

FarmLens Ltd

Website: farmlens.africa | App: app.farmlens.africa | Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya



Crop details

Desmodium

Desmodium intortum / uncinatum

Family: Fabaceae

Categories

Legumes & Pulses

Forages & Fodder

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Quick stats

Family	Fabaceae
Typical harvest	9.8 t/ha
Varieties	2
Pests and diseases	2
Seasons	2

Crop profile

Growth habit	perennial
Days to harvest	120-365+
Main uses	Forage; intercrop (push-pull)
Pollination	insect
Origin and where it grows	Tropical Americas; grown in Africa

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	18 - 26 °C
Rainfall	900 - 1500 mm/yr
Altitude	0 - 2200 m
Best pH	5.5 - 6.8
Soil type	Well-drained loam; tolerates acidity
Row spacing	50 cm
Plant spacing	25 cm
Planting depth	1.5 cm
Seed rate	6 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 120-365+ days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for forage; intercrop (push-pull).

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

Where it grows: Tropical Americas; grown in Africa. Grouped under: Legumes & Pulses, Forages & Fodder.

Best climate: 18 - 26 °C; 900 - 1500 mm/yr; up to about 2200 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 5.5 - 6.8; well-drained loam; tolerates acidity.

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

<u>Planting</u>	Establish Desmodium in a fine weed-free seedbed and keep emergence moisture steady.
<u>Transplanting</u>	Direct seed or transplant depending on production system.
<u>Irrigation</u>	Maintain even soil moisture for steady Desmodium growth and quality.
<u>Fertigation</u>	Use split nitrogen and potassium for market-quality Desmodium.
<u>Pest scouting</u>	Scout Desmodium weekly for chewing pests, sap suckers, and foliar diseases.
<u>Pruning and training</u>	No pruning required unless sanitation or staking is needed.
<u>Harvest</u>	Harvest Desmodium at market maturity for the intended use.
<u>Postharvest</u>	Cool and shade Desmodium promptly after harvest.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

<u>#</u>	<u>Stage</u>	<u>DAP</u>	<u>Product</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Targets (kg/ha)</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1	Basal	0	NPK 12-24-12	60 kg/ha	N: 34, P ₂ O ₅ : 34, K ₂ O: 34	Basal fertilizer for Desmodium.
2	Topdress	21	CAN	100 kg/ha	N: 26, P ₂ O ₅ : N/A, K ₂ O: N/A	Support active Desmodium vegetative growth.

Nutrient requirements

<u>Nutrient</u>	<u>Stage</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unit</u>
N	Basal	35	kg/ha
P ₂ O ₅	Basal	30	kg/ha
K ₂ O	Basal	30	kg/ha
N	Topdress	25	kg/ha
K ₂ O	Topdress	20	kg/ha

Field images



Varieties

<u>Name</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Maturity (days)</u>	<u>Traits</u>
Silverleaf	KE	150	Forage; push-pull
Greenleaf	KE	120	Climbing fodder legume for push-pull and cut feed.

Fertilizer recommendations

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Product</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Planting	Well-rotted manure	5000	Improve soil structure before Desmodium planting.
Vegetative growth	CAN	100	Split topdress for Desmodium production.

Pests and diseases

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Symptoms</u>	<u>Management</u>
Aphids	pest	Honeydew; sooty mold	Natural enemies; light sprays
Leaf spot complex	disease	Necrotic spotting and reduced leaf quality.	Improve airflow, rotate crops, and avoid prolonged leaf wetness.

Yields

<u>System</u>	<u>Typical</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Max</u>	<u>Notes</u>
forage/intercrop	12	6	20	Fresh biomass; high protein
Managed fresh-market production	7.5	5.3	11.3	Typical marketable Desmodium yield under irrigated or well-managed conditions.

Season calendars

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Planting</u>	<u>Harvest</u>
KE	Dairy belts/maize zones	Onset of rains	Cut every 6–8 weeks
KE	Highland Vegetable Zones	Mar-Apr or Oct-Nov	Year-round depending on irrigation

Region suitability

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Suitability</u>
KE	Dairy belts/maize zones	High
KE	Highland Vegetable Zones	High

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