

ORGANIC RICE



Growing rice organically and thus sustainably ensures a steady production level. Proper seed selection, field management and post-harvest handling are crucial for good yields.

Choosing suitable varieties and good seeds

Selecting new varieties

Selection of own seed



What to consider:
1. Upland or lowland?
2. Tested locally?
3. Re-usable seeds?
4. Good yields?



Select only fully mature, uniform, healthy and disease free panicles.



- › Select varieties that are suitable and adapted to local conditions.
- › Rice is self-pollinating. This allows for selection of seeds from own fields.
- › Do not thresh seeds destined for sowing.
- › The dry season harvest is a better source for good seed.
- › Set aside 30 to 40 kg of seed to plant 1 hectare.

Seed viability testing and seed preparation

Seed viability testing

1. Soak seeds



Count 100 seeds and soak them in water for 24 hours.

2. Incubate



Wrap the seeds in a moist paper or cloth and incubate for 2 days.

3. Count germinated seeds

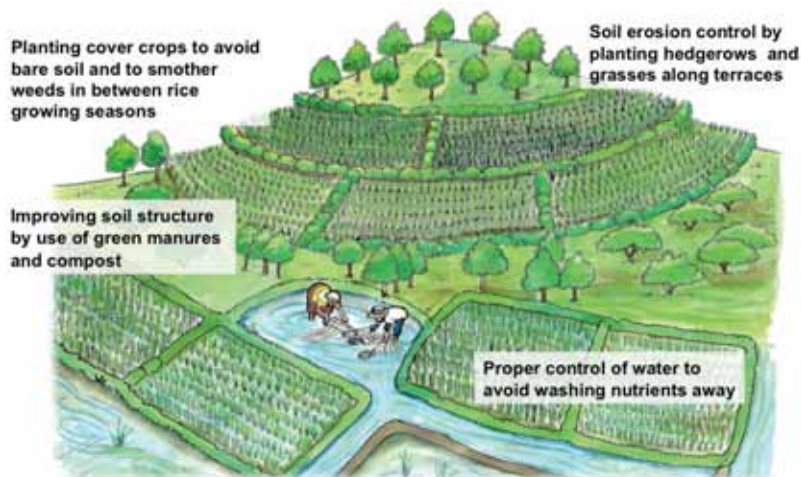


Count all germinated seeds and express the number in percent of 100.

Pregermination of seeds:

- › Start seed preparation at onset of rain.
- › Seeds coming from 3 or more months of storage need first to be prepared by warming them in the sun for 3 hours.
- › Allow seeds to cool off before soaking for 1 day.
- › Discard floating seeds.
- › Fill seeds half full into sacks for incubation during 36 hours. Check them regularly to prevent overheating in the sun.

Improving management techniques



- › Construct terraces to minimise soil loss.
- › Avoid unnecessary disturbance of the soil.
- › Improve soil fertility and conserve soil by intercropping with green manure crops.
- › Prevent nutrient deficiencies by adding organic fertilisers and rock phosphate.
- › Prevent competition by weeds and seed multiplication with repeated timely weeding.

Selection of an appropriate production system

The System of Rice Intensification

Watering:

- › Keep the soil moist, but not wet until flowering.
- › Do not add water the last 25 days before harvest.

Planting:

- › Transplant seedlings when still young (8 to 12 days old).
- › Plant in a square grid pattern of 25x25 cm.



Weeding:

- › 1st: 10 days after planting
- › 2nd: within 2 weeks after 1st
- › Additionally: 1 to 2 times before flowering.

Fertilising:

- › Add compost or manure whenever possible to increase nutrient levels.

The System of Rice Intensification (SRI) is a successful integrated approach to help increase productivity.

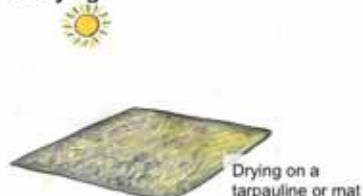
- › Adjust the production system to local conditions.
- › Intercrop and rotate rice with other crops.
- › Apply mosaic planting of different rice varieties.

Proper postharvest handling to minimise losses

1. Harvesting



2. Drying



3. Threshing and packing



4. Milling and storage/selling



- › Harvest only at full maturity.
- › Growing mixed varieties in one field may result in different maturity levels.
- › Spread grains evenly and loosely when drying to prevent mould.
- › Use proper milling facilities to ensure a high percentage of whole grains.
- › Rice should be free of husks, weed seeds and stones to fetch good prices.