielding varieties should be preferred.

### 3. Sowing

Sow seeds at a depth of 2-3 cm with a row spacing of 30-45 cm. Optimum sowing time is June-July for kharif season.

### 4. Irrigation

Bajra is a drought-resistant crop, requiring minimal irrigation. Provide irrigation at critical growth stages like flowering and grain filling.

### 5. Fertilization

Apply organic manure before sowing. Use nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium fertilizers as per soil requirements.

### 6. Weed Control

Weed regularly during the initial growth stages to ensure better yield. Use mechanical weeding or herbicides if necessary.

### 7. Pest and Disease Management

Common pests include shoot fly and grasshoppers. Use organic or chemical pest control measures as required.

### 8. Harvesting

Bajra is ready for harvest in about 80-100 days. Harvest when grains harden and moisture content is around 15%.

### 9. Post-Harvest Processing

Threshing is done manually or using machines. Store grains in a dry place to prevent pest infestation.

## **Conclusion**

Bajra is a highly resilient and nutritious crop suitable for dry regions. With proper cultivation practices,

farmers can achieve high yields and improve soil fertility. It serves as a staple food for many and plays a crucial role in food security.

