

Picture Tour: Growing Sugarbeets

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Images of: **Plowing** · **Planting** · **Crop emergence** · **Growth** · **Fields** · **Harvest**

PLOWING



Most beet ground is either moldboard or chisel plowed in the fall. Better stands are often achieved if the soil is worked early and seeds are planted into a stale seed bed.



Land is tilled in the spring to level the ground and incorporate fertilizer, usually the day before or the day of planting.



Sugar beets are typically planted from March 31 to May 15.

PLANTING



Beets are planted in rowspacings from 15-30".



Rows are planted as straight as possible to make it easier to cultivate and harvest.



Seed is dropped into the row and pressed firmly into moisture.

CROP EMERGENCE



Beets generally emerge 1-2 weeks after planting.



Leaves emerge in pairs.



Beets are most susceptible to injury from frost, wind, disease, herbicides etc. during the first 30 days.

GROWTH



As beets grow, the leaves develop a waxy coat and the taproot grows downward in search of water and nutrients.



During July the root enlarges and stores sugar created by photosynthesis. Sugar beet roots continue to grow until harvest.



As beets mature the crown often extends above the surface of the soil.

FIELDS



Sugar beets will usually fill the rows by the end of June.



Beet leaves continue to grow and expand, utilizing all available sunlight.

HARVEST



Beet leaves are removed prior to harvest with a rotating drum topper.



Rubber flails remove leaves and petioles in the topping operation.



Tops end up between the rows and the beets are ready for harvesting.