FarmLens Ltd

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Crop details

Tamarillo

Solanum betaceum

Family: Solanaceae

Categories

Fruits & Nuts

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Quick stats

Family	Solanaceae
Typical harvest	15.6 t/ha
Varieties	18
Pests and diseases	24
Seasons	19

Crop profile

Growth habit	perennial
Days to harvest	300-540
Main uses	Fruit (fresh/juice)
Pollination	insect
Origin and where it grows	Andean highlands

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	12 - 20 °C
Rainfall	900 - 1400 mm/yr
Altitude	1500 - 2800 m
Best pH	5.8 - 6.5
Soil type	Fertile, well-drained loam
Row spacing	300 cm
Plant spacing	250 cm
Planting depth	40 cm
Seed rate	kg/ha (check local recommendation)
Nursery days	90

Simple notes for farmers

About the crop: This crop is perennial; once planted it can keep producing for many years. Harvest typically starts about 300-540 days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for fruit (fresh/juice).

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

Where it grows: Andean highlands. Grouped under: Fruits & Nuts.

Best climate: 12 - 20 °C; 900 - 1400 mm/yr; up to about 2800 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 5.8 - 6.5; fertile, well-drained loam.

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

Planting	Plant with onset of rains or irrigate. Use healthy seedlings; add compost and starter P; provide windbreaks/stakes in exposed sites.
Transplanting	Mulch basins; protect young stems; avoid root disturbance.
Irrigation	Keep evenly moist, esp. flowering to fruit fill; avoid drought/heat spikes to reduce fruit drop.
Fertigation	Split N in light doses; ensure K and Ca for fruit quality; adjust using soil/leaf tests.
Pest scouting	Scout for aphids, whiteflies, mites, fruit flies, powdery mildew, and bacterial wilt; prune to improve airflow and sanitation.
Pruning and training	Train to 1–3 leaders; remove water shoots; tip-prune to balance vegetative and reproductive growth.
Harvest	Pick when fully colored (red/orange/yellow) and firm; handle carefully to avoid stem-end damage.
Postharvest	Shade-cool promptly; store 6–10 °C at high RH; 2–4 weeks depending on cultivar and handling.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

#	Stage	DAP	Product	Rate	Targets (kg/ha)	Notes
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: 10, K?O: N/A	Mix into backfill; keep away from stem
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A

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1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	120 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: 10, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	Apply in ring under canopy; water in
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
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2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A
2	Topdress	90	CAN 26% N	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	N/A

#	Stage	DAP	Product	Rate	Targets (kg/ha)	Notes
3	Pre-bloom balanced feed	270	NPK 17-17-17	200 g/plant	N: 10, P?O?: 10, K?O: 10	Light dose before flowering
4	Fruit fill K boost	330	Sulfate of potash (SOP)	200 g/plant	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: 15	Prefer SOP for fruit quality
5	Micronutrient foliar (opt.)	300	Ca/B/Zn foliar (as label)	0 —	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	Apply in cool hours to support set/skin

Nutrient requirements

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Establishment	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Establishment	20	kg/ha
K?O	Establishment	20	kg/ha
N	Vegetative	40	kg/ha
K?O	Vegetative	30	kg/ha
N	Flower_set	15	kg/ha
P?O?	Flower_set	20	kg/ha
K?O	Flower_set	30	kg/ha
N	Fruit_fill	10	kg/ha
K?O	Fruit_fill	40	kg/ha
N	Maintenance	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Maintenance	10	kg/ha
K?O	Maintenance	30	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha

Field images



Varieties

Name	Country	Maturity (days)	Traits
Red Tamarillo	KE	420	Juice color; market preferred
Red tamarillo (local)	KE	360	Deep red fruit; good processing
Golden/yellow selection	UG	360	Yellow fruit; mild flavor
Red Tamarillo	KE	420	Juice color; market preferred
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Fertilizer recommendations

Stage	Product	Rate	Notes
Basal	Compost (well-decomposed)	4000	Mulch rings/basins
Vegetative	CAN 26% N	70	Split 2–3× per year on young plants
Fruit fill	Sulfate of potash (SOP)	60	Boost K for fruit quality

Pests and diseases

Name	Type	Symptoms	Management
Late blight	disease	Leaf/stem blight	Protectants; airflow
Aphids	pest	Leaf curl; honeydew; sooty mold; virus risk	Conserve predators; control ants; selective insecticides if needed
Whiteflies	pest	Leaf yellowing; honeydew; virus vector	Yellow traps; natural enemies; targeted controls
Red spider mites	pest	Stippling/bronzing in dry spells	Maintain humidity; miticides if severe
Fruit flies (Tephritidae)	pest	Stings; larval tunnels; fruit drop	Field sanitation; baiting; fruit bagging; timely harvest
Powdery mildew	disease	White powder on leaves/shoots	Open canopy; resistant selections; fungicides if persistent
Bacterial wilt (Ralstonia)	disease	Sudden wilting; brown vascular tissue	Avoid infested fields; rotate; hygiene; grafting on tolerant rootstocks where used
Anthracnose/fruit rots	disease	Sunken lesions; postharvest decay	Pruning for airflow; sanitation; careful handling; protectants in wet weather
Root-knot nematodes	pest	Root galls; stunting	Organic matter; solarization/cover crops; tolerant rootstocks if available
Late blight	disease	Leaf/stem blight	Protectants; airflow
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Yields

System	Typical	Min	Max	Notes
highland orchard	15	8	25	
smallholder rainfed	15	8	25	10–25 kg/tree typical under moderate management
irrigated/intensive	25	15	40	Good cultivars, pruning, and nutrition
highland orchard	15	8	25	
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Season calendars

Country	Region	Planting	Harvest
KE	Highlands	Mar–May / Oct–Nov	Multiple flushes/year
KE	Highlands (long rains)	Mar–Apr	Oct–Feb
KE	Highlands (short rains)	Oct–Nov	May–Sep
UG	Southwest highlands	Mar–Apr	Oct–Feb
KE	Highlands	Mar–May / Oct–Nov	Multiple flushes/year
KE	Highlands	Mar–May / Oct–Nov	Multiple flushes/year
KE	Highlands	Mar–May / Oct–Nov	Multiple flushes/year
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KE	Highlands	Mar–May / Oct–Nov	Multiple flushes/year

Region suitability

Country	Region	Suitability
KE	Frost-prone uplands	Low
KE	Highlands	High
KE	Highlands & cool mid-altitudes	High
KE	Hot lowlands (>28 °C mean)	Low
TZ	Northern highlands	High
UG	Southwest highlands	High

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