

Tree Seed Information Leaflet



Markhamia lutea

Species: *Markhamia lutea* (Denth.) K. Schum.

Family: Bignoniaceae

Common name: Markhamia

Local names: Muu (Kikuyu)

Siala (Luo)

Kyoo (Kamba)

Mungwani (Meru)

Mobeti (Nandi)

Sogdu (Somali)

Ekokwat (Turkana)

Lusiola (Luhya)

Omwobo (Kisii)

Description: *Markhamia lutea* is an evergreen tree with a narrow irregular crown up to 15m high. The bark is reddish brown and finely cracked. Leaves are compound, pinnate with 7-11 leaflets, each leaflet to 10 cm, wider at the tip. Flowers are yellow and trumpet shaped with orange reddish stripes in the throat. Mature fruits are brownish long thin capsules about 40-80 cm long in spiraling clusters, twisted and splinting on the tree to release numerous yellow white flat winged seeds.

Distribution: The species occurs in riverine forests, highland areas and the lake region between 700-2000 m. Prefers red loam soils and has deep roots. It is very common in Nairobi, Nyanza, Western and Central parts of Kenya within agro-climatic zone II and III.

Flowering and fruit development: Flowering is between August and September in Western Kenya whereas it is between December and January in Central Kenya (Mt Kenya region). Pollination is by insect and seeds take 6 months to mature.

Method of collection: Seeds can be collected between February and March in Western Kenya and July and August in Mt. Kenya region. The mature greying brown capsules are collected from the crown of standing trees by spreading a net/canvas sheet under the tree and climbing to the crown to hand pick the capsules or cut them down using looping shears and hand scateurs.

Seed extraction, cleaning and drying: Mature capsules are sun dried in order to open to release the seeds but pods that do not split can either be threshed or opened up by hands. Cleaning is done by hand sorting. Seed can be dried to the required moisture content of < 10%.

Seed weight: There are 70,000-75,000 seed per kilogram depending on the provenance and the climatic conditions of the ripening year.

Seed storage: Seeds can be stored in airtight containers (plastic, kilner jars, and aluminium packets) in cool dry place for a period of up to 2 years without significant loss of viability.

Seed Sowing and Germination: Seed germinate within 4-20 days. The expected germination rate is between 50-80%. Pre-sowing treatment is not necessary.

To sow, broadcast the seeds thinly and evenly on a well-prepared seedbed (containing sand or a mixture of sand and soil). They are then covered with a thin layer of sand/soil and light mulch spread over the seedbed to keep it moist. Watering is done regularly (morning and evening) until they germinate. Mulch is removed immediately germination starts. The young seedlings are transplanted when they are large enough to handle. Seedlings are transplanted in pots containing soil mixed with NPK fertilizer at the rate of 30-40grams per 20liters of soil. Seedlings are planted out when they are 30cm tall (4-6months).

End uses: The wood of this species is used for furniture and construction, production of poles and tool handles. Other uses include bee foliage, soil conservation, shade and ornamental.

For more information contact

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