

The harvested seed heads are placed in a clean tarpaulin or plastic sheet and allowed to dry in the shade. Seeds are easily threshed by hand and cleaned by winnowing. Keep properly dried seeds in the closed container to avoid damage by insects.



Acknowledgement

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References

VAN RENSBURG, W.S.J., VAN AVERBEKE, W., BELETSE, Y.G & SLABBERT, M. M 2012.
Production Guidelines for African Leafy Vegetables, Water Research Commission



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Seed harvesting of indigenous leafy vegetables



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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Seed harvesting of indigenous leafy vegetables

Botanical name: (Cleome gynandra)

Common names: Spider plant, Lerotho, Murudi, Amazonde, Vingerblaartee, Ulude

Seeds can be harvested when pods are fully ripe and yellow but before they open naturally to prevent shattering. Seeds are threshed by hand and cleaned by winnowing. Keep dried seed in a cool dry place. Store seed for three to four months for fresh seed will germinate very unevenly.



Botanical name: (Corchorus olitorius L.)

Common names: Jute mallow, Delele, Thelele, Ligusha

Collect seeds from yellow or brown, almost mature pods and leave to dry on a sheet in the shade. Seeds are dormant and should be sown in only af-

ter 4 months. Keep properly dried seeds in a closed container to avoid damage by insects.

Botanical name: (Solanum retroflexum)

Common names: Black nightshade, Moonyane, Mokolonyane, Umhlabangubo,

Allow the blackish purple berries to completely ripen on the plant before harvesting for seeds. Gently squeeze out the jelly-like substance that contains the seeds from the fruit. Place the jelly and seeds in a small container and add water for fermentation. Loosely cover the container and place in a warm place (around 25-30° C) for 1-2 days. Check it regularly to notice any changes. A layer of fungi or mould will develop on top of the mixture. The fungi will feed on the gelatinous coat that surrounds each seed and prevents germination and also produces antibiotics that helps to control seed-borne diseases.



After fermentation, fill the seed container with water. Let the contents settle and gently pour out the water along with pieces fruit pulp and immature seeds floating on the top. Viable seeds are heavier

and settle on the bottom container. Repeat this process until the water is almost clear. Pour clean seeds into a fine-mesh strainer/cloth bag and let the excess water drip. Place seeds onto paper towel, fine mesh, or newspaper and let the seeds dry completely in partial shade. Keep properly dried seeds in a closed container to avoid damage by insects.

Botanical name: (Brassica rapa)

Common names: Mutshaini, Rape, Mutsina, Chinese mustard cabbage

Harvest carefully when 60-70% of the pods have turned yellow or brown and most of their inner seeds are light brown and firm. Harvested seeds' stalks are cured for 1-2 weeks if desired. Pods are then threshed with sticks and shifted by hand. Seed is brittle and should not be crushed and stored. Keep properly dried seed in a closed container to avoid damage by insects.

Botanical name: (Amaranthus spp.)

Common names: Vowa, Thepe, Umfino, Imbuya, Hanekom, Umbuya, Amaranth

Seeds can be harvested from plants when the leaves start to lighten or yellow. Amaranths with a terminal inflorescence are harvested once.

