Lesson 5 — Agronomy: First Lesson

Yield is built — components, seedbeds and sowing

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Agronomy is the science and practice of producing crops well — a first-strength subject of this school, taught by Nji Griphan. This lesson opens the Library's Agronomy — Principles and Practice.

Yield is built from components: plants per area, productive parts per plant, and weight per part. Two plots can yield alike for opposite reasons — many small cobs, or few large ones — and the cures differ completely. Diagnosing which component failed turns 'low yield' from a complaint into a plan.

The seedbed decides establishment: fine, firm, moist contact for the seed — your boot should mark it, not sink or skate. On slopes, work along the contour, because tillage lines are water lines.

At sowing, the cheapest yield is bought: seed tested for germination, a variety fitted to the place, the right rate, depth and spacing. Maize at 53,000 plants per hectare with 85 per cent germination needs about 62,400 seeds —

roughly 19 kilograms per hectare. Two minutes of arithmetic prevents the thin stand and the wasted bag.

Keep the agronomist's notebook in the field: sowing dates, varieties, inputs, rainfall, yields per plot. Without records, every season's lessons evaporate and the same mistakes are replanted.

Practise

1. Name the three yield components for a crop you know.
2. A seed lot tests at 76% germination. How many seeds must be sown for 40,000 plants?
3. Judge a seedbed by the boot test and write your verdict.

Next steps

Continue in the Library: download the book named in this lesson and read its first chapter. Then leave your name at the enrollment door on the Online School page — classes are taught online by Nji Griphan, and a class holds at most 30 learners.