

FarmLens Ltd

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Crop details

Tamarillo (tree tomato)

Solanum betaceum

Family: Solanaceae

Categories

Fruits & Nuts

Generated: 2026-03-14 14:30

Quick stats

Family	Solanaceae
Typical harvest	18.3 t/ha
Varieties	3
Pests and diseases	9
Seasons	4

Crop profile

Growth habit	tree
Days to harvest	perennial
Main uses	Fresh fruit; processing (juice, sauces); agroforestry/home gardens
Pollination	self
Origin and where it grows	Andean origin; grown in cool subtropics and highland tropics

Weather, soil and spacing

Best temperature	14 - 22 °C
Rainfall	900 - 1400 mm/yr
Altitude	800 - 2600 m
Best pH	6 - 6.8
Soil type	Deep, fertile, well-drained loam; high organic matter
Row spacing	300 cm
Plant spacing	300 cm
Seed rate	kg/ha (check local recommendation)
Nursery days	90

Simple notes for farmers

About the crop: This crop has a growth habit described as "tree". Harvest typically starts about perennial days after planting.

Main use: Farmers mostly grow this crop for fresh fruit; processing (juice, sauces); agroforestry/home gardens.

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

Where it grows: Andean origin; grown in cool subtropics and highland tropics. Grouped under: Fruits & Nuts.

Best climate: 14 - 22 °C; 900 - 1400 mm/yr; up to about 2600 m a.s.l.

Soil: Best at pH 6 - 6.8; deep, fertile, well-drained loam; high organic matter.

Farmer guide (Mwongozo wa Mkulima)

<u>Planting</u>	Plant with onset of rains or irrigate. Use healthy seedlings; add compost and starter P; provide windbreaks/stakes in exposed sites.
<u>Transplanting</u>	Mulch basins; protect young stems; avoid root disturbance.
<u>Irrigation</u>	Keep evenly moist, esp. flowering to fruit fill; avoid drought/heat spikes to reduce fruit drop.
<u>Fertigation</u>	Split N in light doses; ensure K and Ca for fruit quality; adjust using soil/leaf tests.
<u>Pest scouting</u>	Scout for aphids, whiteflies, mites, fruit flies, powdery mildew, and bacterial wilt; prune to improve airflow and sanitation.
<u>Pruning and training</u>	Train to 1–3 leaders; remove water shoots; tip-prune to balance vegetative and reproductive growth.
<u>Harvest</u>	Pick when fully colored (red/orange/yellow) and firm; handle carefully to avoid stem-end damage.
<u>Postharvest</u>	Shade-cool promptly; store 6–10 °C at high RH; 2–4 weeks depending on cultivar and handling.

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	Compost + DAP 18-46-0 (light)	5 kg/plant (compost) + 100 g DAP	N: N/A, P?O?: 10, K?O: N/A	Mix into backfill; keep away from stem
2	Vegetative split N	90	CAN 26% N	150 g/plant	N: 10, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	Apply in ring under canopy; water in
3	Pre-bloom balanced feed	270	NPK 17-17-17	200 g/plant	N: 10, P?O?: 10, K?O: 10	Light dose before flowering
4	Fruit fill K boost	330	Sulfate of potash (SOP)	200 g/plant	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: 15	Prefer SOP for fruit quality
5	Micronutrient foliar (opt.)	300	Ca/B/Zn foliar (as label)	0 —	N: N/A, P?O?: N/A, K?O: N/A	Apply in cool hours to support set/skin

Nutrient requirements

<u>Nutrient</u>	<u>Stage</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unit</u>
N	Basal	50	kg/ha
P?O?	Basal	30	kg/ha
K?O	Basal	60	kg/ha
N	Topdress	40	kg/ha
N	Establishment	20	kg/ha
P?O?	Establishment	20	kg/ha
K?O	Establishment	20	kg/ha

<u>Nutrient</u>	<u>Stage</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Unit</u>
N	Vegetative	40	kg/ha
K?O	Vegetative	30	kg/ha
N	Flower_set	15	kg/ha
P?O?	Flower_set	20	kg/ha
K?O	Flower_set	30	kg/ha
N	Fruit_fill	10	kg/ha
K?O	Fruit_fill	40	kg/ha
N	Maintenance	30	kg/ha
P?O?	Maintenance	10	kg/ha
K?O	Maintenance	30	kg/ha

Field images



Varieties

<u>Name</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Maturity (days)</u>	<u>Traits</u>
Red Tamarillo	KE	420	Juice color; market preferred
Red tamarillo (local)	KE	360	Deep red fruit; good processing
Golden/yellow selection	UG	360	Yellow fruit; mild flavor

Fertilizer recommendations

<u>Stage</u>	<u>Product</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Basal	Compost (well-decomposed)	4000	Mulch rings/basins
Vegetative	CAN 26% N	70	Split 2–3× per year on young plants
Fruit fill	Sulfate of potash (SOP)	60	Boost K for fruit quality

Pests and diseases

<u>Name</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Symptoms</u>	<u>Management</u>
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Late blight	disease	Leaf/stem blight	Protectants; airflow
Aphids	pest	Leaf curl; honeydew; sooty mold; virus risk	Conserve predators; control ants; selective insecticides if needed
Whiteflies	pest	Leaf yellowing; honeydew; virus vector	Yellow traps; natural enemies; targeted controls
Red spider mites	pest	Stippling/bronzing in dry spells	Maintain humidity; miticides if severe
Fruit flies (Tephritidae)	pest	Stings; larval tunnels; fruit drop	Field sanitation; baiting; fruit bagging; timely harvest
Powdery mildew	disease	White powder on leaves/shoots	Open canopy; resistant selections; fungicides if persistent
Bacterial wilt (Ralstonia)	disease	Sudden wilting; brown vascular tissue	Avoid infested fields; rotate; hygiene; grafting on tolerant rootstocks where used
Anthracnose/fruit rots	disease	Sunken lesions; postharvest decay	Pruning for airflow; sanitation; careful handling; protectants in wet weather
Root-knot nematodes	pest	Root galls; stunting	Organic matter; solarization/cover crops; tolerant rootstocks if available

Yields

<u>System</u>	<u>Typical</u>	<u>Min</u>	<u>Max</u>	<u>Notes</u>
highland orchard	15	8	25	
smallholder rainfed	15	8	25	10–25 kg/tree typical under moderate management
irrigated/intensive	25	15	40	Good cultivars, pruning, and nutrition

Season calendars

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Planting</u>	<u>Harvest</u>
KE	Highlands	Mar–May / Oct–Nov	Multiple flushes/year
KE	Highlands (long rains)	Mar–Apr	Oct–Feb
KE	Highlands (short rains)	Oct–Nov	May–Sep
UG	Southwest highlands	Mar–Apr	Oct–Feb

Region suitability

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Suitability</u>
KE	Frost-prone uplands	Low
KE	Highlands	High
KE	Highlands & cool mid-altitudes	High
KE	Hot lowlands (>28 °C mean)	Low

<u>Country</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Suitability</u>
TZ	Northern highlands	High
UG	Southwest highlands	High

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