FarmLens Ltd

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Crop details

Guinea Grass

Megathyrsus maximus

Family: Poaceae

Categories

Forages & Fodder

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Quick stats

Family	Poaceae
Typical harvest	24.0 t/ha
Varieties	1
Pests and diseases	2
Seasons	1

Crop profile

Growth habit	perennial
Days to harvest	85
Main uses	Cut fodder and grazing pasture for dairy and beef systems.
Pollination	wind
Origin and where it grows	Widespread in warm East African lowland and mid-altitude livestock areas.

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	20 - 34 °C
Rainfall	450 - 750 mm/yr
Altitude	800 - 3000 m
Best pH	6 - 7
Soil type	Well-drained loam to clay loam with moderate fertility.
Row spacing	20 cm
Plant spacing	5 cm
Planting depth	4 cm
Seed rate	80 kg/ha

Simple notes for farmers

About the crop: This crop is perennial; once planted it can keep producing for many years. Harvest typically starts about 85 days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for cut fodder and grazing pasture for dairy and beef systems..

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

Where it grows: Widespread in warm East African lowland and mid-altitude livestock areas.. Grouped under: Forages & Fodder.

Best climate: 20 - 34 °C; 450 - 750 mm/yr; up to about 3000 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 6 - 7; well-drained loam to clay loam with moderate fertility..

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

Planting	Direct-seed Guinea Grass into a fine firm seedbed at onset of reliable rains.
Transplanting	Not transplanted.
Irrigation	Maintain moisture during establishment and grain filling where irrigation is used.
Fertigation	Split nitrogen between planting and early vegetative growth where moisture allows.
Pest scouting	Scout Guinea Grass for aphids, armyworms, foliar diseases, and lodging risk.
Pruning and training	No pruning needed; keep weeds low during early establishment.
Harvest	Harvest Guinea Grass when grains harden and heads dry down evenly.
Postharvest	Dry grain well before threshing and storage.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

#	Stage	DAP	Product	Rate	Targets (kg/ha)	Notes
1	Basal	0	DAP	100 kg/ha	N: 18, P?O?: 46, K?O: N/A	Starter fertilizer for Guinea Grass establishment.
2	Topdress	28	CAN	100 kg/ha	N: 26, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	Topdress Guinea Grass before rain or irrigation.

Nutrient requirements

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

Field images



Varieties

Name	Country	Maturity (days)	Traits
Mombasa	KE	85	High biomass tropical pasture grass.

Fertilizer recommendations

Stage	Product	Rate	Notes
Planting	DAP	100	Basal phosphorus for Guinea Grass establishment.
Topdress	CAN	100	Nitrogen support for Guinea Grass vegetative growth.

Pests and diseases

Name	Type	Symptoms	Management
Aphids	pest	Sap sucking on leaves and grain heads.	Scout early, preserve beneficial insects, and control when thresholds are exceeded.
Leaf rust	disease	Rust pustules on leaves reducing grain fill.	Use tolerant varieties, rotation, and timely disease control.

Yields

System	Typical	Min	Max	Notes
Rainfed smallholder production	24	14.4	40.8	Typical grain yield under practical Guinea Grass management.

Season calendars

Country	Region	Planting	Harvest
KE	Highland Grain Zones	Mar-Apr	Jul-Aug

Region suitability

Country	Region	Suitability
KE	Highland Grain Zones	Medium