



LEAFIES PLANTING GUIDE

1. KALE (*Brassica oleraceae* var *acephala*)

The kale is a member of the cabbage family commonly known as sukumawiki with a wide ecological adaptability.

They have vitamins and essential mineral salts and they are widely grown in Kenya by smallholders for local market and home consumption.

Ecological Requirements

Kale is grown under rain-fed and irrigated conditions in a wide range of climatic conditions.

The optimum temperature ranges between 17-22⁰C.

Kale requires an adequate amount of water and 350-500 mm is required during the growing period.

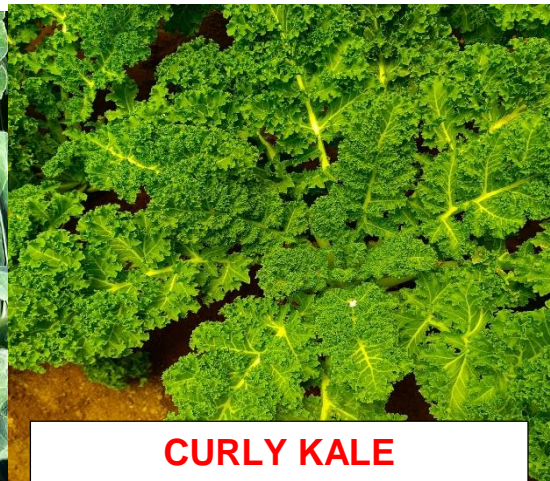
They require an altitude of up to 2200 and not less than 800M above sea level.

Well-drained fertile soils are recommended for a good harvest.

Royal seed varieties



Royal Seed Varieties



2. SPINACH (*Spinacia oleracea*)

Spinach is a vegetable grown for its succulent edible leaves.

They are rich in vitamin A and a high content of minerals like iron, calcium, phosphorus and vitamin c.



CLIMATIC REQUIREMENTS

It thrives well in altitudes of below 1000m ASL. The soils should be fertile, well drained and high in organic matter with optimum PH of between 6.4 and 7

It germinates and grows optimally at temperatures between 4-16⁰c however it can withstand temperatures as low as -7⁰c.

In extreme weather conditions, seeds germinate slowly and may fail to germinate completely. Heat also causes the plants to bolt ruining the flavor of the crop.



CULTURAL PRACTICES OF LEAFIES

In order to achieve best results, soils need to be prepared early in advance and beds made up for summer production.

Beds need to be raised at least between 20 cm-30cm to help drainage with excess rainfall.

Soil moisture is an important factor in leafies production therefore the water level in the root zone should not be below 50%.

Careful planning of irrigation should done depending on soil types and the time of the year.

Leafies do not compete well with weeds therefore the field should be weed free.

Crop rotation is important in leafies as aids in breaking disease cycles and improves soil fertility.

TRANSPLANTING

Kale and spinach seedlings are ready for transplanting after 4-6 weeks and at this stage most seedling have between 6 to 7 leaves.

The seedlings should be hardened before transplanting by removing the shade, reducing the amount of water used for irrigation.

Transplant the seedling early in the morning or late in the evening when the heat intensity is not too high.

Spacing varies with variety planted but the recommended spacing is 45cm x 45cm or 60cmx60cm for big varieties.

FERTILIZER APPLICATION

Phosphatic fertilizers are recommended during transplanting preferably 50kg/acre and nitrogenous fertilizers are recommended during the vegetative stages.

However, excessive application of nitrogenous fertilizer is not recommended as this could affect the taste of the leaves and especially after the first harvest.

Foliar sprays also play a key role in the increase of yield and production

HARVESTING AND STORAGE

Spinach and kales take 45 days to be ready for maturity and our varieties have a harvesting period of 6 to 8 months from the first harvest.

To harvest just snip leaves off just above the base of the plant but a few centimeters from the stem.

