

Faba Bean Staging for Harvest Management

By Saskatchewan Pulse Growers Staff

Faba beans mature in 110 to 130 days depending on moisture conditions. As the crop matures, the lower leaves darken and drop, and the bottom pods turn black and dry from the bottom to the top of the plant.

Glyphosate can be sprayed when the seed has less than 30 per cent moisture content. At this stage, faba bean stems are green to brown, pods are yellow to brown, and 80 to 90 per cent of the leaves have dropped.

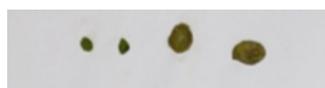
Diquat is a registered desiccant for faba beans. Diquat should be applied when most plants are ripe and dry. At this stage, pods are fully filled and the bottom pods will be tan or black in colour. Always read and follow label directions prior to application.

The crop can be swathed when the lowest one to three pods are turning dark, in about 25 per cent of the plants. By this time, the uppermost pods should be fully developed and the middle pods will be turning light green. At this stage, the moisture content of the most mature seeds may be over 40 per cent and the seeds in the upper part of the plant may have moisture content over 60 per cent.

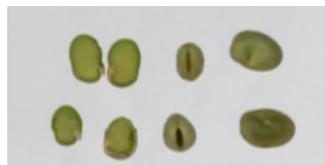
For more information on how to stage faba bean crops for desiccation, watch this [Pulse School Video](#).



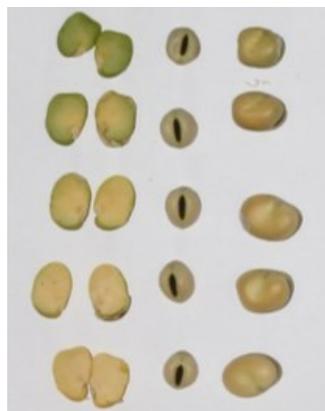
Faba bean pods showing different stages of maturity from top to bottom of plant. Photos illustrate the correct stage for harvest management.



- Seed too immature (soft)



- Seed firm and hilum darkening but moisture content above 60 per cent



- Seed fully formed. Hilum darkened and seed starting to yellow in center. Seeds are physiologically mature. Seeds at this stage at the top of the plant are ready for dry down to reach harvest moisture levels.



- Mature seeds. Stage of seed at the bottom of the plant when at the correct stage for harvest management. Pods are difficult to break open and seed is still a bit soft

Various stages of maturity for faba bean seed.



Very immature pod. Seeds well attached to pod, still developing, and juicy. Very fleshy pod.



Starting to mature, hilum not turned and seed still attached to pod (bottom). Pod still fleshy.



More mature pod (seed detached and pod less fleshy). If top pods are at this stage, plant is ready for dry down or desiccation.



Mature pod showing colour change of seeds and pod. Seeds are fully detached.