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Nutritional value, uses and importance of Sesame crop

A.R.G. Ranganatha

**ICAR-Project Coordinating Unit (PC Unit) for Sesame and Niger Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi
Vishwa Vidyalaya (JNKVV), Jabalpur, 482004 Madhya Pradesh, India**

Corresponding authors email: argranga@gmail.com

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Sesame seeds are a nutrient powerhouse, rich in healthy fats, protein, fiber, calcium, iron, magnesium, and zinc, making them important for bone, heart, and digestive health, with uses in cooking (oil, baking), cosmetics, and traditional medicine for their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, acting as a valuable oilseed crop.

Nutritional value (per 100g, approximate)

Fats: ~50g (healthy unsaturated fats like oleic & linoleic acids).

Protein: ~18-22g (plant-based).

Carbohydrates: ~23g (with ~12g fiber).

Minerals: High in Calcium (1450mg), Iron (9.3mg), Magnesium (87% DV), Phosphorus, Zinc, Copper, Potassium.

Vitamins: Source of Vitamin B6, Vitamin E (tocopherols).

Phytochemicals: Contain lignans (sesamin, sesamol) and phytosterols with antioxidant properties.

Importance of sesame crop and uses

Nutrient density: Known as an "all-purpose nutrient bank" for humans and animals, providing essential nutrients.

Adaptability: A promising oilseed crop for breeding, offering high nutritional potential.

Bioactive compounds: Source of valuable phytochemicals (lignans, tocopherols) with potential health benefits.

Culinary: Seeds used in baking, candy, hummus (tahini), oils for cooking/salads, toppings.

Health and medicinal: Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, supports bone health (calcium), heart health (fats, lignans), immune function (zinc), and may help manage blood sugar/cholesterol.

Industrial: Sesame oil used in cosmetics, perfumes; lignans used as insecticide synergists.

Cultural: Integral in rituals, religion, and traditional medicine (e.g., in India for headaches, anxiety).

Black sesame or white sesame which is best?

Neither black nor white sesame is definitively "best"; black sesame is superior for antioxidants, calcium, and fiber due to its intact hull, offering a stronger, slightly bitter taste, while white sesame (hulled) provides a milder, sweeter flavor, making it versatile for baking and sauces, though both are nutritious. Choose based on your health goal (black for nutrients) or culinary need (white for mildness).

Black sesame seeds

Pros: Higher in antioxidants (like lignans), calcium, iron, fiber, and minerals; stronger, earthier, nutty, slightly bitter flavor; crunchier texture.

Best for: Nutrient boosts, traditional Asian dishes (Japanese, Korean), adding texture and visual contrast, health supplements, or when a robust flavor is desired.

White sesame seeds

Pros: Milder, sweeter, creamier flavor; softer texture; good source of protein, fiber, and healthy fats.

Best for: Everyday cooking, baking, sauces (like tahini), garnishes where a subtle flavor and smooth finish are preferred, says the Times of India, notes the Times of India.

Which to Choose?

For health: Black sesame generally offers more concentrated nutrients because the hull (where much of the goodness resides) is intact.

For flavor/use: White is more versatile in Western cooking for its mildness; black adds depth and intensity.

Best of both: Mix them for a balanced flavor, texture, and visual appeal.