

FarmLens Ltd

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



Crop details

Bitter gourd (bitter melon)

Momordica charantia

Family: Cucurbitaceae

Categories

Vegetables

Generated: 2026-04-11 04:46

Quick stats

Family	Cucurbitaceae
Typical harvest	12.0 t/ha
Varieties	1
Pests and diseases	4
Seasons	2

Crop profile

Growth habit	annual
Days to harvest	90-120
Main uses	Vegetable; medicinal
Pollination	insect
Origin and where it grows	Tropics

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	22 - 30 °C
Rainfall	600 - 900 mm/yr
Altitude	0 - 1600 m
Best pH	6 - 7
Soil type	Fertile loam
Row spacing	150 cm
Plant spacing	60 cm
Planting depth	2 cm
Seed rate	2 kg/ha
Nursery days	18

Simple notes for farmers

About the crop: This crop is annual; it grows and is harvested in one season. Harvest typically starts about 90-120 days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for vegetable; medicinal.

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

Where it grows: Tropics. Grouped under: Vegetables.

Best climate: 22 - 30 °C; 600 - 900 mm/yr; up to about 1600 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 6 - 7; fertile loam.

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

<u>Planting</u>	Plant into fertile, well-drained beds; provide trellis for vines; mulch to conserve moisture.
<u>Transplanting</u>	Transplant at 3–4 true leaves; avoid root disturbance; water in well.
<u>Irrigation</u>	Keep evenly moist; increase during flowering and fruit set; avoid wet foliage at night.
<u>Fertigation</u>	Where drip is used, split N and K in small weekly doses during fruiting.
<u>Pest scouting</u>	Scout for downy mildew, powdery mildew, and fruit fly; remove infested fruit; use traps and sanitation.
<u>Pruning and training</u>	Train main vine on trellis; prune excess laterals to improve airflow and fruit quality.
<u>Harvest</u>	Harvest immature green fruits 12–20 days after fruit set before color change.
<u>Postharvest</u>	Hydrocool or shade-cool; store at ~10–12 °C with high RH; handle gently to avoid scuffing.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

#	Stage	DAP	Product	Rate	Targets (kg/ha)	Notes
1	Basal	0	DAP 18-46-0	100 kg/ha	N: N/A, P ₂ O ₅ : N/A, K ₂ O: N/A	Band 5–8 cm from seedling; avoid seed burn
2	Veg	25	CAN 26% N	90 kg/ha	N: N/A, P ₂ O ₅ : N/A, K ₂ O: N/A	Irrigate after application
3	Micros	28	Trace mix (Zn, B)	0 —	N: N/A, P ₂ O ₅ : N/A, K ₂ O: N/A	Foliar—follow label; early morning/evening

Nutrient requirements

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
P ₂ O ₅	Basal	40	kg/ha
K ₂ O	Basal	40	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha

Field images



Varieties

Name	Country	Maturity (days)	Traits
Local Bitter Gourd	KE	100	Trellising needed

Fertilizer recommendations

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Product</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Basal	DAP 18-46-0	100	
Veg	CAN 26% N	90	Split if soils are light

Pests and diseases

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Symptoms</u>	<u>Management</u>
Downy mildew	disease	Foliar blight	Airflow; protectants
Powdery mildew	disease	White powdery growth on leaves	Sanitation; sulfur or labeled fungicides as needed
Fruit fly	pest	Oviposition stings; larval damage in fruit	Protein bait traps; field sanitation; harvest promptly
Aphids	pest	Curling, honeydew/sooty mold	Conserve natural enemies; soft insecticides if thresholds exceeded

Yields

<u>System</u>	<u>Typical</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Max</u>	<u>Notes</u>
open-field	12	8	20	

Season calendars

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Planting</u>	<u>Harvest</u>
KE	Lowlands	Mar–Apr	Jun–Aug
KE	Irrigated schemes	Year-round (staggered)	—

Region suitability

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Suitability</u>
KE	Lowlands	Medium
TZ	Coastal belt	High
UG	Lake Victoria basin (warm zones)	Medium

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