

Tree Seed Information Leaflet



Albizia gummifera

Species: *Albizia gummifera* (J.F.Gmel.) C.A.Sm.

Family: Mimosaceae

Common name: Peacock Flower

Local name: Mukurue (Kikuyu, Meru)

Set, Seyet (Nandi)

Mukhonzuli (Kakamega)

Omugonjoro (Kisii)

Description: *Albizia gummifera* is a tree up to 25m high with a flat crown. The bark is grey and smooth. The leaves are compound with 9–16 pairs of almost rectangular leaflets with a diagonal midrib. Flowers are white–pink clusters with exerted stamens. Mature pods are shiny reddish or purplish brown and about 10–20cm long and 3cm wide. Appearing in bundles, each pod containing 8–14 seeds.

Distribution: Widespread in dry or wet lowland or upland forest edges and also riverine forests from coast up to 2,400m. the species prefer well drained soils in areas with a mean annual rainfall above 1,000mm. It occurs on the slopes of the coastal hills and on the higher mountains of central and western highlands (Mt. Kenya, Aberdares and Mau). Also isolated mountains in northern Kenya (Marsabit, Maralal and Kulal) and in Kakamega Forest.

Flowering and fruiting: Flowering occurs in February –March and August–September. Seed maturity takes 4–6 months depending on provenance or climatic conditions of the seeding year. Seeds can be collected twice in a year between May–June and November–January.

Seed collection method: The mature purple brown pods are collected from the crown by spreading a net, canvas, etc under the tree and climbing the tree to hand pick the fruits or shaking the branches to release the pods.

Seed extraction and drying and cleaning: The harvested pods are sun dried until they start to split. Then threshed lightly to minimize damage to the seeds. After extraction, the seeds are cleaned by hand sorting, winnowing or sieving.

Seed weight: There are 14,000 – 16,000 seeds per kilogram.

Seed storage: Seeds can be stored in airtight containers 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 to 15 days. The expected germination rate of mature and healthy seed lots is between 60 and 80%. For good germination results the seed should be nipped using knife, nail clippers or scalpel.

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: The wood of this species is used for timber (furniture), pole and fuel wood; other uses include medicine (Bark and roots), fodder, bee forage, shade and ornamental.

For more information contact

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