

Growing Amaranth in lines

Recognize the problem

Farmers prefer to broadcast amaranth seed at planting as it is easy to do. Broadcasting amaranth seed results in a dense population due to close spacing with no regular pattern in plant stand. Planting in lines on the other hand offers an appropriate plant population, hence less competition, less mutual shading, reduced pest and disease problems, increased plant vigour with stronger stems and broader leaves. Finally, line planting makes other agronomic practices easier and simpler translating into higher yield.

Well managed Amaranth garden.
(Photo by Omary Mbwambo)



Background

The land is prepared to a smooth tilth because the seeds of amaranth are very small and would not easily germinate in a rough soil. Marking the fields helps in making good lines for planting amaranth. A blunt peg is used in making a shallow planting furrow as the seeds should not be put too deep in the soil. This is because deep placement of seed usually results into emergence failure. The seed is mixed with chicken manure or ash to help in separating it and avoid close spacing. A dry bottle can be used in seed placement to increase the speed of planting. Seeds are covered with small amount of soil to avoid being blowing away by wind. Thinning should be done to a spacing of 10cm between plants as this gives an optimum plant population.

Amaranth garden, before thinning.
(Photo by Omary Mbwambo)



Management

Planting Amaranth in lines

- Prepare the land to a smooth tilth
- Mark the field using strings and pegs at a spacing of one foot (30 cm) from one row to another
- Make shallow planting furrows (about 1cm deep) along the strings using a blunt peg where the seeds will be planted
- Prepare the amaranth seeds and mix them with chicken manure or ash
- Mix 1 part of amaranth seeds to 4 parts of chicken manure or ash
- Get a dry mineral water bottle and put a hole in the bottle top
- Put the mixture of seed/manure in the bottle and tighten with the cap
- Hold the bottle and pour seeds through the hole into the furrows
- Cover the seeds with a very light layer of soil
- When the seeds germinate allow them to grow for one week.
- Thin plants to keep 10 cm spacing from each other

The recommendations in this factsheet are relevant to: All Countries



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