

# Zaid Crop Advisory

Zaid crops are short-duration summer crops grown between March and June using irrigation.

Zaid crop management involves cultivating fast-maturing crops (60-90 days) such as watermelon, cucumber, muskmelon, and green fodder between March and June (between Rabi and Kharif seasons). Key management practices include consistent irrigation every 5-7 days due to high summer heat, selection of early-maturing, drought-tolerant varieties, and utilizing organic/plastic mulch to conserve soil moisture.

## Why Farmers Grow Zaid Crops

- ❖ Earns additional income during the agricultural gap between Rabi and Kharif
- ❖ Utilises idle farmland that would otherwise remain fallow during summer
- ❖ Takes advantage of residual soil moisture after Rabi harvest
- ❖ Meets high summer demand for vegetables and fruits
- ❖ Short crop duration means quick returns within 60-90 days



## Common Zaid Crops:

- ❖ **Fruits/Vegetables:** Watermelon, Muskmelon, Cucumber, Bitter gourd, Pumpkin, Bottle gourd.
- ❖ **Pulses/Fodder:** Moong dal, Urad dal, Fodder maize.
- ❖ **Cash Crops:** Sunflower, Groundnut.

## Zaid Season Months in India

Stage	Months
Field Preparation	February - March
Sowing	March
Growing Period	April - May
Harvesting	June
Market Arrival	June – July

## Cultivation Tips for Zaid Crops

- Timely Sowing:** Zaid crops must be sown in March to ensure harvest before monsoon arrival in June. Delayed sowing compresses the growing period and reduces yields significantly.
- Irrigation Management:** Zaid crops are grown during the hottest months of the year. Frequent irrigation — every 5-7 days — is essential to prevent moisture stress. Drip irrigation is ideal for water efficiency.
- Variety Selection:** Always choose short-duration, heat-tolerant varieties specifically developed for summer cultivation. Standard Kharif varieties of the same crop may not perform well under summer temperatures.
- Mulching:** Applying plastic or organic mulch around plants conserves soil moisture, reduces irrigation frequency, controls weeds, and keeps soil temperature lower — all critical benefits during summer cultivation.
- Pest and Disease Management:** Summer heat accelerates pest cycles. Regular scouting for red spider mites, aphids, and fruit flies is essential. Early intervention prevents yield losses that can be severe in short-duration Zaid crops.
- Harvesting on Time:** Zaid vegetables have a narrow harvesting window. Over-mature fruits lose market value rapidly. Regular picking every 2-3 days at the right maturity stage maximises both yield and price realisation.

## Key Management Strategies for Zaid Crops:

- ❖ **Sowing Time:** Early sowing in March is critical to avoid monsoon rains during harvesting.
- ❖ **Irrigation Management:** Due to low moisture, irrigation is crucial. Drip irrigation is highly recommended to manage water efficiently.
- ❖ **Soil Health:** Organic manure is advised to maintain nutrient levels. Intercropping with legumes (like moong) helps improve soil nitrogen.
- ❖ **Pest & Disease Control:** Use appropriate pesticides and follow label & leaflet.
- ❖ **Mechanization:** Use of mini-tractors and implements like rotavators/cultivators helps finish land preparation and sowing quickly within the short window.

## About CropLife India

CropLife India is committed to advancing sustainable agriculture and it is an association of 17 R&D driven member companies in crop protection. We jointly represent ~ 70% of the market and are responsible for 95% of the molecules introduced in the country. Our member companies have annual global R & D spend of 6 billion USD and are firmly committed to engaging with the farming community to enable Safe, Secure Food Supply.

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