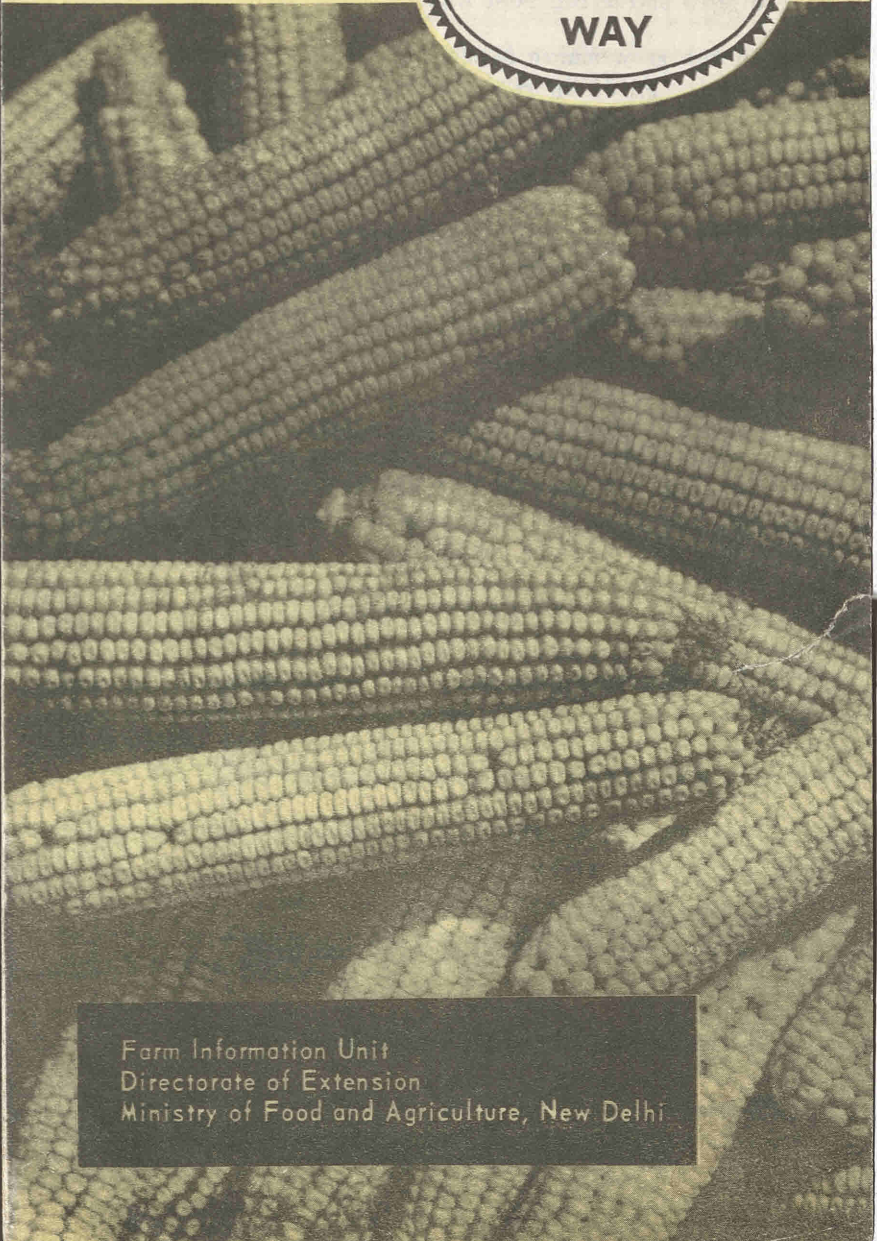


Information Leaflet No. 27

GROW MAIZE

THE
IMPROVED
WAY



Farm Information Unit
Directorate of Extension
Ministry of Food and Agriculture, New Delhi

GROW MAIZE THE IMPROVED WAY

Maize can give you very high yield of cereal grains to an acre. As a matter of fact, it yields much more than any of your cereal crops such as rice, wheat, barley, *jowar* and *bajra*. It is thus a great advantage to grow maize as you can not only get ample food for your family but you can also utilize the grains for other purposes. But you must know how to grow maize the best way.

You can grow maize in many types of climate. It can be successfully grown in the plains as well as in the hills up to an elevation of 12,000 feet above sea-level. The best time for sowing maize in north India is from June to October and in south India from October to December.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT SOIL

As you want to get the most out of your maize crop, choose the most fertile land you have with good drainage.

Maize will grow very well on loams including the black loamy soils of the South. Maize does not bear well in sandy soils as they are poor in fertility and dry out quickly. If, however, you have no other choice than sandy soil, grow maize only after heavily manuring it.

USE BETTER SEED

Maize will yield a lot more if you use seeds of improved varieties rather than the locals. Always insist on such seeds for sowing. You can consult your local Agricultural Officer for the variety suited to your area.

Here are some improved varieties recommended for different states:

Uttar Pradesh :

Meerut Yellow, Meerut 3, K.19 and K.41

Bihar :

Pusa Yellow 2, Pusa 5 and Jonpur

Rajasthan :

Udaipur Selected and Bassi Selected

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Punjab :

Punjab Hy.No.1 and American hybrids such as U.S.13 and Ill. 1656.

The other suitable American strains that can be used in other places are: N.C.27, Tex.26, and Dixie 11, 18 and 22.

PREPARE THE LAND WELL

Plough the land with a soil-inverting plough immediately after the harvest of the previous crop, and leave it to weather for some time. Apply ten cartloads of farmyard manure per acre four to six weeks before the time of sowing. Mix the manure well with the soil by ploughing criss-cross three to four times with a country plough. If your land is well-prepared, maize will grow well.

FERTILIZE WELL

Maize is a heavy feeder. So you must feed your crop with adequate fertilizers.

A fertilizer mixture containing 40 pounds of nitrogen, 20 pounds of phosphoric acid and 20 pounds of potash is recommended per acre.

For hybrid maize under the Punjab conditions, you are to apply as much as 100 pounds of nitrogen, 50 pounds of phosphoric acid and 40 pounds of potash to an acre.

It is best to apply the fertilizer mixture in two doses. Drill the first half at the time of sowing, and apply the rest of it as a topdressing about a month after sowing.

BE SURE OF ADEQUATE SOIL MOISTURE

Maize requires quite a heavy amount of soil moisture for its growth. Be sure that the land is adequately wet especially when you are applying heavy doses of fertilizers. Maize needs about 29 acre-inches of water up to the time of its maturity.

ATTEND TO TIMELY INTERCULTURE

To yield well, maize needs a clean cultivation. It is very important to do weeding and hoeing of the maize plots

in time. You can make good any shortcomings in the preparation of the seed-bed by hoeing during the early period of growth of the crop. A bullock - hoe can do your job well. In all, you are to hoe two to three times. Do the first weeding by hand after about ten days of sowing. Follow this with a bullock-hoe two to three weeks later.

After about three weeks of the first weeding, do the second hoeing. A hoe fitted with a ridging attachment will do the earthing up also in the same operation and will protect the plants against strong winds.

CHECK PESTS AND DISEASES

As soon as you notice the attack of any pest or disease, contact your local Agricultural Officer for help.

The control measures for some of the common and important pests and diseases are given below.

Maize borer

Remove the affected plants and destroy them. Catch the moths with light-traps, and kill them.

Grasshoppers

Spray the crop with 0.1 per cent BHC emulsion, or dust with 5 per cent BHC at 20 pounds per acre. Plough up the land after harvest. This will destroy the eggs.

Downy mildew

Destroy the diseased plants. Spray the crop with Bordeaux mixture. Grow resistant varieties.

Leaf blight and Leaf spot

Grow resistant varieties.
Adopt crop rotations.

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