

FROM SEED TO FEED

THE PLANTING AND HARVESTING OF SOYBEANS



Spring is a season of fresh beginnings, particularly on the farm. Soybean farming entails multiple processes - from planting to growing to harvesting - to produce a secure, nutritious, and cost-effective crop that can be utilized for various purposes.



Planting

Planting time can vary depending on the climate and the weather, but generally will begin in early to mid-May and will continue through early July.

Pest Control and Fertilizing

Even before planting, farmers will check for potential weed and insect problems. In many cases, seeds are coated with an insecticide and fungicide to prevent insects from eating the seed before it has a chance to sprout and to help prevent fungal infection. Herbicides may also be applied to help with weed control during emergence to reduce competition for nutrients.

Pest Control

Post planting herbicide can be applied once the soybeans have emerged help control weeds if needed. Farmers will also scout for possible fungal issues, and may apply a fungicide if needed.

Harvesting

Harvest time will vary based on the variety of the soybeans, weather, and if they were single or double crop soybeans. Single crop beans (which are planted earlier) can begin to be harvested in late September, while some double crop beans may not be harvested until late November or early December, when they reach approximately 15% moisture.

Flowering and Pod Development

Once the plants have developed leaves they will flower and then develop pods for the beans. Once the pods have formed, seed development will begin.

Plant Maturity

Once the seeds have fully formed the plant will reach maturity and the leaves will begin to turn yellow. Harvest will begin when 95% of the plant has turned yellow and the leaves begin to drop, and the moisture reaches the correct level.

Fall Fertilizer Application

Once the soybeans are harvested, a fall application of lime may be applied to the fields.

Plant Emergence

The seed will germinate and emerge from the ground in approximately 7-10 days (weather allowing).

Plant Growth

After the plant emerges, it goes through a period of growth, adding leaves and growing taller.

