SAFFRON has been an important crop in Iran for over a thousand years, and Iran produces most of the world supply. Saffron is well adapted to dry conditions, but Iran has so little rainfall that saffron must be irrigated. In Iran saffron is often planted in August and early September. However, studies have shown that planting year yields can be increased by 25% to 50% if saffron is planted in June. There are two types of dormancy for bulbs: Saffron corms are in true dormancy from May to the end of June (sprouts are completely dormant). From late June until August or September corms are in light sleep or quiescent and exposure to temperatures above 25°C (75°F) affects the formation of the flower buds in the corms.

To prepare a field for planting, the land is plowed to a depth of 25-30 cm (10-12 inches) to loosen the soil and control weeds, then is left fallow. Just prior to planting about 50 to 70 tons per hectare of composted animal manure is spread over the soil and then incorporated with deep plowing. Synthetic NPK fertilizer is applied in accordance with soil test results. Animal manure loading, Animal manure distribution and Fertilizer distribution are done.

Flood irrigation (conventional) is one where normally two or three crucial steps of weeding are necessary. The first and second weeding are done after harvesting and the third weeding is done in March to eliminate winter weeds. In a saffron farm two or three crucial steps of weeding are necessary. The first and second weeding are done after harvesting and in March to eliminate winter weeds. The final weeding is done after the first irrigation and before flowering of saffron in fall. Weather conditions in March are so important in this step. From late June until August or September corms are in light sleep or quiescent and exposure to temperatures above 25°C (75°F) affects the formation of the flower buds in the corms.

Harvested flowers should be processed to separate the stigmas from the flower and dry the stigmas. Farmers may process their own saffron, or send the harvested flowers to a processing facility. Farmers process the stigmas by hand, and if the farm is not large enough, farmers use selective herbicides. Summer or fall weeding are usually done mechanically. To keep the corms at a constant depth, farmers usually spread about 5 cm of soil on the field after the fall weeding. Saffron irrigation begins in late September or October. Usually saffron fields are irrigated 5 times a year. In the cold regions, the first irrigation is in the end of September or early October. After this irrigation it is very important to break the soil crust and control weeds, particularly when sprinkler or basin irrigation is used. Saffron begins flowering three weeks after the first irrigation.

In a saffron farm two or three crucial steps of weeding are necessary. The first and second weeding are done after harvesting and in March to eliminate winter weeds. Saffron irrigation begins in late September or October. Usually saffron fields are irrigated 5 times a year. In the cold regions, the first irrigation is in the end of September or early October. After this irrigation it is very important to break the soil crust and control weeds, particularly when sprinkler or basin irrigation is used. Saffron begins flowering three weeks after the first irrigation. The Second irrigation is usually about 40 days after the first irrigation. Farmers apply 100 kg of urea fertilizer as a top dressing to support vegetative growth and use the irrigation to incorporate it. The two above-mentioned irrigations are very important in the development of roots of saffron corms and the feeding of them to support plant growth and development of the corms.

In the middle of February or the first week of March the third irrigation will conducted, and fields will be cultivated to control winter weeds. Saffron is irrigated again in late March to keep the corms moist while daughter corms are maturing. If needed a fifth irrigation is applied at the beginning of leaf die-back. Saffron irrigation begins in late September or October. Usually saffron fields are irrigated 5 times a year. In the cold regions, the first irrigation is in the end of September or early October. After this irrigation it is very important to break the soil crust and control weeds, particularly when sprinkler or basin irrigation is used. Saffron begins flowering three weeks after the first irrigation. The Second irrigation is usually about 40 days after the first irrigation. Farmers apply 100 kg of urea fertilizer as a top dressing to support vegetative growth and use the irrigation to incorporate it. The two above-mentioned irrigations are very important in the development of roots of saffron corms and the feeding of them to support plant growth and development of the corms.

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