

FarmLens Ltd

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

Crop details

Thyme

Thymus vulgaris

Family: Lamiaceae

Categories

Spices & Condiments

Generated: 2025-12-15 08:45

Quick stats

Family	Lamiaceae
Typical harvest	6.0 t/ha
Varieties	3
Pests and diseases	4
Seasons	3

Crop profile

Growth habit	perennial
Days to harvest	120
Main uses	Fresh and dried leaves for seasoning, herbal teas and essential oils.
Pollination	insect
Origin and where it grows	Mediterranean origin; thrives in sunny, well-drained sites in temperate to warm regions.

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	15 - 28 °C
Rainfall	500 - 900 mm/yr
Altitude	0 - 2300 m
Best pH	6 - 7.5
Soil type	Light, well-drained sandy loams or stony soils; tolerates relatively poor, low-N soils.
Row spacing	40 cm
Plant spacing	30 cm
Planting depth	1 cm
Seed rate	2 kg/ha
Nursery days	35

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 days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for fresh and dried leaves for seasoning, herbal teas and essential oils..

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

Where it grows: Mediterranean origin; thrives in sunny, well-drained sites in temperate to warm regions.. Grouped under: Spices & Condiments.

Best climate: 15 - 28 °C; 500 - 900 mm/yr; up to about 2300 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 6 - 7.5; light, well-drained sandy loams or stony soils; tolerates relatively poor, low-n soils..

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

<u>Planting</u>	Sow seeds in a fine nursery or trays and transplant when 5–8 cm tall, or plant rooted cuttings/splits directly into prepared beds.
<u>Transplanting</u>	Transplant in cool hours, water immediately and mulch lightly around plants.
<u>Irrigation</u>	Keep moist (not wet) during establishment. Once established, water moderately and allow topsoil to dry between irrigations.
<u>Fertigation</u>	Under drip, use light, infrequent feeds; thyme prefers moderate fertility to maintain aroma and oil quality.
<u>Pest scouting</u>	Scout for root rots, leaf spots, aphids and spider mites on hot, dry sites; remove badly affected plants and improve airflow.
<u>Pruning and training</u>	Harvest as light pruning. Avoid cutting into very old woody stems; aim to keep plants low and bushy.
<u>Harvest</u>	First harvest 3–4 months after transplanting when plants are well branched. Cut 8–10 cm above ground, leaving enough foliage for regrowth.
<u>Postharvest</u>	Harvest in cool hours, avoid bruising. For drying, use shade or low-temperature drying to keep green colour and strong aroma.

Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)

#	<u>Stage</u>	<u>DAP</u>	<u>Product</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Targets (kg/ha)</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1	Basal at planting	0	NPK 17-17-17 + compost	50 kg/ha (plus 2–4 t/ha compost)	N: 8, P?O?: 8, K?O: 8	Apply in bands along rows and mix lightly with topsoil before transplanting.
2	Establishment topdress	35	CAN 26% N	40 kg/ha	N: 10, P?O?: 0, K?O: 0	Side-dress on moist soil away from stems, then water lightly.
3	Post-cut regrowth feed	80	NPK 20-10-10 or similar	40 kg/ha after main cut	N: 8, P?O?: 4, K?O: 4	Apply after first major harvest to support regrowth; avoid over-fertilising to preserve flavour.

Nutrient requirements

<u>Nutrient</u>	<u>Stage</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unit</u>
N	Basal	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	20	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	25	kg/ha
N	Establishment	15	kg/ha
P?O?	Establishment	0	kg/ha
K?O	Establishment	15	kg/ha
N	After_cut	10	kg/ha
P?O?	After_cut	0	kg/ha

<u>Nutrient</u>	<u>Stage</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unit</u>
K ₂ O	After_cut	15	kg/ha

Varieties

<u>Name</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Maturity (days)</u>	<u>Traits</u>
Common garden thyme	KE	110	Good aroma, multipurpose use for fresh and dried herb.
High-oil thyme selection	TZ	120	Higher essential oil content, preferred for drying and extraction.
Local thyme type	UG	115	Adapted local landrace for homestead use and small-scale market sales.

Fertilizer recommendations

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Product</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Basal	NPK 17-17-17 + compost	50	Apply with 2–4 t/ha compost or well-rotted manure before planting.
Establishment	CAN 26% N	40	4–6 weeks after transplanting when plants are actively growing.
After cut	NPK 20-10-10	40	After main harvest in intensively managed thyme stands.

Pests and diseases

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Symptoms</u>	<u>Management</u>
Root and crown rot	disease	Plants suddenly wilt, yellow and die back; roots and crown show brown, rotted tissues.	Use well-drained soils, avoid waterlogging and over-irrigation, remove affected plants and improve drainage.
Leaf spot / blight	disease	Small dark spots or patches on leaves, sometimes coalescing and causing dieback.	Improve airflow, avoid overhead watering late in the day, remove heavily affected shoots.
Aphids	pest	Clusters on tender tips, curled leaves, presence of honeydew and sooty mould.	Encourage natural enemies, prune heavily infested tips, avoid excess nitrogen.
Spider mites	pest	Fine webbing, stippled and yellowing leaves in hot, dry conditions.	Maintain some humidity, avoid dusty stressed plants, remove badly infested leaves or plants.

Yields

<u>System</u>	<u>Typical</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Max</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Low-input smallholder (fresh herb)	3	2	4	Wide spacing, minimal fertilizer, 2–3 cuttings per year after establishment.
Managed beds with irrigation	6	4	8	Moderate fertilization, weed control and 3–4 cuttings per year.
Intensive herb production	9	6	12	Dense plantings, drip irrigation and frequent harvests for fresh and dried herb markets.

Season calendars

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Planting</u>	<u>Harvest</u>
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KE	Highlands and well-drained mid-altitudes	At onset of long or short rains, or any frost-free period with irrigation.	First harvest 3–4 months after transpla
TZ	Northern and southern highlands; cooler irrigated areas	Start of main rains or under irrigation when soils are workable and not waterlogged.	Multiple cuttings across the year once
UG	Moist, well-drained mid-altitude zones	At onset of reliable rains on light, well-drained soils.	Regular cuttings for several seasons w

Region suitability

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Suitability</u>
KE	Central & Rift highlands; dry, well-drained slopes	High
TZ	Northern and southern highlands; cooler irrigated pockets	High
UG	Mid-altitude belts with good drainage and mild conditions	High

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