Irrigation

Normal rainfall in medium potential areas is adequate. However, irrigation at pod formation and grain filling improves yields.

Diseases and pests

Common diseases and pests of bush beans also affect climbing beans. It is advisable to use healthy seed, crop rotation, appropriate fungicides and insecticides.

Bird damage

Birds and especially mouse-birds are the most problematic pests of climbing beans. They feed on young shoots, young leaves, flowers, young and young pods.

Scaring of birds should be done to protect the crop.

Harvesting

a) Pods are harvested according to their usage.
   • Harvest when grain filling is complete for use as green vegetable,
   b) For dry grain, pick pods when they dry and thresh them.

It is important to note that since the pods on the plant may dry at different times, dry grain harvesting follows the same pattern.

Storage

The threshed grains should be cleaned by sorting to remove straw, dirt and discolored grains. Grain should then be dried and dusted with storage chemicals.

Grow climbing beans for high yields

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Introduction

Climbing beans are beans with capacity to climb to a height of up to 4 m. They have a high yield potential and mature within a season. They need support materials and labour to train them on the supports.

Why grow climbing beans?

- Their yield potential is over 5 tons/ha
- They fix nitrogen and produce 17-25 tons of leaves per hectare
- They have higher net benefit than bush beans.

Staking

Climbing beans require support which improves aeration and reduces the incidence of diseases.

- The height of growth determines the yields and so support should be over 3.0 m high.

The support methods used are

- Sticks for every plant
- Posts and wire or string structure.

How to grow climbing beans

Land preparation

This may be by hand or by animal or tractor drawn plough to loosen the soil and kill perennial weeds.

Spacing

Make holes spaced at 75 cm x 30 cm and plant two (2) seeds per hill.

Manure

Climbing beans are heavy feeders and need high quantities of nutrients. Apply a hand full of well rotten manure per planting hole and mix thoroughly with soil.

Fertilizer

Use DAP, 20:20:0, or 17:17:17 at the rate of 5 g (1 teaspoon) per planting hole and mix thoroughly with soil before planting seeds.

Climbing bean varieties

There are three climbing bean varieties for Kenyan farmers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIETY OF CLIMBING BEAN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
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