4. Harvest

Timely harvesting is important to avoid shattering

• Harvest when most of the pods are dry and brown in colour, and seeds in pods rattle when plants are shaken

• Preferably, cut the mature plants at ground level. Soybean roots left in the field add nutrients to the soil

5. Post-harvest

• Dry the harvested plants on tarpaulin in sunlight for 4 days before threshing, to a moisture content of 13% or less. Soybean seed is sufficiently dry if it breaks or cracks when bitten or pinched with finger nails

• Pile soybean plants on a tarpaulin and hit gently with a stick. Sort and winnow

• Pack seed in clean bags and place the bags on wooden pallets in a cool place
1. Land preparation & seed selection

- Select soil with moderate to high fertility
- Plough in crop residues and vegetation to improve soil fertility. Break up large lumps of soil and level
- Where soil is acidic, broadcast agricultural lime at the rate of 20 bags of 50 kg per hectare and plough in
- Plant improved varieties. Use certified seed or seed from a crop grown from certified seed. Do not use same seed for more than 3 seasons
- Test seed for germination before the start of the rainy season. Plant 100 seeds, and if at least 85 germinate, then the seed is good to plant
- Inoculate seeds under a shade and plant on the same day. In Zambia, 250 g inoculant from Mt. Makulu is used for 50 kg seed

2. Planting

- Plant at the start of the rainy season - usually between the 1st and 3rd week of December
- Space furrows at 45-50 cm. Furrows should be 5 cm deep
- At planting, apply 2 bottle-tops of Soymix fertilizer per meter along the furrow (4 bags of 50 kg per hectare). Cover the furrow partially with soil
- If manure is available, make furrows slightly deeper, apply manure and fertilizer along the furrow, and mix with soil before placing seed
- Drill seeds along the furrow at a spacing of 3-5 cm between seeds. You will need 100 kg of seed per hectare
- Cover seed with soil immediately to protect the inoculant from damage by the sun

3. Field management

- Weed on time - first weeding at 2 weeks after planting and the second at 5–6 weeks after planting
- For seed production, uproot diseased plants, and plants that look different from the rest
- Seek advice when applying chemicals:
  - use pre-emergence (Acetochlor) or post-emergence (Bragadier) herbicides
  - insecticides such as Karate control leaf-eating insects if damage is likely to reduce yield
  - fungicides such as Bravo control rust, frogeye and powdery mildew