

Baby Corn

Varieties

Contact Manitoba Agriculture and Food's Vegetable Specialist for information on variety recommendations.

Spacing

Baby corn production requires high plant populations, between 34,000 and 44,000 plants per acre, approximately 5 kg seed per acre. In row spacing at 2.4 inch (6 cm) and between row spacing at 24 to 35 inch (60-90 cm). Estimated yield at this rate is 8,000-10,000 lb (3600-4500 kg) of unhusked ears or 800-1000 lb (360-450 kg) husked ears per acre.

Planting

Prior to planting work soil as needed to form a smooth level seed bed. Plant corn on well drained soil at a depth of 0.5-1 inch (1 - 2.5 cm) deep after soil temperature has reached a minimum of 16°C, as cool soil temperature will affect germination.

Fertilizer

Refer to Tables 1 through 9 for this crop. For general recommendations in the absence of a soil test, refer to Table 10 in the fertility section.

Irrigation

Irrigate so that precipitation plus irrigation is equivalent to a rate of 2 inches (50 mm) of water four times from mid-June till late August, for a total of 8 inches (400 mm).

Pest Management

Insect and Disease

Baby corn is relatively pest-free, since plants are harvested before damage normally associated with corn production occurs. If disease or insect problems do occur, treatment is the same as for sweet corn production.

Weeds

It is essential to keep weeds suppressed until the corn has reached a height of 24 inches (60 cm). Weed competition will delay maturity and reduce yield. Control weeds with mechanical cultivation between row and hand cultivation in row. If chemical weed control is used, pay particular attention to waiting period stipulated on label between herbicide application and harvest, since baby corn will be harvested much earlier than sweet corn varieties. For specific recommendations refer to the *Guide to Vegetable Crop Protection 2003*.

Harvest and Post-Harvest

Days to maturity are approximately 65 days after germination. A single planting may require between six to 12 hand harvests. Baby corn must be harvested no more than one to two days after silks emerge. Ideal cob size is 2 to 4.5 inches (4.5 - 10 cm) in length and 0.2 to 0.6 inch (7-17 mm) in width at the base or butt end. Harvest generally lasts between two to four weeks. The corn is sold in the husk to maintain moisture and ear quality. Harvested product should be refrigerated and shipped to market as soon as possible to maintain quality, preferably the same day.