

# FarmLens Ltd

Website: [farmlens.africa](http://farmlens.africa) | App: [app.farmlens.africa](http://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

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

### Crop profile

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

### Weather, soil and spacing

<b>Best temperature</b>	18 - 26 °C
<b>Rainfall</b>	900 - 1500 mm/yr
<b>Altitude</b>	0 - 2200 m
<b>Best pH</b>	5.5 - 6.8
<b>Soil type</b>	Well-drained loam; tolerates acidity
<b>Row spacing</b>	50 cm
<b>Plant spacing</b>	25 cm
<b>Planting depth</b>	1.5 cm
<b>Seed rate</b>	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)

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

### **Nutrient schedule (Mbolea kwa Hatua)**

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

### **Nutrient requirements**

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

### **Field images**



### **Varieties**

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

## **Fertilizer recommendations**

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

## **Pests and diseases**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Type</u></b>	<b><u>Symptoms</u></b>	<b><u>Management</u></b>
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**

<b><u>System</u></b>	<b><u>Typical</u></b>	<b><u>Min</u></b>	<b><u>Max</u></b>	<b><u>Notes</u></b>
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**

<b><u>Country</u></b>	<b><u>Region</u></b>	<b><u>Planting</u></b>	<b><u>Harvest</u></b>
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**

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

Source: FarmLens Ltd - [farmlens.africa](http://farmlens.africa) and [app.farmlens.africa](https://app.farmlens.africa). Headquarters: Nairobi, Kenya. This guide was generated from the FarmLens database.