

MABELE A MAFUBELU

RED SORGHUM

Sorghum is a very important crop in Basotho culture and traditions as it is used for seed and food. It is a nutrient-dense, gluten-free climate tolerant crop.

The narrative label is a Slow Food project and tells about the product, who produces it and the entire supply chain

VARIETY The grains of this red coloured sorghum variety are round and very small ranging from 2 to 4 millimeters in diameter. The cooked sorghum grains will have a mild nutty flavour and a hearty, chewy texture. When ground into flour it will have a light colour and mild sweet flavour.

PLACE Mabele a Mafubelu are grown along the Senqu (Orange) River Valley in Lesotho. The river valley is situated on low elevation; there are no harsh climate conditions such as strong winds, frost and extremely cold temperature as they are not favorable for sorghum crop.

CULTIVATION The planting of the sorghum is done from the month of August. Traditional methods of planting are used and organic manure is added to the soil. The sorghum cereal crop in the Senqu River Valley, produce good yields, and are of good quality because of good soil structure which is loam soil. Farmers plough under the moist soil incorporated with organic fertilizer. Sorghum is a drought tolerant crop, but responds well to additional water hence the success in the river valley.

HARVESTING & PROCESSING Harvest season is within the months of June to July. The sorghum is harvested by hand when it is mature and completely dry, just by breaking off the stalks or using manual tools. Once harvested, the heads are arranged into heaps, on a clean threshing floor. The sorghum is then sorted; the best ones are kept away to be used as seed. Once sorting is done, the sorghum is heaped on the ground or threshing floor. The threshing job is done by the men of the village with thick wooden clubs 'knobkerrie' and the men get into motion, in rhythm, over song with women cheering on and providing food and traditional sorghum beer. The threshed sorghum is then taken away by the women and the winnowing process is done to remove chaff from the grain. The sorghum is then packed and kept in a storage facility where all the aggregation takes place and it is stored there and dispatched as per market requirements. This versatile crop is processed into a variety of traditional dishes from stews, porridge, bread and beverages. This red variety is excellent eaten whole, cooked into stews, soup and salad. When milled it is used for joala (traditional beer), lesheleshele (breakfast porridge), motoho (fermented sorghum drink), sorghum bread and pap, and as a non-gluten baking flour alternative.



SEQHOBANE SE SESOEU

WHITE SORGHUM

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VARIETY The grains of this white sorghum variety are round and very small ranging from 2 to 4 millimeters in diameter. The cooked sorghum grains will have a mild nutty flavour and a hearty, chewy texture. When ground into flour it will have a light colour and mild sweet flavour.

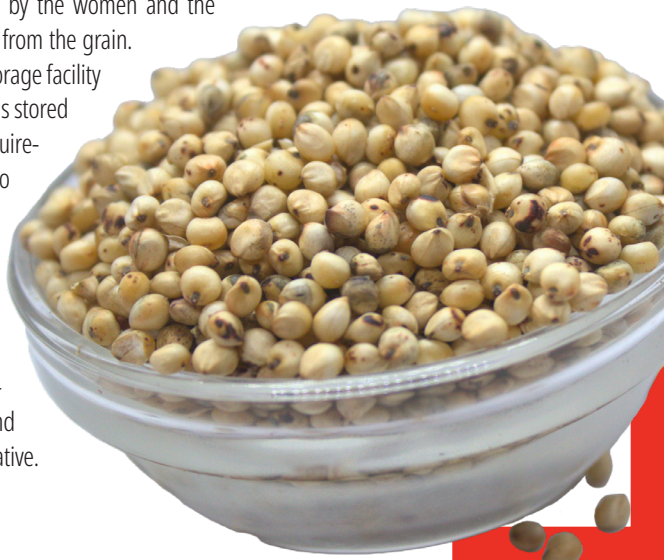
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The threshed sorghum is then taken away by the women and the winnowing process is done to remove chaff from the grain.

The sorghum is then packed and kept in a storage facility where all the aggregation takes place and it is stored there and dispatched as per market requirements. This versatile crop is processed into a variety of traditional dishes from stews, porridge, bread and beverages. This white variety is excellent eaten whole, cooked into stews, soup and salad. When milled it is used for joala (traditional beer), lesheleshele (breakfast porridge), motoho (fermented sorghum drink), sorghum bread and pap, and as a non-gluten baking flour alternative.



LINAOA

BASOTHO DRY BEANS

Basotho Dry Beans are regarded as one of the most important field crops on account of their high protein content and dietary benefits. There are many different types and colours. Within each species there are many seed types which differ in size, shape and colour.

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VARIETIES These mixtures of traditional dry bean varieties all have flavourful, earthy and nutty flavours in common. The different types are, but not limited to:

Marakabei - these are white & black/maroon beans and they may also have some speckles. They take a bit longer to cook.

Linaoa tse Ts'ehla - mustard yellow beans; delicious, cook a bit longer.

Mahe a likoekoe - Basotho pinto beans; Speckled mix of reddish-brown in appearance. Moderate cooking time.

Sugar Beans - cook faster

Small White haricot - pure white roughly oval shaped beans. They are perfect for canning as well.

Linaoa tsa Sesotho - Cowpeas: They are cream/white in colour with either black, brown, red or pink eyes.

Lebete - Have a pleasant cooking aroma, these beans are broad, quick cooking, with a buttery mouthfeel texture when cooked.

Mqhalapoto - White & purple kidney beans.

PLACE These beans grow well all over Lesotho at the different agro-ecological zones at the lowest altitude of 2161 m above sea level and the highest being 3482 m in the mountains. The zones are lowlands, foothills, mountains (here beans are grown along river valleys) and Senqu (Orange) River Valley

CULTIVATION Since the soil must be moderately warm (13°C or above) the earliest plantings occur around the first of October and can continue until about 15th January in warm areas; but in cold areas yield go down with each date after November. Cultivars with growing season of 85 to 100 days are planted in the highlands from October to end of November. The cultivars with a growing season of 90 to 115 day planted on the lowlands and foothills from first October to 15th of January. The length of season to maturity ranges from 85 days to 120 days for the different varieties.

HARVESTING & PROCESSING Dry beans are harvested when all the pods have turned yellow and rattle easily, but before they have become so dry that the pods begin to shatter. Dry beans can be harvested by hand pulling and hiping them into bags and threshing by driving a tractor over them a number of rounds on a prepared threshing floor or men called for smaller volumes and threshed by hand by beating bean bags with big sticks. Then wind is used (winnowing) to separate the seeds from the chaff. They may be cooked into a mélange of grains to make a traditional likhobe dish; They are perfect in soup; They may be prepared on their own and eaten with bread, papa or rice; They are an excellent addition to stews and casseroles and they may also be cooked and preserved by canning. When ground into flour, it may be used for: -Nutritious baby weaning food, baking flour alternative, vegan patties and many more dishes.

