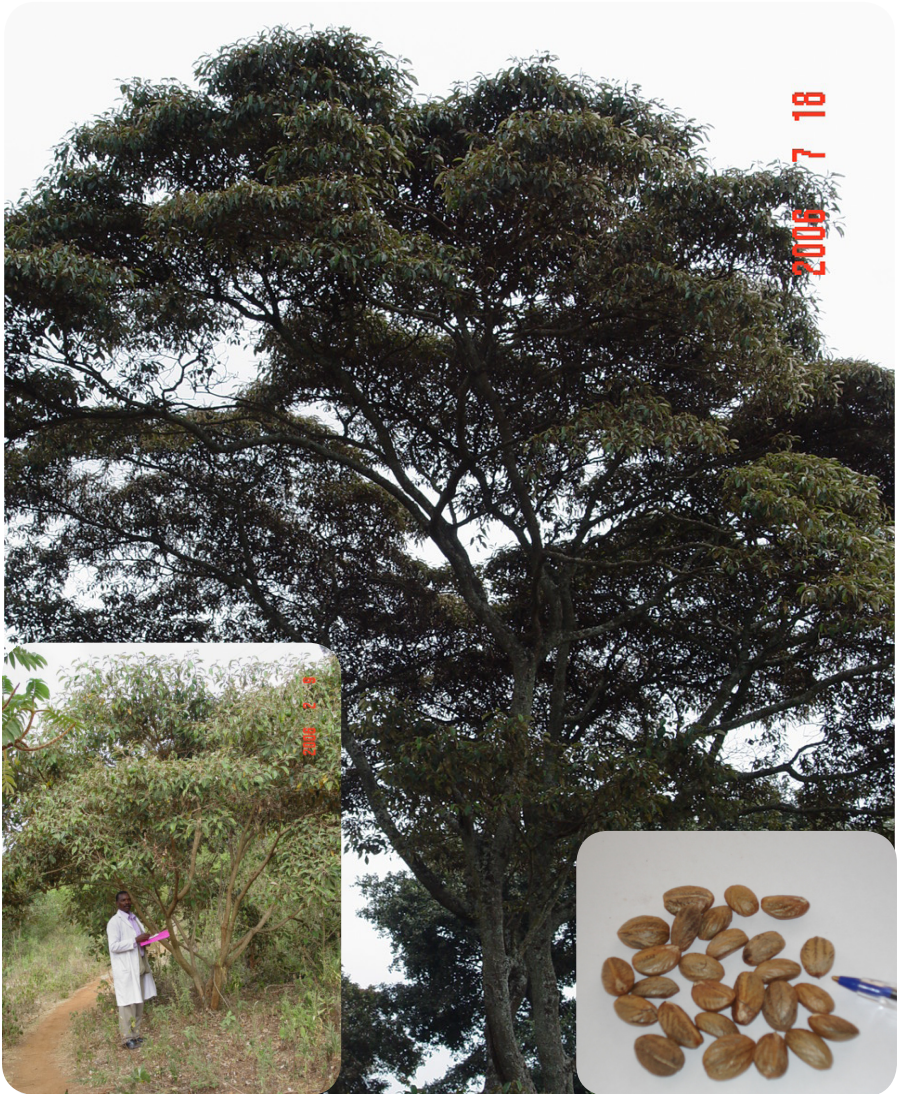


Tree Seed Information Leaflet



Croton megalocarpus

Species: *Croton megalocarpus* Hutch.

Family: Euphorbiaceae

Common name: Musine

Local name: Mukinduri (Kikuyu, Meru)

Muthulu (Kamba)

Musine (Luhya)

Masineitet (Nandi)

Lameruguet (Samburu)

Description: *Croton megalocarpus* is a tree to 35m high with rather flat crown of distinctive layered branches. Bark is dark grey; rough and cracking. Leaves are green on the upper surface and silvery underside. Flowers are yellow in hanging spikes. Mature fruit is grey, almost round and woody, about 2.5cm long, 3-valved and containing three grey brown seeds with a minute caruncle.

Distribution: The species is found in dry upland evergreen or semi-deciduous forest and also in moist upland forest, riverine forests or wooded grasslands between 900–2100. Common in Central highlands, Nairobi, Kakamega and Samburu.

Flowering and fruiting: In Nyeri, Kiambu, Nandi and Kericho districts, flowering is between February and May, Bungoma district in September, and in Kakamega district between October and January. Pollination is by insects; seed maturity takes about 5 months. Each fruit contains 3 hard and woody seeds. The seeds are white when immature, grey-brown when mature. Seed can be collected from July to June depending on the region.

Seed collection method: Mature grey-brown fruits are collected from the ground under selected seed trees, following natural seed fall. Collection can also be done from the crown of standing trees by spreading a net or canvas under the tree and climbing to shake the branches to release the fruits.

Seed extraction, drying and cleaning: Seed extraction is a tedious activity that involves cracking each fruit with a hammer and splitting it open by hand to remove the seeds. Seeds are cleaned by hands sorting to remove debris and other broken pieces. Seeds are then sun-dried by spreading in thin layer and turning regularly to avoid overheating.

Seed weight: There are 1,600–1,800 seeds per kilogram.

Seed storage: Seeds can be stored in airtight in a cool dry place for a period of up to 2 years with

no significant loss of viability.

Seed Sowing and Germination: Seeds germinate within 7-14 days. The expected germination rate of mature and healthy seed lots is up to 95%. Pre-sowing treatment is not necessary.

Seeds are sown by broadcasting them 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 soil. The seedbed is then covered with a light mulch (dry grass) to keep it moist. Watering is done regularly (morning and evening) checking daily for any emergent seedling. Mulch is removed immediately germination starts. The young seedlings are transplanted when they are large enough to handle (4-5 leaves). Seedlings can be transplanted to pots or polythene tubes 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: Wood is used as timber and fuel wood; other parts of this species are used as medicine, bee forage, mulch and green manure.

For more information contact

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