FarmLens Ltd

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Crop details

Rosemary

Salvia rosmarinus

Family: Lamiaceae

Categories

Spices & Condiments

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Quick stats

Family	Lamiaceae
Typical harvest	10.0 t/ha
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Crop profile

Growth habit	perennial
Days to harvest	150
Main uses	Fresh and dried shoots for seasoning, herbal teas, medicinal extracts and essential oils.
Pollination	insect
Origin and where it grows	Mediterranean origin; suited to warm temperate to subtropical climates with good drainage.

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	15 - 28 °C
Rainfall	500 - 900 mm/yr
Altitude	0 - 2300 m
Best pH	6 - 7.5
Soil type	Well-drained sandy loam or loam; tolerates relatively poor soils if drainage is good.
Row spacing	70 cm
Plant spacing	50 cm
Planting depth	3 cm
Seed rate	kg/ha (check local recommendation)
Nursery days	35

Simple notes for farmers

About the crop: This crop is perennial; once planted it can keep producing for many years. Harvest typically starts about 150 days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for fresh and dried shoots for seasoning, herbal teas, medicinal extracts and essential oils..

Pollination: Mainly insect; healthy flowers and pollinators improve fruit set.

Where it grows: Mediterranean origin; suited to warm temperate to subtropical climates with good drainage.. Grouped under: Spices & Condiments.

Best climate: 15 - 28 °C; 500 - 900 mm/yr; up to about 2300 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 6 - 7.5; well-drained sandy loam or loam; tolerates relatively poor soils if drainage is good..

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

Planting	Propagate from semi-hardwood cuttings rooted in a nursery or pots, then transplant to the field once well-rooted and 10–15 cm tall.
Transplanting	Transplant in the late afternoon or on cloudy days, irrigate immediately and mulch around the base.
Irrigation	Require moderate watering during establishment; once established, water only when the topsoil is dry to avoid root diseases.
Fertigation	Under drip, apply light but regular feeds; rosemary prefers moderate fertility rather than heavy N.
Pest scouting	Scout for root rots, powdery mildew, aphids and spittlebugs on young tips. Remove infected branches and improve airflow.
Pruning and training	Harvest by light pruning; avoid cutting into old woody stems. Shape plants to keep them bushy and accessible.
Harvest	First harvest 4–6 months after transplanting by cutting young leafy shoots. Subsequent harvests every 6–8 weeks depending on regrowth.
Postharvest	Harvest in cool hours, keep shaded and ventilated. For drying, use shade or low-temperature dryers to preserve aroma and colour.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

#	Stage	DAP	Product	Rate	Targets (kg/ha)	Notes
1	Basal at transplanting	0	NPK 17-17-17 + compost	60 kg/ha (plus 3–5 t/ha compost)	N: 10, P?O?: 10, K?O: 10	Apply in planting furrows or spots and mix lightly with soil before transplanting.
2	Establishment topdress	45	CAN 26% N	60 kg/ha	N: 16, P?O?: 0, K?O: 0	Side-dress along rows on moist soil, avoiding direct contact with stems.
3	Post-harvest regrowth feed	120	NPK 20-10-10 or similar	50 kg/ha after main harvest	N: 10, P?O?: 5, K?O: 5	Apply after a major pruning/harvest to support regrowth, particularly in high-producing blocks.

Nutrient requirements

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
N	Basal	25	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	25	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	30	kg/ha
N	Establishment	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Establishment	0	kg/ha

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
K?O	Establishment	20	kg/ha
N	After_cut	15	kg/ha
P?O?	After_cut	0	kg/ha
K?O	After_cut	20	kg/ha

Field images

Varieties

Name	Country	Maturity (days)	Traits
Upright rosemary selection	KE	150	Tall upright habit, suited for hedgerows and fresh cutting.
High-oil rosemary type	TZ	160	Good essential oil yield, popular with small-scale distillers.
Local rosemary landrace	UG	150	Adapted to mid-altitude gardens, used for seasoning and medicinal teas.

Fertilizer recommendations

Stage	Product	Rate	Notes
Basal	NPK 17-17-17 + compost	60	Apply with 3–5 t/ha compost or well-rotted manure before transplanting.
Establishment	CAN 26% N	60	6–8 weeks after transplanting when plants are well rooted.
After cut	NPK 20-10-10	50	After main harvest in intensively managed rosemary stands.

Pests and diseases

Name	Type	Symptoms	Management
Root and crown rot	disease	Plants wilt, yellow and die back from the base; roots dark, soft or rotted.	Use well-drained soils, avoid over-irrigation, improve drainage and remove severely affected plants.
Powdery mildew	disease	White powdery growth on leaves and stems, leaf yellowing and reduced aroma.	Improve spacing and airflow, avoid overhead irrigation, and remove heavily infected shoots.
Aphids	pest	Colonies on tender shoots, curled leaves and sticky honeydew.	Encourage natural enemies, prune off heavily infested tips and avoid excess nitrogen.
Spittlebugs	pest	Foamy spittle masses on stems, minor sucking damage on shoots.	Squash or wash off spittle masses, maintain field hygiene, encourage beneficial insects.

Yields

System	Typical	Min	Max	Notes
Low-input smallholder (fresh shoots)	5	3	7	Wide spacing, minimal fertilizer, 2–3 cuts per year after establishment.
Managed hedge / beds (fresh)	10	6	14	Regular pruning harvests, modest NPK and good weed control.
Intensive irrigated herb production	15	10	20	Dense hedgerows, drip irrigation and multi-cut harvesting for fresh herb markets.

Season calendars

Country	Region	Planting	Harvest
KE	Highlands and well-drained mid-altitudes	At onset of long or short rains, or any frost-free period with irrigation.	First harvest 4–6 months after transplanting, then reg
TZ	Northern and southern highlands, cooler irrigated zones	Start of main rains or under irrigation when soils are workable.	Multiple cuttings across the year once plants are esta
UG	Moist, well-drained mid-altitude areas	At onset of reliable rains on well-drained soils.	Regular cuttings for several years, avoiding very col

Region suitability

Country	Region	Suitability
KE	Central & Rift highlands; dry, well-drained slopes	High
TZ	Northern and southern highlands; cooler irrigated pockets	High
UG	Mid-altitude belts with good drainage and mild winters	High

Source: **FarmLens Ltd** - farmlens.africa and app.farmlens.africa. Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya. This guide was generated from the FarmLens database.