FarmLens Ltd

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Crop details

Snow peas

Pisum sativum var. macrocarpon

Family: Fabaceae

Categories

Vegetables

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Quick stats

Family	Fabaceae
Typical harvest	6.7 t/ha
Varieties	3
Pests and diseases	7
Seasons	3

Crop profile

Growth habit	annual
Days to harvest	70
Main uses	Young flat pods eaten whole in stir-fries, mixed vegetable dishes and for fresh export markets.
Pollination	self
Origin and where it grows	Snow peas are grown in cool and medium-altitude areas of East Africa, often alongside French beans for fresh and export markets.

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	12 - 22 °C
Rainfall	600 - 900 mm/yr
Altitude	1400 - 2600 m
Best pH	6.2 - 7
Soil type	Well-drained fertile loam or sandy loam with plenty of organic matter for good root growth and nodulation.
Row spacing	60 cm
Plant spacing	5 cm
Planting depth	3 cm
Seed rate	80 kg/ha

Simple notes for farmers

About the crop: This crop is annual; it grows and is harvested in one season. Harvest typically starts about 70 days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for young flat pods eaten whole in stir-fries, mixed vegetable dishes and for fresh export markets..

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

Where it grows: Snow peas are grown in cool and medium-altitude areas of East Africa, often alongside French beans for fresh and export markets.. Grouped under: Vegetables.

Best climate: 12 - 22 °C; 600 - 900 mm/yr; up to about 2600 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 6.2 - 7; well-drained fertile loam or sandy loam with plenty of organic matter for good root growth and nodulation..

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

Planting	Sow Snow peas directly in moist soil. Place seeds in rows next to a support line or trellis, and cover with fine soil. Provide stakes or netting before plants start climbing.
Transplanting	Snow peas are usually not transplanted; direct planting is easier and safer for the taproot.
Irrigation	Keep soil evenly moist from sowing to pod filling. Avoid water stress at flowering and early pod development, and do not allow standing water.
Fertigation	With drip irrigation, give small amounts of balanced NPK early, then reduce nitrogen later, as Snow peas fix nitrogen once nodules form.
Pest scouting	Inspect 2–3 times per week for aphids, thrips, leaf miners, pod borers and diseases. Check young shoots, flowers and flat pods carefully.
Pruning and training	Guide vines onto strings or netting and remove only badly diseased or broken shoots. Keep weeds low to improve airflow.
Harvest	Harvest Snow peas when pods are flat, bright green and seeds inside are still small. Pick every 1–2 days to maintain quality and encourage new pods.
Postharvest	Handle gently to avoid bruising. Keep in shade, avoid heat and dry wind, and cool as soon as possible for good shelf life.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

#	Stage	DAP	Product	Rate	Targets (kg/ha)	Notes
1	Basal at planting	0	NPK 17-17-17 or 15-15-15	70 kg/ha	N: 12, P?O?: 12, K?O: 12	Band fertilizer slightly to the side and below the Snow pea seed line.
2	Early topdress	18	CAN 26% N	50 kg/ha	N: 13, P?O?: 0, K?O: 0	Apply along rows in moist soil if crop colour is light green.
3	Topdress at early flowering	30	NPK 10-10-20 or SOP-based mix	60 kg/ha	N: 6, P?O?: 6, K?O: 12	Focus on potassium to improve pod firmness, colour and shelf life.

Nutrient requirements

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
N	Basal	15	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	40	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	30	kg/ha
N	Topdress_early	15	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_early	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_early	20	kg/ha

Nutrient	Stage	Amount	Unit
N	Topdress_flowering	10	kg/ha
P?O?	Topdress_flowering	0	kg/ha
K?O	Topdress_flowering	20	kg/ha

Field images



Varieties

Name	Country	Maturity (days)	Traits
Fine Snow pea (export type)	KE	65	Flat, tender pods, suitable for export and high-end local markets.
Medium Snow pea selection	KE	70	Slightly wider pods for local fresh markets.
Climbing Snow pea	TZ	70	Needs staking but gives higher yield per area where trellis is available.

Fertilizer recommendations

Stage	Product	Rate	Notes
Basal	NPK 17-17-17 or 15-15-15	70	Starter nutrients before Snow peas start fixing nitrogen.
Topdress (early)	CAN 26% N	50	Applied only where Snow peas look pale or soil N is low.
High K for pods	Sulfate of potash (SOP) or NPK with higher K	40	Around flowering to improve pod quality and storage life.
Organic	Well-rotted manure or compost	5000	Incorporate before planting to improve soil structure and moisture holding.

Pests and diseases

Name	Type	Symptoms	Management
Aphids	pest	Soft insects on shoot tips and underside of leaves causing curling and sticky honeydew on Snow peas.	Encourage natural enemies, avoid excessive nitrogen and use selective insecticides/biopesticides when populations build.
Thrips	pest	Silver streaks and scarring on leaves and pods, reducing pod quality.	Monitor flowering crops closely and treat with recommended products based on thresholds.

Name	Type	Symptoms	Management
Leaf miners	pest	White, winding mines in leaves that reduce photosynthesis.	Remove heavily mined leaves early and use targeted controls when necessary.
Pod borers and caterpillars	pest	Holes and frass in pods; damaged peas inside.	Timely sprays based on scouting, quick removal of damaged pods and field sanitation.
Powdery mildew	disease	White powdery growth on Snow pea leaves and pods; leaves yellow and dry early.	Plant in cooler periods, improve airflow, avoid excess nitrogen and use fungicides if needed.
Downy mildew	disease	Yellow patches on upper leaf surface and grey-purple mould underneath, in cool, moist conditions.	Rotate crops, avoid overhead irrigation in the evening and apply suitable fungicides where necessary.
Root rots and damping-off	disease	Poor emergence, rotted seedlings and yellow, stunted plants in wet patches.	Use treated or clean seed, plant in well-drained soils and avoid waterlogging.

Yields

System	Typical	Min	Max	Notes
Smallholder Snow peas, low–medium input	4	2.5	6	Some fertilizer, basic pest control, simple staking.
Well-managed Snow peas with staking	7	5	9	Good variety, proper trellising, fertilization and regular harvesting.
Irrigated / export Snow peas	9	7	12	Cool highland areas with drip irrigation, fertigation and tight pest/disease control.

Season calendars

Country	Region	Planting	Harvest
KE	Highland Snow pea zones	Cooler months and main rainy seasons in highlands.	First flat pods from around 9–10 weeks after sowing, then fre
KE	Irrigated highland belts	Staggered plantings where cool conditions can be maintained.	Extended production with careful disease and pest manageme
TZ	Southern and northern highland Snow pea areas	Cool seasons with reliable rainfall or irrigation.	Harvests during cool, less humid periods for best quality.

Region suitability

Country	Region	Suitability
KE	Central and Rift Valley highlands (cool vegetable zones)	High

Country	Region	Suitability
KE	Irrigated highland export belts	High
TZ	Southern and northern highland vegetable areas	High
UG	Cooler highland smallholder vegetable zones	High

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