

Cutting Crop

What is cutting?

Cutting crop is part of harvesting process. Harvesting is the process of collecting the mature crop from the field and includes cutting, hauling, threshing, cleaning and optionally field drying and/or staking or piling.

Why is proper and timely cutting important?

Harvesting at the right time and moisture content gives maximum yield, germination and head rice. Proper cutting and placing of the cut crop in the field minimizes shattering loss and prevents re-wetting of the grains from water standing in the field.

Cutting methods



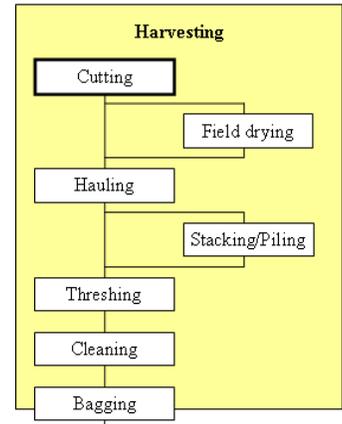
The most common method for harvesting rice in Asia is the manual system. The rice crop is cut by simple hand tools including sickles cutting 15-25 cm above ground level, and simple hand-held knives to cut just below the panicle (e.g. ani ani in Indonesia). In Bangladesh and India, the harvested crop is bundled to improve handling, and dried in the field. The manual system of harvesting is very effective in lodged crop conditions, however it is labor intensive. Manual harvesting requires 40 to 80 person-hours per ha. It will take additional labor to collect the harvested crop.



Cutting can also be done mechanically by a reaper, although the use of reapers is not wide-spread in Asia. In some countries, reapers are used that are mounted on the front of a tractor. Most reapers lay the crop in a windrow, which allows for easy pick up of the harvested crop. A reaper with a cutting-width of 1.5m can operate at a rate of 2-4 ha per day. For proper operation of reapers, fields need to be leveled and drained. It is difficult to reap crop that is lodged, lying on the ground.

Tips for good cutting practices

- Drain the field 7-10 days before the expected harvest date or when the upper grains in most of the tillers are in the hard dough stage turning from green to yellow.
- When laying the cut crop in the field make sure that the panicles with the grains stay dry and are off the ground.



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